



# Marking Policy

Date: May 2026

Due for Review: May 2028

We define marking as the process whereby teachers look at pupils' work, (or observe them working) and analyse what they see for evidence of learning, errors or misconceptions, and then respond to the work in some way, either in writing, speech or action.

We believe that marking is part of the planning, teaching, learning and assessment cycle. Through careful marking, we are able to assess what children have learnt, how they have learnt and what their strengths and areas for development are.

Research (Black et al 2003) shows that the most effective and beneficial forms of marking and assessment are ones which support learning and are built in to lesson design. This policy was designed with this research in mind. **We recognise that talking to children about their learning is the most powerful form of feedback, particularly when it happens within the lesson, and so will always try to offer verbal feedback to learning as part of our teaching in every lesson.** Where children haven't been given verbal feedback, succinct written feedback will be given instead if needed.

We believe that the most important activity for teachers is the teaching itself, supported by the design and preparation of lessons. Marking should be efficient so that it doesn't steal time that could be better spent on lesson design and preparation.

## Purpose

We believe that the purposes of marking are:

- to inform planning
- to provide information for assessment
- to encourage, motivate, support and promote positive attitudes
- to provide constructive feedback
- to recognise achievement, presentation and effort
- to show pupils that we value their work
- to promote higher standards
- to correct errors and clarify misunderstandings
- to assist learning
- to allow pupils to reflect on their performance and to set new targets together with the teacher.

## Key Principles

Marking should:

- be constructive
- be related to needs, attainment and ability
- be related to specific learning objectives or targets which the pupil should know in advance
- where possible, be accompanied by verbal comments
- follow consistent practice throughout the school
- ensure that pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to improve to make further progress
- provide pupils with opportunities to assess their own work and that of others

## When to mark

Marking should be done during, or as soon as possible after, the completion of the task and always before the next teaching session of that subject.

### **What to mark**

Teachers will apply their judgement when choosing the detail and focus of the marking, depending on the learning objective, their knowledge of the child and the child's personal learning targets.

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

For slips, the teacher may indicate where this has happened and, depending on the child and the context of the learning, encourage pupils to correct the error.

If errors demonstrate a lack of understanding, the teacher will take an alternative course of action: For instance, with a small group of pupils the teacher may arrange same day intervention (known in school as Point of Need) while, for a larger number of pupils, the errors will be addressed in the next lesson.

### **How to mark**

Although most marking is completed within the lesson, with the majority of this being verbal, instant feedback, where marking takes place after the task has been completed, the teacher will use our marking codes (see Appendix 1) to record their thoughts. (NB The exception to this is Big Write writing assessments where teachers record directly on marking grids and the work in books is not marked).

Corrections, if given, should support the child's learning and it should be remembered that too many can overwhelm and demoralise the pupil.

### **Pupil marking**

**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.**

- Children may, where appropriate, self-mark work, or mark another child's work. The teacher will review this marking. We also teach our children to evaluate their own learning at the end of a lesson, and this is recorded by the use of ticks against the Learning Question.
- From time to time we will also encourage children to write a reflective comment about their own learning or that of a peer.
- Where children do respond to marking, this must be clear. These responses are often completed in BLUE pen or a different coloured pencil. Sometimes a teacher will draw a line to show the pupil where they should 'have another go'.
- Homework can often be marked by the children themselves. In this way the class can discuss and explain the answers.
- Erasers are used with caution. When drafting, errors are left and corrections are made around them. This enables children and teachers to see where mistakes or misconceptions have been made and how they have been addressed and rectified. For best work and final pieces, erasers may be used.

### **Teaching Assistants**

TAs should only mark work for groups of children they have taught.

### **Supply Teachers**

We expect supply teachers to mark work using a comment in any ink and sign as 'ST'.

### **Pupil Age Specific Marking**

Clearly written feedback becomes more accessible to children as their ability to read improves and they mature in attitude to be able to reflect on learning and make corrections independently. We therefore use an age appropriate response when marking and responding to pupils' work.

