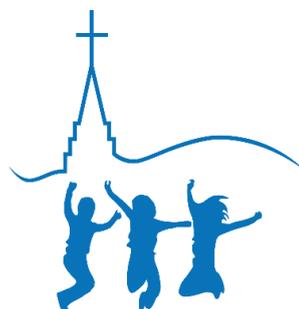


ST MICHAEL'S CE (VA) JUNIOR SCHOOL

Effective Feedback and Marking Policy

By God's love, we all flourish together.

At St Michael's, by God's love and through our Christian values of Love, Faith, Respect and Courage, we celebrate uniqueness and nurture curiosity, enabling each child to flourish on their own rich learning journey; whilst contributing to the wider community.



St. Michael's CE (VA) Junior School

Reviewed & ratified by Pupil & Curriculum Committee:	01/12/21
To be reviewed:	2023

Embedding the principles of effective marking

It is essential that pupils work as hard as their teachers. For this to happen, teachers need to ensure their pupils know the right answers to these two questions:

What am I doing well in this subject? What do I need to do to improve my work in this subject? If pupils can answer these questions accurately, in subject specific detail, they are receiving effective feedback

We recommend that all marking should be **meaningful, manageable and motivating**.

Marking should serve a single purpose – to advance pupil progress and outcomes.

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.*

The primary purpose of marking written work is to assess the depth of learning that has taken place and to identify misconceptions to inform future teaching. It is acknowledged that marking is most effective and has the most impact when it has taken place in partnership with the child; therefore, teachers will endeavour to provide immediate feedback. The audience for the marking is the children.

Principles

Marking and feedback should:

- ✓ Provide **meaningful** feedback to the child;
- ✓ Highlight areas for development/improvement/correction;
- ✓ Inform future planning of lessons;
- ✓ Enable the teacher to record progress related to learning objectives;
- ✓ Be **manageable** for both the child and the teacher. Distance marking is not an expectation.
- ✓ Be relevant

Verbal feedback will be given to the children during the lesson where possible. Verbal feedback will be used to identify misconceptions and/or to move learning on. Verbal feedback may be individual, group based, or to the whole class. The adult delivering the verbal feedback may annotate the child's book to indicate what has been discussed, if it is felt that it would be helpful for the child to refer back to it. The marking code (vf) will be written in the margin. If the vf is given by an adult, other than the teacher, it is initialled.

Light touch marking will refer to the learning objective by ticking, in green against the WALT. Light touch marking may occur in the presence of the child or may be through distance marking, where the child is not present.

Self-marking (SM)

Where appropriate, children will mark their own work in order to assess their own learning. Children are encouraged to self-mark their learning with a brief comment or by using the metacognition colours to indicate their understanding (blue – fully understood objective, green – understood objective, yellow – beginning to understand objective but need more practise, red – did not understand objective). Where self-marking has taken place, it is not expected that an adult will acknowledge the child's work.

Peer-marking (PM)

Children will be given regular opportunities to mark, assess and review the work of a partner. Feedback may be verbal or written. Dialogue about children's learning is an important skill that we seek to develop throughout the school. Where relevant, the peer-markers should initial any comments made. Where peer marking has taken place, it is not expected that an adult will acknowledge the child's work. Pupils will need to be well trained to peer mark effectively – this will need to be modelled initially by the teacher.

English marking

For writing tasks, **deeper marking** may occur during the writing process and will provide more detailed feedback for assessment purposes; deep marking could occur via written or verbal feedback. It could include marking of skills and concepts taught elsewhere, for example high frequency words, spellings, punctuation, handwriting, layout, etc. Children will be given time to read, discuss and respond to the feedback in order that the feedback provided has maximum impact on learning.

Maths marking

Whenever possible, teachers and LSAs will provide immediate verbal (and sometimes written, if it supports learning) feedback to children during maths lessons. Children will self-mark their learning against the WALT using the metacognition colours and strategies at least at the end of each lesson. When completing distance marking, teachers will not provide any written comments or next steps in maths books or next steps: these should be given as verbal feedback (vf in the margin).

Foundation subject marking

Whenever possible, children will self-mark their learning in foundation subjects by ticking the WALT, using metacognition colours or by writing a short reflection to indicate whether they think they have met the objective or not.

When marking work in science or one of the foundation subjects, teachers must concentrate on the correction of vocabulary specific to that subject and may disregard any more general spelling errors. Marking may also address misconceptions; this could be through verbal feedback (vf). There is no expectation that next steps will be given.

In all instances, teachers should feel empowered to identify and adjust techniques and approaches depending on which marking method will have the most effective impact on learning and progress for each piece of work set. However, the marking code is to be used consistently by all members of staff.

Metacognition colours – Reflect Ed – used in maths

(blue – fully understood objective, green – understood objective, yellow – beginning to understand objective but need more practise, red – did not understand objective).

Marking Guidelines

- We have agreed that teachers will mark work with green and orange pens. Green pen will be used to recognise good learning behaviours, individual progress or achievement of the success criteria. Orange pen will be used to identify errors that the child/children can respond to.
- Children will edit their work and respond to marking comments using a blue pen.
- Where lessons have been taught by an HLTA, wherever possible, the work will be peer marked (PM).
- LSAs should record the level of support given to the child by annotating the child's work.
- Time will be allocated for children to respond to feedback when deemed appropriate by the teacher.
- Verbal feedback does not need to be recorded in written form.

Marking Expectations

The marking code is to be displayed in every classroom for children to access. If necessary, it can be stuck in the front of the child's book.

