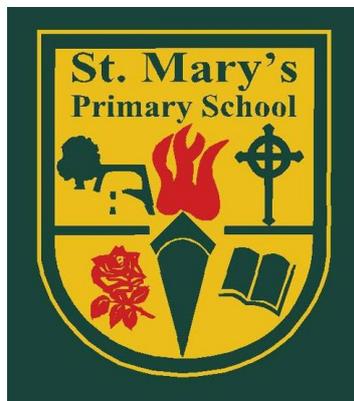




# Marking for Improvement and Feedback Policy



*"Assessment which is explicitly designed to promote learning is the simple, most powerful tool we have for both raising standards and empowering lifelong learners."*  
(Beyond the Black Box, Assessment Reform Group, 1999)

It is important for teachers to have a shared understanding of, and a consistent approach to, the provision of **feedback**. The nature and quality of feedback is crucial to improving pupils' learning. Effective feedback can significantly raise pupils' self-esteem and their performance.

The purpose of this policy is to make explicit how teachers mark children's work and provide feedback. All members of staff are expected to be familiar with this policy and to apply it consistently.

It is important to provide constructive and specific feedback to children, focusing on success and areas for improvement. This enables children to become reflective learners whilst being given advice on how to close the gap between their current achievement and the next steps in their learning.

Effective marking aims to help children learn; its aim should not be to find fault, but to guide a child forward in his/her learning. Marking allows the teacher to show that a child's work is valued and that there has been an audience for the work. Children should know that it is acceptable to make mistakes - making mistakes is one of the ways we learn. Mistakes should be corrected where appropriate, but not erased. It is rarely appropriate for children to be made to repeat, or copy out large quantities of work.

At St Mary's Primary School, we believe that marking is about responding appropriately to pupils' work. Some of this is found in books and on presented work, but much of pupils' practical work, and their learning experiences, results in verbal feedback. It is, therefore, important to focus on feedback as a whole, rather than on written annotations and comments only.

Developing an AFL culture in our school, will embrace the notion that everyone can have areas for **improvement**, even the best. With its emphasis on effort rather than ability, supportive feedback builds self-confidence and sends a clear message to pupils that everyone can improve.

#### **What is the *purpose* of Feedback?**

Feedback to pupils should:

- Aid their future learning
- Indicate areas of success in pupils' work
- Indicate areas for future improvement
- Scaffold pupils' efforts towards such improvement
- Help inform parents of their child's progress

#### **Principles that underpin our approach to marking**

Feedback will:

- Be carried out regularly

- Be carried out as soon as possible after the completion of a task/activity
- Be, on balance, a positive expression towards the pupil
- Relate to the learning intention for the activity
- Inform future planning for learning intentions and learning activities
- Be accessible to the pupil

### **Good Practice**

- Provide comment only feedback, where two successes and one improvement are identified and expressed in the feedback for an activity, whether written or verbal. If it is difficult to find two areas to highlight in pink, 'face-to-face' marking is needed as the task was inappropriate or not enough work was generated.
- Pupils will collaborate with the teacher to develop success criteria, which should be used to scaffold the learning activity and to guide feedback
- Pupils will use the success criteria to scaffold their own self-assessment
- Pupils will be given time to read feedback and respond to it

### **Monitoring**

The school's curriculum leaders will review written feedback and monitor samples of books termly, to look at:

- Clarity of comments (language used and legibility)
- Appropriateness of improvement prompts

The **reminder prompt** is simply a reiteration of the learning objective (most suitable for more able children).

The **scaffolded prompt** involves the teacher deciding what she would like the child to write, then finding a way of handing it back to the child (a question, a directive or an unfinished sentence).

The **example prompt** models a choice of possible improvements, but asks if the child has an idea of his or her own. This is extremely successful for all children, especially average or below average children.