### **Marking in the Early Years**

The majority of work in the Early Years is assessed using close observations of the children working. Verbal feedback is the most appropriate form of marking and is undertaken by all adults working with children in the Early Years. Adults will use whatever writing tool they have to hand to record, and this may be of any colour.

Where children have produced a written response to learning, staff will annotate this work to show the context in which it was completed.

The codes recorded on pupils' work, photos and observations are as follows:

**I Completed entirely independently by the child**

**S The child was supported by an adult to complete the task**

**VF The child was given verbal feedback about their learning**

**CL The work reflects the attitude that the child approached the learning with (see Early Years 'Characteristics of Learning').**

## **Subject Specific Marking**

### **Reading**

Across both schools, Reading Records are seen by the teaching team daily and initialled, unless a parent comment requires a more detailed response by the teacher.

### **Key Stage 1**

Every child receives a comment from their class teacher each week which is a detailed response to their focused Guided Reading session. This comment supports our assessment procedures and forms the bulk of the evidence we use for on-going assessment, therefore marking in Guided Reading Work books is kept to a minimum (these books are usually marked using our coding system). The results of half-termly benchmarking assessment levels are recorded in the reading record, and shared with parents.

### **Key Stage 2**

If a teacher reads with a child individually or with a focus group, the class teacher will gather verbal evidence of answers to questions to assess a child's ability to retrieve information, infer meaning from a text and discuss the use of language features in the text. Where a verbal answer matches criteria on our assessment grids, this is recorded for every successful answer. Feedback to children is usually verbal.

At Key Stage 2 we also use whole class teaching to practice reading skills together, and ask children to respond to reading independently. When this happens, teachers will use our tiered tick system to mark work.

The results of the end of term assessments, together with next steps targets for learning, are shared twice a year as part of our annual report to keep parents informed and support the home-school learning partnership.

### **Writing**

**Generally, feedback is given verbally within lessons (especially when a teacher is working with a small group within the lesson). However, we also commonly use our 3 tick response against the title or learning question, and will also use our marking codes to give context to the learning, or ask pupils to correct errors. Teachers will correct presentation, punctuation and spelling in writing across all subjects.**

**When children are asked to proof read or edit their writing, we may use our Writing Checklists for each year group to support this.**

Writing in Literacy Books reflects the learning in lessons and is where work that has been improved and edited by children (and their peers) can be found. Sometimes a teacher will deep mark Literacy Books to give children guidance and support to help them improve during a follow up, editing lesson. Generally, feedback is given verbally within lessons, but teachers may also use the tiered tick method to give children feedback.

In Key Stage 2, it is also common for the teacher to ask children to self-assess their achievement using the tiered tick method next to the title or learning question.

The Big Write is marked by the teacher and assessed using the writing grids in books every time. Whilst marking, teachers may use ticks in the margin, or next to a specific word/phrase used by a pupil as an

aide-memoire to evidence the pupil achieving an assessment criteria, similarly they may circle an error for the same reason.

In Year 1, teachers will highlight children's attempts to use any words on their Year Group Word List. From Year 2 onwards children are encouraged to identify and highlight their own attempts at using these words. (NB this simply denotes a child's attempt at using a word, it does not indicate that it is spelled correctly).

In Year 6 children are also made aware of the End of key Stage 2 National Expectations for Writing and are guided to cross reference their work against these.

Detailed comments and written feedback are not given to the children in response to Big Write. It will be at least a week before the children see their Big Write books again, and we believe that this is too long for children to wait for feedback – Big Write is purely a record of what the children are able to write independently and the outcomes are tracked through our assessment grids. This builds a portfolio of each child's writing attainment and is a good source of evidence to track progress.

### **Spelling Tests**

In Key Stage 1, a member of staff will mark spelling tests. The results, along with a list of any incorrect words, are written in the Reading Record every Friday and sent home.

