

ACT Schools – Marking and Feedback Policy

Commitment

Effective feedback is one of the most powerful tools for improving learning, supporting progress and developing independent learners. At ACT Schools, feedback is viewed as an integral part of high-quality teaching and learning, and underpins the planning and progression processes of all teachers and support staff. Without effective, timely and targeted feedback, pupils will be unable to develop their holistic skills in line with the Curriculum for Wales' four purposes and progression steps.

Purpose

Feedback should provide pupils with structured opportunities to reflect on their learning, respond meaningfully and improve their work. Feedback should be timely and focused, allowing pupils to reflect and respond with a clear purpose and idea of pathways towards progression. Marking should be completed with meaningful progress in mind, and should aim to support the pupils' journey towards progression, whilst maintaining a manageable staff workload.

Scope

This policy is relevant to all school staff involved in marking and providing feedback to pupils at ACT Schools. This will also be relevant to all members of staff involved in the Quality Assurance processes within Schools. This policy will be shared with all school staff, senior leaders within ACT and be made available to parents and pupils.

Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for this document lies with the Deputy Head of Curriculum and ALN. However, ACT Schools adopts a whole school approach to meeting the needs of pupils and further responsibilities have been outlined below.

School leadership team

- Monitor consistency
- Support school staff in implementing all aspects of the policy
- Share best practice to ensure ongoing consistency
- Provide ongoing training and resources to support delivery
- Review policy effectiveness regularly and make appropriate adaptation

Head of Continuous Improvement and Deputy Head of Curriculum and ALN

- Monitor effectiveness of policy
- Respond appropriately to feedback to ensure processes remain consistent
- Oversee implementation of policy by Schools Leadership team

Teachers

- Read and understand the policy to ensure consistent application
- Provide effective feedback during implementation
- Encourage effective and thoughtful pupil responses

Pupils

- Respond to feedback appropriately
- Reflect on improvements and targets

Communication and Storage

This policy will be shared with all staff through email communication upon implementation. It will be accessible through the staff SharePoint for Schools to ensure relevant staff can access it whenever needed. It will be included as part of ongoing training and CPD, where relevant to school staff. The policy will also be stored on Calon and be

made accessible by parents/carers and pupils through the school website. The fundamentals of the policy will be routinely shared with pupils as part of ongoing and best teaching practice.

Principles of effective feedback

The following key principles underpin the Marking and Feedback Policy:

- Feedback is pupil-focused and improves learning and outcomes
- Feedback is timely, meaningful and purposeful
- Feedback encourages and fosters independence and reflection
- Feedback is inclusive and accessible to all pupils

Expectations for feedback

To ensure consistency across the school and ensure that all pupils have fair and equal access to feedback, expectations are in place for all teachers to adhere to when it comes to written and verbal feedback to allow opportunities to progress.

Frequency

Pupils are to receive feedback consistently to support their learning. This will take place daily and in every lesson through verbal feedback, as well as at key points throughout units or schemes of work, where bespoke written feedback will be given to encourage reflection.

- Pupils to receive verbal feedback on an ad-hoc basis, when required, during lessons to encourage development
- Pupils to receive meaningful written feedback within each subject every 2 weeks (over a series/block of 5 lessons as per the fortnightly timetable)
- Pupils to have at least 2 opportunities to complete meaningful Dedicated Improvements and Reflection Time (DIRT) tasks within lessons per half-term.

Teachers should provide meaningful written feedback at regular intervals throughout each scheme of learning. As a minimum, pupils should receive written formative feedback at least once every five taught lessons, unless an agreed departmental variation has been approved by the Senior Leadership Team.

Types of feedback

The following types of feedback are recognised as part of day-to-day teaching practice and are acknowledged as an important process for learning:

- Verbal feedback
- Live feedback during lessons
- Whole-class feedback

The following types of feedback are recognised as part of long-term planning for progression and providing opportunities to meaningfully reflect:

- Written feedback
- Peer-assessment
- Self-assessment

All forms of feedback are equally valid when providing opportunities to improve learning.

Marking expectations

Teacher feedback

Formative feedback

Written formative feedback should normally be provided when:

- The work is completed as part of an assessment
- The work is completed in preparation for a formal assessment or assessment period
- Work is completed as part of a formal qualification or in preparation for a formal qualification
- The work requires formative feedback in order to progress or improve a skill within a subject

The school's preferred written feedback model is What Went Well/Even Better If (WWW/EBI). Subject teachers may adapt this format where an alternative subject-specific approach more effectively supports learning, whilst maintaining the principles of the policy.

Summative feedback

Summative marking (a grade, number or percentage) is to be completed/given using the teacher's judgement, other than the following:

- For work that is marked using assessment criteria or objectives as part of a formal qualification
- For work that requires submission of a formal mark as part of a formal qualification or exam entry
- During assessment Data Entry periods required by the school as part of progress tracking procedures, including on Arbor and for internal monitoring

In all other cases, summative marking is completed using the teacher's judgement of best practice. For example, for regular spelling tests in English or progressive numeracy tests in Mathematics.

