

Marking Policy



St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

Reviewed: July 2026

Love, Listen and Learn

Mission Statement

St. Mary's school community follows the teachings of Jesus Christ, working together to develop the whole child, in a spiritual, moral, academic, physical, social and emotional way, within a caring and supportive environment.

Introduction

This policy reflects the school's philosophy and values with regards to providing children with feedback about their learning. The policy is for the use of all teachers and learning support assistants who are involved in providing feedback to our children and is also to inform parents and carers about our assessment for learning practices and how children are involved in their own learning. It also makes clear our stance on the marking of children's work.

Definition of feedback

Feedback is a process in which learners make sense of information about their performance and use it to enhance the quality of their work or learning strategies.

Feedback should empower children to take responsibility for improving their work; it should not take away from this responsibility by adults doing the hard thinking for the pupil. Feedback is part of the school's wider assessment processes which aim to provide an appropriate level of challenge to pupils in lessons, allowing them to make good progress.

Purpose of feedback

Feedback and marking should:

- Focus solely on furthering children's learning and driving pupil progress; it should improve the learner, not just a piece of work
- Be manageable for teachers and accessible to pupils and relate to the learning objective.
- Give recognition and praise for achievement.
- Give clear strategies for improvement which result in better pupil achievement.
- Allow specific time for pupils to read, reflect and respond to feedback and marking – often as early morning work or specific time at the start of a lesson.

Aims of the policy

- To provide a consistent stance on feedback throughout the school, so that pupils have a clear understanding of their teachers' expectations of them, enabling them to identify strengths and information on how to improve their performance.
- To use marking as a tool for ongoing formative assessment, ensuring children are effectively challenged and that progress is evident through a dialogue which supports progression.
- To develop positive attitudes to learning and achievement.
- To inform the teacher of children's progress and needs for future planning.
- To support the balance of teacher workload.

Teacher responsibilities

As stated in the Department for Education Teachers' Standards, teachers have the duty to give pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback.

Senior Leaders and Governors Responsibilities

Senior leaders and governors are responsible for the effective deployment of all resources in school. When assessing and reviewing the marking policy, they should use the three principles: "all marking should be meaningful, manageable and motivating" as set out by the DfE's Workload Review Group.

Workload Considerations

The DfE set up a Marking Policy Review Group to consider effective practice on marking which raises standards for pupils without creating unnecessary workload.

The Review Group founds that marking, particularly providing extensive written feedback, had evolved into an unhelpful burden for teachers when the time it takes is not repaid in positive on pupil's progress.

The Review Group stressed that marking is best regarded as one element of a wider approach to feedback and assessment. Its report made clear that it is inappropriate to regard marking as more important or more effective than other forms of feedback or to consider it in isolation from other ways in which pupil's work can be assessed.

Principles of effective feedback

In their guidance report – 'Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning', the Education Endowment Foundation provides a summary of recommendations for effective feedback. Effective feedback should move learning forward, targeting either the task or the subject. Feedback can be provided in a variety of forms. **Crucially, pupils need to be given opportunities to act on the feedback they have been given.**

1	Lay foundations for effective feedback	Before providing feedback, teachers should provide high quality instruction. This includes setting clear learning objectives and using formative assessment to assess learning gaps. High quality initial instruction will reduce the work that feedback needs to do.
2	Deliver appropriately timed feedback that focuses on moving learning forward throughout the lesson to lessen misconceptions which need to be identified within your marking	Feedback should focus on moving the learning forward. High quality feedback may focus on: • The task (feedback focused on improving a specific piece of work or task) e.g. <i>'Many of you are identifying the bulbs and wires in this circuit. Can you also label the switches and cells?'</i> • The subject (feedback targets the underlying processes in a task, which are used across a subject. The feedback can be applied in other subject tasks) e.g. <i>'Let's look at how you are writing your d's. Can you see that you have started at the top and gone down and done a loop? Remember we start writing a 'd' by doing a letter 'c' shape.'</i> • Self-regulation strategies (feedback is usually provided as prompts and cues and aims to improve the learner's ability to plan, monitor and evaluate their own learning) e.g. <i>'Look at our display of strategies that we've used to solve problems we've tackled in the past. I think one of those could help you solve this problem.'</i> Feedback that focuses on a learner's personal characteristics e.g. 'This is ok but you can do better!' or that offers vague remarks e.g. 'Be clearer' is deemed as ineffective feedback and should be avoided.
3	Plan for how pupils will receive and use feedback	Careful thought should be given to how pupils receive feedback. Pupil motivation, self-confidence, their trust in the teacher and their capacity to receive information can impact the effectiveness of feedback. Teachers should implement strategies that encourage pupils to welcome feedback. They should also provide opportunities for pupils to use and respond to feedback. • Discuss the importance of feedback. Discuss with the class why feedback is important. The key is to emphasis that feedback is provided