In Years 3, 4 and 5 children either self or peer mark spellings immediately after the spelling test on Friday. Teachers then 'double check' the marking over the weekend and record results against the weekly list in the Reading Record using a ✓ against correct words and a . against incorrect words. These are then sent home on a Monday (with the new spelling words). Children are encouraged to practise any incorrect words as a morning challenge on a Monday.

In Year 6 the same process applies, but results are recorded in Homework Books.

Results can only be shared with parents if the Reading Record or Homework Book is in school on the day results are recorded.

### **Mathematics**

Wherever possible, feedback is given verbally throughout the lesson, and the big focus on marking is the identifying of misconceptions. Children's work is to be marked daily using ticks to indicate correct answers and dots to show errors. Where errors have arisen, these must be addressed either within the lesson, at the end of the lesson or at the start of the next lesson (we call this Point of Need intervention).

In line with our whole school Mastery Approach, teachers incorporate a mixture of conceptual and procedural variation, alongside intelligent practice, within each lesson. There are regular opportunities to discuss answers and strategies to support pupils' reasoning skills and check/deepen their understanding. This means that children receive frequent verbal feedback throughout each lesson. When the children are ready for further challenge they are offered the opportunity to attempt a Dong Nao Jing question. This is accessible to every child in the class to respond at their level. Children/Class Teachers will assess against the learning question/objective using the tiered ticks system.

### **Other Subjects (RE/Science/Computing/Humanities/Arts/PSHE and PE):**

**We commonly use our 3 tick response against the title or learning question. However, teachers will correct presentation, punctuation and spelling in writing across all subjects if necessary or appropriate.**

Marking Codes are used in all subjects (Appendix 1).

### **Success Criteria:**

We know our policy is working if:

- there is evidence that work is being marked regularly and consistently
- marking informs future planning and supports the assessment system
- pupils acknowledge targets or 'next steps' and work towards achieving them

In conclusion in applying these principles, we will maintain a consistency throughout school that will support all children in their learning by focusing explicitly on what children 'can do' and identifying clearly 'next steps' for their continued progress and improvement.

**Monitoring**

We will ensure that these guidelines are being used consistently throughout the school by carrying out subject specific Book Scrutiny and termly, whole staff Book Look. Feedback on the implementation of the policy will be given during staff meetings or with individual members of staff. The Local Committee will monitor the implementation of the policy.

**References**

We would like to thank the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics (NCETM) and Shareen Mayers for their guidance in forming this policy.

Black, P., Harrison, C., & Lee, C. (2003) Assessment for learning: *Putting it into practice*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).

Black, P., William, D., (1998). Inside the Black Box: Raising standards through classroom assessment. Kings College, London

## Appendix 1: Marking Codes

Early Years Staff use any colour to mark. From Year 1 onwards marking is completed using a pink pen.

MARKING CODES	
✓    ✓✓    ✓✓✓	Next to the title – indicates the extent to which the child has achieved the learning objective/question.
TA	Child has worked with a Teaching Assistant to complete task.
VF	Child has received verbal feedback.
I	Child has completed this work <b>entirely independently</b> .
CT	Indicates class teacher worked with child to complete the task.
ST	Indicates this work was completed with a supply teacher.
●	Incorrect answer
↑	Next steps
○	Indicates a punctuation or spelling error.
PN	Point of Need Intervention
^	Some information is missing.

In addition, Junior Teachers may award house points to a maximum of 5 for a single piece of work.

CHILDREN'S SELF-EVALUATION	
✓    ✓✓    ✓✓✓	Next to the title or Learning Objective/Question – indicates the extent to which the child feels they have achieved.
<p>To support deep marking/end of topic learning children in Key Stage 2 will sometimes be asked to complete a self-assessment/peer assessment marking ladder. The judgements will be checked by the teacher, who will then use the ladder to mark in the same way.</p> <p>From time to time we will also encourage children to write a reflective comment about their own learning or that of a peer.</p>	