- Pupils' responses in the form of improvements made

### **Agreed Procedures**

#### **Oral Feedback**

It is important for all children to have oral feedback when appropriate from the adult working with them. The adult should initially talk to the child about how he/she has met the learning intention and then question the child about a specific part of the work. This may be to aid a child's understanding or to extend the child's learning. The majority of feedback given to foundation stage children will be verbal but when appropriate 'tickled pink and growing green' colours will be used to identify successes and next steps. Foundation stage children can be encouraged to self evaluate by using traffic lights and smiley faces.

### **Summative Marking/Feedback**

This usually consists of ticks, underlining or circles and is associated with closed tasks or questions where the answer is either right or wrong. This can also be marked by the children (depending on age), as a class or in groups.

### **Tickled Pink and Green for Growth**

Teachers where appropriate use pink and green pens when marking to indicate to pupils when the teacher is pleased with a particular aspect of a child's work (tickled pink) and to highlight areas that need attention (green for growth).

### **Formative Marking/Feedback**

Not all pieces of work can be marked in great detail. Teachers need to decide which pieces of work will be given detailed attention.

Feedback may focus first and foremost on the learning intention of the task. The emphasis in marking should be on success and ways to facilitate improvement when measured against the learning intention. Focused comment should help the child in 'closing the gap' between what they have achieved and what they could have achieved.

*Celebrate success* with comments like:

- Well done! I like the way you have .....
- This is a good piece of work because.....
- Good. You have.....
- Excellent. You really know how to .....

### **Secretarial Features**

Spelling, punctuation and grammar should not be marked in every piece of writing. Children cannot effectively focus on too many things in any one piece of work. However, appropriate elements and those which have been taught should be highlighted; for example, if the children have been focusing on verbs in the past tense in a recent lesson and a mistake is made in independent writing, then this should be pointed out to the child.

### **Self Assessment**

By Primary 2 Children should begin to evaluate their own work and demonstrate how well they are learning by using the traffic light symbols at the bottom of a their work.

- Red - I found this tricky, I am learning something new.
- Orange - I think I have done well, it made me think. I am learning.
- Green - I found this work easy. I need more challenging work.

### **Peer Assessment**

#### **Golden rules for children marking with a response partner**

- Both partners should be roughly the same ability, or just one jump ahead or behind, rather than a wide gap

- The pupil needs time to reflect on and check his or her writing before a response partner sees it
- The response partner should begin with a positive comment about the work
- The roles of both parties need to be clearly defined
- The response partner needs time to take in the child's work, so it is best for the author to read the work out first. This also establishes ownership of the piece
- Children need to be trained in the success and improvement process, or whatever is being used, so that they are confident with the steps involved
- Children must both agree the part to be changed
- The author should make the marks on his or her own work, as a result of the paired discussion
- Children need to be reminded that the focus of their task is the learning objective
- The response partner should ask for clarification rather than jump to conclusions
- The improvement suggestions should be verbal and not written down. The only writing necessary would be the identification of successes and the improvement itself
- It would be useful to role-play response partners in front of the class, perhaps showing them the wrong way and the right way over a piece of work
- It could be useful to do this two-thirds of the way through a lesson, so that children can make the improvement and continue writing with a better understanding of quality

### **Our Agreement on Marking Partnerships**

We decided that there were some rules we all needed to keep. When we become marking partners we all agree to.....

- **Respect** our partner's work because they have done their best and so their work should be valued
- **Try to see** how they have tackled the learning objective and only try to improve things that are to do with the learning objective
- **Tell** our partner the good things we see in their work
- **Listen** to our partner's advice because we are trying to help each other do better in our work
- **Look for** a way to help our partner to achieve the learning objective better by giving them a 'closing the gap' activity to do
- Try to make our suggestion as **clear** as possible
- Try to make our suggestions **positive**
- Get our partner to **talk about** what they have tried to achieve in their work
- **Be fair** to our partner. We will not talk about their work behind their backs because we wouldn't like them to do it to us and it wouldn't be fair.

*The purpose of marking and providing feedback is to further the learning of every child.*