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TIME

Marking & Assessment Policy

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1. Introduction

This marking policy is designed to support learning by providing learners with meaningful feedback on their work, encourage self-assessment, guide teachers in their instructional methods, and cater specifically to the social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs of learners. The policy aims to reinforce the connection between teaching and learning by ensuring consistency in feedback across all subjects and year levels.

This policy applies to all teaching staff including teachers, teaching assistants, and other instructional personnel at our school. It covers marking practices for all types of learner work including classwork, homework, projects, and assessments.

Effective marking provides critical feedback to learners, enabling them to understand their progress and areas in need of improvement. Consistent and constructive marking practices enhance learner engagement and motivation, supported by both Ofsted guidance and DfE recommendations. This policy aligns with our commitment to uphold high standards of education and learner achievement, including comprehensive support for learners' SEMH.

2. The Aims of Marking

- To enhance learning- Marking should serve as a dialogic tool, offering clear, specific, and relevant feedback that directly relates to the learning objectives and is sensitive to learners' SEMH needs. This practice supports the learners' ability to reflect on their work and to take ownership of their learning process.
- Motivation and promote self-esteem-We aim to use marking to positively affect learner motivation, self-esteem, and emotional well-being. Recognizing effort and achievement, even in small steps, boosts confidence, supports emotional resilience, and encourages learners to engage more positively with their learning.
- Assessing and monitoring- Regular marking helps teachers to monitor the effectiveness of their teaching strategies, provides valuable information for adjusting instruction to meet learner needs including their SEMH needs, and aids in identifying areas where additional support may be necessary.
- To ensure learners have an accurate understanding of their next steps including individual targets and EHCP targets
- Marking is aimed at empowering learners and build on their growth mindset and importantly their resilience by encouraging learners that mistakes are required in order to grow and develop, this is my education refrain from placing marks on the front of papers in order to break the stigma that results are the highest priority instead we focus on growth.

3. Principles of Marking

Clarity and consistency - All staff should adhere to a common marking scheme that is understood by learners and parents. This scheme will be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure clarity and relevance not only to the latest curriculum objectives but also to accommodate learners' SEMH considerations.

Constructive feedback - Feedback should be actionable and empowering, guiding learners on how to improve and consolidate their skills. Comments should be specific rather than generic, focusing on particular aspects of the work while considering the emotional impact such feedback may have.

Timeliness - Feedback should be provided promptly while the work is still fresh in learners' minds. This immediacy helps to reinforce learning and allows timely corrections of misunderstandings, which

supports emotional stability and wellbeing. Marking should be no more than 1 week after the lesson has taken place.

Accessible - All marking must be made accessible to learners. If learners have low literacy levels then staff may need to read their marking to learners or additionally give verbal feedback.

Our marking and feedback approach recognises that many of our learners have experienced trauma, disrupted learning, and barriers related to emotional regulation, self-esteem, and confidence.

This policy ensures that assessment:

- builds confidence, not anxiety
- focuses on strengths before corrections
- is predictable and safe
- supports progress without triggering shame or withdrawal
- helps students recognise what they have achieved and what their next steps are

The purpose of marking is to support learning, promote emotional safety, and provide clarity, not to criticise or overwhelm.

4. Trauma-informed principles behind our marking

Safety and Predictability

- Marking follows a consistent structure and colour-coding system
- Students are explicitly taught what each marking symbol means
- No sudden negative comments or red-pen marking

Connection Before Correction

- Positive recognition always comes first
- Corrections are framed as opportunities, not failures

Strength-Based Approach

- Feedback always highlights what went well before giving "even better if"
- Guidance

Emotional Awareness

- Staff consider the student's readiness before giving feedback
- Students may receive verbal, written or individualised feedback depending on need

Choice and Control

- Students can opt for immediate feedback or a calm-moment discussion later
- Students are invited to respond to feedback in a way that suits them (verbal, written, discussion)

Focus on Growth

- Progress is measured from individual starting points
- Small steps of improvement are explicitly acknowledged

5. Marking codes and symbols

Green Highlight – "This links to the Learning Objective"

Used to show:

- the student has met or partially met the LO
- work that directly answers the task
- high-quality vocabulary or a strong point

Purpose: To build confidence and reinforce success

Yellow Highlight – “This could be strengthened or improved”

Used to show:

- > something needs further detail
- > a point could be made clearer
- > an instruction was partly followed

Purpose: Encourages improvement without shaming or criticism.

