

Policy on Marking and Feedback

1 Introduction

- 1.1 At Otley and Witnesham Primary Schools, we will take a professional approach to the tasks of marking work and giving feedback on it. There will naturally be some differences in the marking symbols and grading systems used by individual teachers, and the age of the children will have to be taken into account. However, all children are entitled to regular and comprehensive feedback on their learning. Therefore, all teachers will mark work and give feedback as an essential part of the assessment process.

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 We mark children's work and offer feedback in order to:
- show that we value the children's work, and encourage them to value it too;
 - boost the pupils' self-esteem, and raise aspirations, through use of praise and encouragement. The main objective of marking and feedback is not to find fault, but to help children learn. If children's work is well matched to their abilities, then errors that need to be corrected will not be so numerous as to affect their self-esteem;
 - give the children a clear general picture of how far they have come in their learning, and how they can improve their work in the future;
 - offer the children specific information on the extent to which they have met the lesson objective, and/or the individual targets set for them;
 - promote self-assessment, whereby the children recognise their difficulties, and are encouraged to accept guidance from others;
 - share expectations;
 - gauge the children's understanding, and identify any misconceptions;
 - provide a basis both for summative and for formative assessment;
 - provide the ongoing assessment that should inform our future lesson-planning.

3 Principles of marking and feedback

- 3.1 We believe that the following principles should underpin all marking and feedback:
- The process of marking and offering feedback should be a positive one, with pride of place given to recognition of the efforts made by the child.
 - Marking and feedback is the dialogue that takes place between teacher and pupil, ideally while the task is still being completed.
 - Marking should always relate to the task objective and, increasingly, the child's own personal learning targets, regardless of the subject being marked.
 - The child must be able to read and respond to the comments made, and be given time to do so. Where the child is not able to read and respond in the usual way, other arrangements for communication must be made.
 - Comments should be appropriate to the age and ability of the child, and may vary across year groups and key stages.
 - Comments will focus on only one or two key areas for improvement at any one time.
 - Teachers should aim to promote children's self-assessment by linking marking and feedback into a wider process of engaging the child in his or her own learning. This includes sharing the learning objectives and the key expectations for the task at a time that is appropriate.
 - Whenever possible, marking and feedback should involve the child directly. The younger the child, the more important it is that the feedback is oral and immediate.
 - The marking system should be constructive and formative. A useful formula is this: 'praise, advice on improvement, more praise'.

- For one-to-one feedback (teacher to pupil) to be effective, sufficient mutual trust must be established.
- Feedback may also be given by a teaching assistant, or through peer review.
- Group feedback is provided through plenaries too, and in group sessions.
- Feedback will help a child to identify their key priorities for improvement and the progress they are making towards personal targets.
- Teachers will note errors that are made by many children and use them to inform future planning.
- Marking will always be carried out promptly, and will normally be completed before the next lesson in that subject (although this may not always be possible for longer pieces of work).

4 Implementing the marking policy

- 4.1 The schools have explicit rules that apply to all pieces of work (e.g. beginning to underline the date and title in KS2).
- 4.2 In addition to these general rules, there are specific rules for specific types of work, e.g. short date in numeracy. These rules have been shared with pupils.
- 4.3 The extent of the teacher's response to a piece of work is determined not by the number of errors found in it, but by the teacher's professional judgement. Consideration is given to what a particular child is capable of, what the next learning stages involve, and what should now have priority. Children should not receive the impression that things are right when they are not; on the other hand, they should not be discouraged from being adventurous for fear of having faults emphasised.
- 4.4 In order to encourage a positive response, any negative comments must always be followed up by a constructive statement on how to improve.
- 4.5 Written comments are more valuable than marks or grades. We do not normally give marks or grades on pieces of written work but Y2 upwards pupils can be informed if they are working at a specific standard.
- 4.6 Ticks are normal where work is correct, and circles or a dot where errors have been made. Other symbols may be used once their meaning has been explained, e.g. an Sp through a spelling mistake.
- 4.7 Wherever possible, teachers should establish direct links between oral or written praise and the class or school rewards systems. At Witnesham the children are in houses and the reward of a housepoint is shown as hp.
- 4.8 Where pupils interact in the marking process or in peer or self-assessment, they will be all the more engaged and receptive to correction.
- 4.9 When appropriate, children may mark their own or another child's work, but the teacher must always review this marking. Marking their own work is usually preferable, because when the teacher makes a point, the children need to be able to relate it to their own efforts. Children are encouraged to mark mistakes by circling them.
- 4.10 Children should be encouraged to assess their work ahead of final marking, using prompts.
- 4.11 In addition, the children could indicate where they think a particular target has been achieved. Their learning partners might also check on their behalf, before the work is handed in, that a particular target has been met e.g. through smiley faces.
- 4.13 Teachers will comment on spelling and grammar across the curriculum:
 - if it is a spelling that that particular pupil should know;
 - if it is something related to the child's target.

5 Monitoring and review

- 5.1 We are aware of the need to monitor and update the school's marking and feedback policy on a regular basis, so that we can take account of improvements made in our practice. We will therefore review this policy in two years, or earlier if necessary.

Signed:

Date: September 2015

A VISUAL DISPLAY OF MARKING SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE IN EACH CLASSROOM.