

Winterbourne Earls CE (VC) Primary School

Marking and Feedback Policy

Date Agreed: January 2024
Review Date: January 2026

At Winterbourne Earls Primary School we recognise the importance of high quality, timely and purposeful feedback which engages the children as active participants in their learning and provides personalised help and guidance. We are mindful also of the workload implications of written marking, and of the research surrounding effective feedback.

Our updated policy is underpinned by the evidence of best practice from the Education Endowment Foundation and other expert organisations. The Education Endowment Foundation research shows that effective feedback should:

- redirect or refocus either the teacher's or the learner's actions to achieve a goal
- be specific, accurate and clear
- encourage and support further effort
- be given sparingly so that it is meaningful
- provide specific guidance on how to improve and not just tell students when they are wrong

The Department for Education's research into teacher workload has highlighted written marking as a key contributing factor to workload. As such, we have investigated alternatives to onerous written marking, which can provide effective feedback. Both professional bodies emphasise that marking should be: meaningful, manageable and motivating.

We have also taken note of the guidance provided by the NCETM (National Centre for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics) that marking and evidence-recording strategies should be efficient, so that they do not steal time that would be better spent on lesson design and preparation. Neither should they result in an excessive workload for teachers. We are adopting their guidance which follows:

Maths Marking

It is important for teachers to distinguish between a pupil's simple slip and an error that reflects a lack of understanding:

- For slips, it is often enough to simply indicate where each slip occurs, particularly when the teacher's/school's approach is to encourage pupils to correct them
- If errors demonstrate lack of understanding, the teacher may decide to take alternative courses of action. For instance, with a small number of pupils, the teacher may arrange same-day intervention while for a large number of pupils, the errors will be addressed in the next lesson

Evidence shows (Black and William 1998) that pupils benefit from marking their own work. Part of this responsibility is to identify for themselves the facts, strategies and concepts they know well and those which they find harder and need to continue to work on.

Aims of feedback and marking:

We offer feedback in order to:

- show that we value the pupil's work and encourage them to do the same
- boost self-esteem and aspirations through use of praise and encouragement
- share expectations
- show pupils how they have improved in their learning
- clarify what their next steps are
- promote self-assessment, recognise any misconceptions and offer guidance
- inform future lesson planning and target setting

Key Principles:

If children are to develop as independent learners, with an awareness of their own strengths as well as areas for development (learning targets) it is essential that:

- The process of offering feedback should be a positive one, giving recognition and appropriate praise for achievement
- Feedback should relate to the learning intention or lesson objective: Children are made aware of the criteria against which their work will be marked or assessed. "This is what you are going to do and this is how I will be marking it"
- Written comments should be appropriate to the age and ability of the child
- When written feedback is given, children are given specific time to read, reflect and respond to marking
- Children should be involved in the process and encouraged to self and peer assess
- As children progress through the school, feedback should encourage children to take ownership of their own learning
- Feedback delivered closest to the point of action is most effective and as such feedback delivered in lessons is more effective than comments provided at a later date
- Feedback is a part of the school's wider assessment processes which aim to provide an appropriate level of challenge to pupils in lessons, allowing them to make good progress
- Where possible, feedback should be given 'in the moment' or 'at the point of need' so any misconceptions are addressed swiftly, preferably in the lesson
- All pupils' work should be reviewed by teachers at the earliest appropriate opportunity so that it might impact on future learning. When work is reviewed, it should be acknowledged in books

Wherever possible marking takes place with the children e.g. when staff are working with an individual or a focus group. This then offers guidance as to the extent to which learning intentions have been met and suggests the next steps children might take in their learning.

Towards a whole school approach

In order to achieve a whole school approach marking methods must be agreed and should be:

- Developmental across the age range
- Consistently applied by all those working with children in school including supply teachers and support staff

Oral feedback

- Is the most powerful and has maximum impact when pointing out successes and improvement needs against the learning intentions. Written reflections can pull down the quality of articulation of the learning. The quality of the thinking can be higher if it is oral
- Is usually interactive and developmental. It may give reassurance or a quick check on progress. The effect of teacher comments will be seen in a child's response in moving on to the next learning step
- May be in the form of a learning conference or review.

Written feedback should be

- Legible and clear in meaning
- Be manageable for teachers
- Be consistently applied

STRATEGIES

Summative feedback/ marking

This usually consists of ticks and dots (to show an incorrect answer) and is associated with closed tasks or exercises. Wherever possible, children should self-mark or the work is marked as a class or in groups.

Formative written feedback/ marking

- Not all pieces of work can be 'quality marked'. Teachers decide whether work will be simply acknowledged or given detailed attention
- When work has been quality marked, response to marking time should be planned in to the next session
- Wherever the task is open or narrative, feedback will focus first and foremost on the learning intention of the task
- The emphasis in marking should be on both success against the learning intention and improvement needs against the learning intention. Focused comment should help the child in "closing the gap" between what they have achieved and what they could have achieved.

Symbols and abbreviations- marking codes

Spelling, punctuation, grammar etc. will not be marked in every piece of narrative writing, because children cannot effectively focus on too many things in one space of time.

Feedback will be given for those things that children have been asked to pay attention to and therefore clearly linked to the learning objective. This will mean that some aspects of writing are unmarked, but over time will be marked.

Self-marking

Children will self-evaluate wherever possible. Children can identify their own successes and look for improvement points. The plenary (this may at a point other than at the end of a lesson) can then focus on this process as a way of analysing the learning.

Shared marking

Teachers can use one piece of work from a child in the class to mark as a class, by modelling the marking process and teaching particular points at the same time.

Paired marking

- Paired marking is introduced in Y3 unless the teachers feel younger children are ready for this.
- Children need to be trained for this, through modelling with the whole class
- Ground rules should be decided as a class
- Children should point out what they like first, then suggest ways to improve a piece, but only against the learning objective
- Encourages a dialogue between the children.