6. Symbols and Marking Indicators

Symbols and marking to be written in green pen

~~~~ Wiggly Line Under a Word

Indicates spelling needs checking

Students are encouraged to:

- > rewrite the word underneath
- > use a word bank or dictionary
- > ask for support if needed

Purpose: Identifies errors gently without crossing out or red-pen correction.

^ Caret Symbol

Indicates a missing word or missing punctuation

// Double Slash

Indicates a new paragraph may be needed here

? Question Mark in Margin

Signals that meaning is unclear or the reader needs clarification.

Staff phrase this positively, e.g., “Can you explain this part further?”

✓ Tick

Used sparingly to reinforce strengths and correct responses

## **7. Improvement Feedback Structure (Used by All Staff)**

***Every marked piece of work follows the Positive → Progress → Purpose model:***

1. Positive (Strength)

A clear, specific comment naming what the student did well.

E.g., “You’ve used strong descriptive vocabulary here.”

2. Progress Step (Next Step)

A single, manageable improvement.

E.g., “Add one more example to support your point.”

3. Purpose Link (Learning Objective)

Connect the feedback back to the LO.

E.g., “This will help you explain your viewpoint more clearly.”

This structure keeps feedback predictable, safe, and actionable.

### **Positive feedback structure (Used By All Staff)**

If there are no improvements required, it is still important to follow a trauma-based structure to provide positive feedback.

1. Praise but do not overpraise
2. Keep the feedback brief
3. Highlight a specific strength (linking to learning objective)
4. Encourage students to move their learning forward  
Example comment: "Well done \_\_\_\_! I can clearly see that you have understood/mastered this topic. We will be moving onto \_\_\_\_\_. Is there anything you already know about this?"

### **Trauma-Informed Written Comments**

All comments must be:

- non-judgemental
- supportive and encouraging
- written in plain, accessible language
- phrased as "next steps", not failures

Examples:

- ✓ "This is a great start..."
- ✓ "I can see you worked hard on this."
- ✓ "Next time, try adding..."
- ✓ "You're developing this skill well; let's build on it."

Avoid:

- ✗ "This is wrong."
- ✗ "You didn't do this properly."
- ✗ "You should already know this."

### **Teachers**

- Teachers are responsible for implementing the marking policy through consistent, regular, and meaningful marking of learner work
- To ensure that all classwork and homework is marked regularly according to the school's marking policy
- To ensure that any unfinished learner work is subsequently completed
- To keep a record of marks and levels achieved in accordance with the agreed procedures within their subject areas
- To explain the marking and assessment grading system to the learners
- To ensure that assessment information informs further curriculum planning
- To give learners time to engage with and access marking and feedback
- To allow discussion regarding feedback
- To ensure communication is in a form which is comprehensible and clearly able to be understood by the individual learner
- To encourage learners to write comments on their work to support learning

### **Learners**

- Learners should respond to feedback from teachers by making improvements or asking for further clarification when necessary

**Leadership**

- The leadership team is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the marking policy, providing necessary resources and support and monitoring its effectiveness through regular reviews.

**8. Monitoring**

The headteacher will monitor and review the implementation of this policy.  
This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the Headteacher.

### **Appendix: Learning Objective**

The following lesson objective sheet can be found below, the objective sheet should be completed before the lesson begins, the first 2 objectives relate to the scheme of work and the last objective relates to the learner, this should be linked to their EHCP target outcome set by the school SENDco every half term, all outcomes should be communicated to the learner before the start of each session.

Once the lesson is complete the learner should lead the marking process by ticking if they believe they have achieved their outcomes or believe they are working towards this outcome (in purple pen) this helps to promote self-esteem and reflective thinking. Learners will then rate their lesson from 1-4 based on the learner feedback table (which can also be found below) this will include, Understanding, independence and my EHCP target.

The class teacher will mark second (In green pen) and provide feedback. The teacher will then highlight what has gone well during the lesson and then the next steps based on SMART targets. Ensuring opportunities are made for learners to discuss teacher feedback.

Written comments should be legible, comprehensible and unambiguous for the learners concerned, with due regard to a learner's reading ability. Written comments should be in green ink.

Learner's work will then be marked throughout their workbooks or portfolio, feedback should be given throughout the marking process and refrain from tick base marking, marking should be dated and signed by the class teacher providing space for the learner to respond.

## Learning objectives

Appendix A

Planning, Marking and Feedback document.



**DATE**

**TITLE**

| Learning Objective     | You have <b>achieved</b> your Learning Objective. | You are <b>working towards</b> your Learning Objective. |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.                     |                                                   |                                                         |
| 2.                     |                                                   |                                                         |
| Links to ECHP outcomes |                                                   |                                                         |

|                                                      |               |              |                |
|------------------------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|
| What went well:                                      |               |              |                |
| Next Steps:                                          |               |              |                |
| Date marked:                                         |               |              |                |
| Learner response using the rubric table with learner | Understanding | Independence | My EHCP Target |
|                                                      |               |              |                |
| Learner Comment                                      |               |              |                |

**My Feedback Table**

|          | <b>Understanding</b>                     | <b>Independence</b>                    | <b>My EHCP</b>                           |
|----------|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <b>4</b> | I fully understood this lesson           | I completed independently              | I need no further support with my target |
| <b>3</b> | I understood the majority of this lesson | I had minimal support with this lesson | I need minimal support with my target    |
| <b>2</b> | I understood parts of this lesson        | I had some support with this lesson    | I need some support with my target       |
| <b>1</b> | I did not understand this lesson         | I had lots of support with this lesson | I need lots of support with my target    |