1. Writing expectations are to be visible in the classroom for children to refer to
2. If spellings are corrected, ensure the new spelling is correct
3. A ruler must be used accurately and neatly to underline all dates and the WALT.
4. A ruler is to be used consistently to underline or for crossings out
5. Presentation needs to be a high expectation of all staff, it is important for the children to take pride in their work.
6. Handwriting – a linkpen, legible cursive 4 script
7. Dates must be spelt corrected or picked up by the teacher immediately
8. Editing is important to do before a child hands their work in. Children are encouraged to use word mats, dictionaries, working walls etc...to edit their work themselves initially.
9. Marking across all disciplines should be consistent
10. Editing must be in blue pen
11. Ensure that the WALT is recorded

Marking Code: where appropriate, teachers may use circling or underlining instead to identify errors

✓	Correct
✓✓	When a particular element is exceptional or where a WALT has been met
•	Maths - incorrect / think again / check independently
sp	Incorrect spelling
//	New paragraph needed
C	Capital letter
T	Check the tense
P	Check the punctuation
VF	Verbal feedback given
GW	Guided work (following by initials of adult providing support)
I	Independent work
PM	Peer-marking

Eliminating unnecessary workload around marking
Report of the Independent Teacher Workload Review Group

Teachers should be clear about what they are trying to achieve and the best way of achieving it. Crucially, the most important person in deciding what is appropriate is the teacher. Oral feedback, working with pupils in class, reading their work – all help teachers understand what pupils can do and understand. Every teacher will know whether they are getting useful information from their marking and whether pupils are progressing.

Consistency across a department or a school is still important, but this can come from consistent high standards, rather than unvarying practice. Shared expectations of marking will help everybody to be clear about what is required of them, but each subject and phase should be able to determine the 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. Policies should be judged against the actual hours spent on marking, and adjustments to requirements made where necessary.

The time taken to mark does not always correlate with successful pupil outcomes and leads to wasted teacher time. Examples of disproportionate marking practice include: extensive comments which children in an early years' class are unable to read, or a written dialogue instead of a conversation. If teachers are spending more time on marking than the children are on a piece of work then the proportion is wrong and should be changed.

Senior leaders and governors are responsible for the effective deployment of all resources in the school. They should take into account the hours teachers spend on marking and have regard to the work-life balance of their staff.

The key is for schools to challenge and review their marking practice, making sure they are considering the impact on teacher workload when setting expectations. Teachers will be better able to exercise their professional judgement about the type of work to be set, including more extensive written tasks, if the marking load is manageable and when released from the burden of deep marking every piece of work.

Feedback can take the form of spoken or written marking, peer marking and self-assessment. If the hours spent do not have the commensurate impact on pupil progress: **stop it.**

In the Workload Challenge responses, a key driver of particular marking practices was seen to be Ofsted. In response, in the spring of 2015, Ofsted clearly set out that it does not expect to see any specific frequency, type or volume of marking – it is only interested in the overall effectiveness of marking policies on outcomes for pupils. This clarification is now contained within the School Inspection Handbook:

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.

It is important that schools take notice of the Ofsted clarification document and that Ofsted continues to train its inspectors so that every school inspection reflects these important clarifications. We are heartened to note that Ofsted is monitoring report against the clarification information and taking action where necessary, including asking for reports to be rewritten.

An important element of marking is to acknowledge the work a pupil has done, to value their efforts and achievement, and to celebrate progress. But there are many ways to do this without extensive marking. And too much feedback can take away responsibility from the pupil, detract from the challenge of a piece of work, and reduce long term retention and resilience-building.

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.

Marking should be part of an assessment policy alongside other practices that inform teachers, create positive pupil outcomes and drive future planning

'marking practice that does not have the desired impact on pupil outcomes is a time-wasting burden for teachers that has to stop.'

Effective marking is an essential part of the education process. At its heart, it is an interaction between teacher and pupil: a way of acknowledging pupils' work, checking the outcomes and making decisions about what teachers and pupils need to do next, with the primary aim of driving pupil progress. This can often be achieved without extensive written dialogue or comments.

In particular, we are concerned that it has become common practice for teachers to provide extensive written comments on every piece of work when there is very little evidence that this improves pupil outcomes in the long term.

There is no 'one-size-fits-all' approach. A balance needs to be struck between a core and consistent approach and trusting teachers to focus on what is best for their pupils and circumstances.

Our remit was to pay particular attention to 'deep marking'. From a review of the educational literature, there appears to be no broadly agreed definition for this term or any theoretical underpinning of its educational worth. As a working definition we adopted the following:
'Deep marking is a generic term used to describe a process whereby teachers provide written feedback to pupils offering guidance with a view to improving or enhancing the future performance of pupils. Pupils are then expected to respond in writing to the guidance which in turn is verified by the teacher.'

No Government or Ofsted guidance or policy has set deep marking as a requirement. The Teachers' Standards state that teachers should 'give pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback'. This is not a requirement for pupils to provide a written response to feedback: it could simply be that pupils should act on the feedback in subsequent work.

Deep marking also seems to have been supported by an assumption that marking provides a more thorough means of giving feedback and demonstrates a stronger professional ethic, as well as improving pupil outcomes. Deep marking often acts as a proxy for 'good' teaching as it is something concrete and tangible which lends itself as 'evidence'. 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.

Barrier: Some pupils (especially the more able) were saying that they just wanted to know how to improve. They knew they were working hard and didn't need the written affirmation. They said they didn't even read it.

Solution: Amp up the verbal praise even more (already a big positive in our classrooms) and use writing to record what they need to do to improve (only in situations where pupils can't be guided to work it out for themselves of course).

Teachers [should] present subject matter clearly, promoting appropriate discussion about the subject matter they are teaching. They check learners' understanding systematically, identify misconceptions accurately and provide clear, direct feedback. (Ofsted)