

The Winterton Federation Marking & Feedback Policy

Policy Statement

The Winterton Federation Marking & Feedback Policy has been created after extensive research and training on making marking more meaningful. Feedback is part of the Federation's wider assessment process, which aims to provide an appropriate level of challenge to pupils in lessons, allowing them to make good or better progress. OFSTED have clarified their position in 2016 on marking and feedback:

'Ofsted does not expect to see a particular frequency or quantity of work in pupils' books or folders. Ofsted recognises that the amount of work in books and folders will depend on the subject being studied and the age and ability of the pupils. Ofsted recognises that marking and feedback to pupils, both written and oral, are important aspects of assessment. However, Ofsted does not expect to see any specific frequency, type or volume of marking and feedback; these are for the school to decide through its assessment policy. Marking and feedback should be consistent with that policy, which may cater for different subjects and different age groups of pupils in different ways, in order to be effective and efficient in promoting learning. While inspectors will consider how written and oral feedback is used to promote learning, Ofsted does not expect to see any written record of oral feedback provided to pupils by teachers. If it is necessary for inspectors to identify marking as an area for improvement for a school, they will pay careful attention to the way recommendations are written to ensure that these do not drive unnecessary workload for teachers.'

This policy aims to ensure that marking is meaningful, manageable and motivating, and that pupil progress is at the heart of every piece of feedback that is delivered, removing unnecessary barriers, like time constraints and workload, to outstanding classroom practice. This policy needs to be read in conjunction with the Assessment Policy.

Rationale

- To clarify and reduce the emphasis of written feedback, eliminating the need for teachers to spend time outside of lessons writing comments in books. This means focusing on giving feedback directly to pupils during the lesson and a chance to respond to feedback quickly.
- To integrate feedback into teaching and learning pedagogy and be immediate and impactful.
- To free up teacher time and improve staff morale; achieve a better work life balance while still ensuring teaching moves children on in their learning.
- To further facilitate a move away from unnecessary worksheets and encourage teachers to provide extended writing and research opportunities for pupils.
- To further improve feedback during teaching, empowering children to take ownership of their learning.
- To free up teacher time, in order to plan exciting and engaging lessons with improved learning experiences for all involved.

Aims

- Feedback will only be used to further children's learning
- Policy is teacher-led and emphasises the trust teachers have to assess effectively
- Enshrine different marking approaches for different subjects, based on an evidence-led approach
- Monitoring is focussed on pupil output, outcomes and progress, rather than written marking.

- Majority of feedback to be delivered verbally, through in-class assessment, and written comments should only be used as a last resort, for those very few children who are otherwise unable to assess their own learning, even after guided modelling by adults.
- Feedback is received during the lesson, or in the next appropriate lesson.
- Feedback supports learning and knowledge retention, to ensure explicit steps are taken over time to revisit and refresh learning
- Feedback empowers children to take responsibility for improving their own work.

Marking

Overall, marking needs to be considered as Meaningful, Manageable and Motivating.

Meaningful: marking varies by age group, subject, and what works best for the pupil and teacher in relation to any particular piece of work. Teachers are encouraged to adjust their approach as necessary and trusted to incorporate the outcomes into subsequent planning and teaching.

Manageable: marking practice is proportionate and considers the frequency and complexity of written feedback, as well as the cost and time-effectiveness of marking in relation to the overall workload of teachers. This is written into any assessment policy.

Motivating: Marking should help to motivate pupils to progress. This does not mean always writing in-depth comments or being universally positive: sometimes short, challenging comments or oral feedback are more effective. If the teacher is doing more work than their pupils, this can become a disincentive for pupils to accept challenges and take responsibility for improving their work.

All these points were carefully considered when devising this policy.

Research shows that too often, it is the marking itself which is being monitored and commented on by leaders, rather than pupil outcomes and progress, as a result of quality feedback. Too much value is currently placed on written feedback. In some cases, the perception exists that the amount of marking a teacher does equals their level of professionalism and effectiveness. These are false assumptions, that lead to teacher workload issues. We need to challenge the 'false comfort' of deep marking. Each subject and phase will determine the feedback policy in their areas, responding to the different workload demands of each subject/phase, and drawing on teacher professionalism to create meaningful and manageable approaches.

Please see Appendix 1 for type and frequency of feedback relating to different subject and age phases.

Closed tasks or exercises can be marked using green or yellow highlighters. When appropriate, children should self-mark in class, or in a group session, which is shown using green pen. Errors in work will be indicated to the children; time will be given to amend the work, in response to feedback. When extending themselves, pupils will use a purple pen.

Adult comments in books should be in red pen, and minimal, referring to Appendix 1, remembering that any feedback is to further children's learning. If a written comment does not achieve this aim, then it is not appropriate to do so.

Verbal Feedback

Feedback is accepted as important to development, but this can almost always be achieved without extensive written dialogue or comments. Pupils will have regular verbal feedback during lessons, and support in order to progress throughout their learning. Verbal feedback takes precedence over extensive teacher comments. Effective feedback needs to be specific, accurate and clear (e.g. It was good because you... rather than just saying correct or well done). Verbal feedback will be assessed as part of classroom observation, and form a large part of the feedback process within the classroom. Verbal feedback does not need to be noted, as OFSTED does not expect to see any written record of oral feedback provided to pupils by teachers. School leaders will see the impact of verbal feedback through pupil output.

Peer and self-assessment

Research suggests that effective feedback can come from peers as well as adults. Accepting work that pupils have not checked sufficiently and then providing extensive feedback detracts from pupils' responsibility for their own learning, particularly in editing and drafting skills. Pupils should be taught and encouraged to check their own work by understanding the success criteria, presented in an age appropriate way, so that they complete work to the highest standard. Self-assessment helps to increase pupils' confidence too, as they quickly see that they are getting questions right and move on to a greater level of challenge, or they have a chance to address difficulties immediately and make progress in every lesson. This introduces an ethos of addressing mistakes quickly, and ensuring children don't waste entire lessons misunderstanding a topic.

Children will be given the opportunity to regularly assess their own, and their peers work, and empower them to take responsibility for their own learning. Self and peer assessment takes precedence over extensive teacher comments.