		not to be critical but because the teacher has high expectations and standards and thoroughly believes the pupils can meet them (mindset). • Model the use of feedback. Pupils may be more likely to welcome and use feedback if it is modelled to them by their peers. For example, could whole-class discussions focus on a learner who has improved their work as a result of acting on feedback. • Provide clear, concise, and focused feedback. Sometimes less is more. Teachers should avoid feedback that 'overloads' pupils. • Ensure that pupils understand the feedback given. This includes teacher handwriting being clear enough for pupils to read.
4	Carefully consider how to use purposeful, and time-efficient, written feedback.	Written methods of feedback, including written comments, marks and scores, can improve pupil attainment; however, the effects of written feedback can vary. Written feedback can be effective if it follows high quality foundations, is timed appropriately, focuses on the task, subject or self-regulation, and is then used by pupils.
5	Carefully consider how to use purposeful verbal feedback	Verbal methods of feedback can improve pupil attainment and may be more time-efficient compared to some forms of written feedback. Again, the effects of verbal feedback can vary.
6	Design a school feedback policy that prioritises and exemplifies the principles of effective feedback	Schools should design feedback policies which promote and exemplify principles of effective feedback.

In 2016, the Department for Education published a report, 'Eliminating Unnecessary Workload Around Marking', which described three principles of effective marking:

- **Meaningful:** Marking varies by age, group, subject, and what works best for the pupil and teacher in relation to any particular work. Teachers are encouraged to adjust their approach as necessary and should be 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.
- **Motivating:** Marking should help to motivate pupils progress. This does not mean always writing in-depth comments or being universally positive- sometimes short, challenging comments are more effective. If a teacher is doing more work than the pupils, this can be a disincentive for pupils to accept challenges and take responsibility for improving their work.

One message in the report was very clear- **marking practice that does not have the desired impact on pupil outcomes in a time-wasting burden for teachers that has to stop.**

Feedback Strategies Used at St Mary's

Above all, feedback (whether written or verbal) needs to reflect the principles of effective feedback.

Strategies	What this might look like
Live Feedback <i>The next step is given 'in the moment'</i>	Whilst pupils are working, the class teacher (who should be with a focus group) provides instant feedback on their work by asking questions, giving hints or through modelling and scaffolding next steps. Pupils review and correct their work in the moment. Live feedback includes the teacher gathering and responding to feedback from verbal responses and mini whiteboards. It may involve individuals, small groups or the whole class and may take the form of further support, challenge, or a change of task better suited to their needs.

	Improvements/corrections should be evident in the child's work- potentially in a different colour in order to indicate a response to feedback. 'Live feedback' is really only effective for the pupils working directly within the adult focus group as it can take place during class time. This marking must ensure that the feedback given is thoughtful and purposeful and that pupils are provided with opportunities to use it. Since the teacher and pupil interact during live marking, it is more likely that the pupil is clear about what the feedback means, which is sometimes not the case in distance marking. Teachers and Learning Support Assistants may be involved in providing live feedback.
Summary feedback Mini plenaries	Mini plenaries provide an opportunity to review learning and offer feedback during the lesson or task, rather than at the end where there is no time to edit mistakes and make improvements. For mid-lesson learning stops to be effective, the learning objective and success criteria must be clear and challenging yet achievable. The teacher stops pupils periodically and reviews the success criteria, models or verbalises their thought processes and directs pupils to check their own work. Pupils may review their own work or that of a partner. They then have the rest of the lesson to make changes or to ensure that they have met the learning objective.
Written / distance feedback	Takes place away from the point of teaching. Provides teachers with opportunities for assessment of understanding. Includes a balance of 'lighter touch' marking and deeper marking, which will provide more detailed feedback. Being mindful of workload, teachers are not expected to mark every single piece of work deeply and to the learning objective. Instead, teachers should identify common misconceptions and errors in basic skills. They will identify who didn't grasp the concept, those who showed good understanding, and those who did particularly well (these children could then be used as models of success in the following lesson). Extensive written comments do not need to be made, instead acronyms such as LOM (Learning Objective Met), LOPM (Learning Objective Partially Met) and LONM (Learning Objective Not Met) can be used at the end of the work. Teachers should use either green or pink pen when responding to children's work. Pupils should respond to teacher feedback/make corrections using purple pen. <u>See 'marking guidance' section for more specific details about marking across different subjects.</u>
Self and peer assessment	Pupils should be involved in the assessment process. We expect pupils to take ownership of their learning and have opportunities to reflect on their success through peer and self-assessment. • Teachers will share learning intentions with pupils in all lessons. • Teachers will clarify and share success criteria for pupils to self or peer assess against as appropriate (e.g. through modelling, checklists, exemplars etc). Where appropriate, pupils could be involved in co-creating the success criteria. • Teachers should encourage pupils to see themselves as the 'first markers', and audience for their learning. Pupils should be encouraged to spot their OWN mistakes and to check and improve their work individually or with the help of a peer before the work is responded to by a teacher. • Teachers must plan for feedback to take place and should include a range of assessment types including peer and self-assessment. Enabling pupils to self and peer assess their own work supports a reduction in teacher workload. If pupils can identify and correct minor errors in advance of the teacher marking

	their work then teacher workload can be more tightly focused on how to improve their work addressing misconceptions. Pupils can be encouraged to self/peer mark their own work – for example, the answers to maths problems could be provided so that children can mark their own work within the lesson before progressing to the next task. In this way, children receive immediate feedback on how well they are doing and class teachers can focus their marking on modelling, scaffolding or moving on as necessary.
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Marking Guidance

Maths

The class teacher and supporting TA should be working with a different focus group each lesson- ensuring that targeted support is available to all pupils throughout the week. A supporting TA may take children from both classes to support.

Pupils (where age appropriate) should be trained to mark their own work – honestly- as part of self-assessment. In this way, Live Feedback can then take place as children can correct their misconceptions using purple pen immediately.

- Teachers should use the following codes to feedback on a piece of maths:

LOM	Learning Objective Met- potentially an extension question provided
LOPM	Learning objective partially met- a clarification question should be set for the pupil in order to further determine understanding
LONM	Learning Objective Not Met- followed by clear next steps i.e. intervention with TA, re-teaching etc
✓	Correct answer
.	Incorrect answer
I	Work completed independently
WS	Work completed with support

- Where misconceptions are evident, teachers may need to provide comments which provide a model or scaffold to support the child to arrive at the correct answer.
- Pupils should be provided with opportunities to respond to feedback as soon as possible.
- Short verbal or written feedback comments could be provided to extend children further- for example: 'prove it', 'explain how you know', 'draw it', 'show it in another way.' These short extension comments could be provided during live feedback or as part of distance marking.

Literacy

Big Writing- Prior to the teacher marking any written work, it is important that pupils have been given the opportunity to 'find and fix' their own errors (spelling and punctuation) and to edit and re-draft their own work. Of course, the process of proof-reading and editing will need to be carefully modelled to students first.

- To support the editing and re-drafting process, we encourage children to leave every other line blank in their writing book. In this way, the empty lines can be used for corrections, and re-drafting larger sections of writing.
- Pupils should edit their work in purple pen and teacher should mark in either green or pink.

- Teachers should use the following codes to feedback on a piece of writing:

	Punctuation errors, <u>chn</u> expected to make correction in circle
	Spelling- placed either in the margin or above the word for <u>chn</u> to correct
	Missing word/phrases
	New paragraph
	Check tense/grammar
	Check your writing makes sense
	Handwriting/Presentation needs to improve
	Extend ideas

- Pupils should be provided with opportunities to respond to written feedback as soon as possible.

Reading / SPAG

Literacy lessons which focus on reading comprehension, SPAG etc should be marked with the consideration of the learning objective as a focus. Where work has been completed independently, opportunities to mark this work together would be beneficial as children will be able to receive immediate feedback and make their own edits/corrections in their purple pen.

Structuring Lessons to Maximise the Effectiveness of Feedback

Teachers should be resourceful and flexible with the structure of lessons to 'carve' out opportunities for feedback to take place and be responded to. There should be a shift away from the traditional three-part lesson and lessons should instead be more flexible and 'fluid' in design. Examples of how feedback can be built into the day include:

- EMW (for children who are in early enough) is a great way for children to respond to feedback at the beginning of the day, before a lesson officially begins or maybe during assembly.
- Time is planned into the start of a lesson for feedback to be given or responded to e.g. misconceptions from the previous lesson is addressed or good learning shared with the class.
- Use of whiteboards throughout the lesson so children can share answers and teachers can give immediate feedback.
- Mid-lesson plenaries.
- Time built into lessons for self-assessment for example, self-marking in Maths, checking writing against success criteria etc.
- Lessons designated to proof reading and editing writing on a regular basis.

This policy was created by Rosheen Martin in July 2026 and will be reviewed in July 2027.

Appendix 1

Marking Codes

LOM	Learning Objective Met- potentially an extension question provided
LOPM	Learning objective partially met- a clarification question should be set for the pupil in order to further determine understanding
LONM	Learning Objective Not Met- followed by clear next steps i.e. intervention with TA, re-teaching etc
	Punctuation errors, chn expected to make correction in circle
Sp	Spelling- placed either in the margin or above the word for chn to correct
^	Missing word/phrases
//	New paragraph
G	Check tense/grammar
S	Check your writing makes sense
H/P	Handwriting/Presentation needs to improve
→	Extend ideas
✓	Correct answer
.	Incorrect answer
I	Work completed independently
WS	Work completed with support