General expectations for feedback

Teachers should use feedback routinely throughout teaching to acknowledge achievement, identify misconceptions, clarify expectations and support progression. This also covers feedback to provide praise and give recommendations for improvement, as well as clarifying or reminding of expectations for presentation of work.

Written feedback should be done using a green pen consistently across all subjects. This applies to formative and summative marking, as well as in applying marking codes.

Marking and feedback is only considered meaningful when completed and reflected upon within an appropriate amount of time of the work being completed by the pupil. As such, it is expected that there is a 2-week turnaround time of work being formatively marked and reflected upon by pupils before it loses its impact. Any work planned to be marked and improved should be done so during this 2-week window.

Marking codes

The following marking codes are to be used consistently across the school and within all departments when providing written feedback to pupils. These are to support a consistent approach to literacy across the school and to promote development across the curriculum.

Symbol	Marking error
SP	Spelling
P	Punctuation

Symbol	Marking error
Cap	Missing or misused capital letter
WW	Wrong word
NP	New paragraph
^	Missing word
Exp	Error in expression/grammar
VF*	Verbal feedback given
✓	Marks awarded/ credit given
✓✓	Best part
WWW	What Went Well
EBI	Even Better If
Yellow-box*	Work to improve
Green-box*	Work that has been improved

Notes:

*The VF code is to be used within the margin of a book when verbal feedback given is significant to the learning taking place. This may also be used when verbal feedback consists of a target that has or will be actioned.

*The yellow-box marking method is detailed below and is applicable only to DIRT sessions.

Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time (DIRT)

Teachers are to plan their schemes of work to provide regular, meaningful opportunities for pupils to create work to exemplify or show their learning. These should also provide regular opportunities to receive meaningful, impactful written feedback using a consistent approach to Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time (DIRT) across all subjects and lessons.

The presentation of DIRT within books may vary slightly depending on the subject matter, however the general expectations below apply to the facilitation of DIRT sessions in all subjects.

Frequency

The expectation is that DIRT is completed following formative feedback for at least 2 pieces of work, or at least 2 times across a half-term. DIRT should normally take place as soon as practicable after feedback has been provided to maximise impact.

Expectations

DIRT will be carried out using the yellow-box method.

A yellow-box is put around a section or piece of pupil work when:

- This area of work needs improving
- This area of work directly correlates to the target being given through WWW and EBI
- This area of work requires reflection on a key skill (including literacy and numeracy)

A green box is used to:

- Highlight where an area of work has been improved, following reflection
- Highlight where a target has been aimed to be met or has been met
- Highlight a follow-on task that has been provided to reflect on or revisit a key skill

This method is to be used when formative feedback has been given and should give regular, purposeful and structured time for pupils to reflect and respond. DIRT will be conducted at the teacher's discretion, but must adhere to the following:

- Give meaningful, structured time to reflect on targets
- Give appropriate and adequate time to respond to written feedback
- Be completed in an appropriate learning environment and with adequate support to address questions, concerns or misconceptions of the pupil
- Improvements must be acknowledged by the teacher, either verbally (in which case, a VF code is to be used) or through a summative comment on engagement, effort or a target being met

Whole-school literacy

All teachers share responsibility for developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum, as part of the Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF). All subjects will have the following documents as part of their learning:

- Spelling log
- Glossary of key terms
- Marking codes

Teachers are expected to allow pupils appropriate time to reflect on these documents after marking or feedback is given. This may be included as part of structured DIRT, or at regular intervals to reflect on shorter pieces of work. This is to be based on teacher judgement; however, the minimum expectation is that the spelling log and glossary of key terms is reflected on meaningfully by learners twice per half-term, in line with the policy's guidance on applying DIRT activities. Reasonable adjustments may be made depending on the pupils' or class's individual needs.

Supporting pupils

Where appropriate and necessary, feedback should be tailored to support the individual learning needs of pupils. The approach should also be adapted to support the needs of pupils sitting specific qualifications, where feedback may need to be more frequent or targeted towards specific skills or assessment objectives.

Feedback should be tailored or adapted appropriately for the following needs:

Additional Learning Needs (ALN) - feedback should be adapted to suit the specific learning needs of pupils. This may require applying reasonable adjustments to the marking policy to ensure that feedback is meaningful. Feedback given should be accurately recorded using alternative methods, when necessary and appropriate.

Pupils requiring challenge - at times, some pupils may require feedback that extends beyond the planned learning objectives in order to promote further progress. Teachers should use their professional judgement to ensure feedback appropriately stretches and challenges pupils.

EAL pupils - pupils with English as an Additional Language may require highly adapted forms of written or verbal feedback. This may take the form of translated or scaffolded feedback where appropriate, or highly

simplified language to support comprehension. These cases will require teacher judgement to ensure that their approach is adapted to suit the pupils' needs.

Examination/qualification-based subjects - subjects requiring a formal examination may require bespoke feedback around specific assessment objectives. Despite these not being tracked centrally as a school, the subject teacher may be required to provide targets from an examination or qualification rubric to support learning and development to gain a qualification.

Teacher workload and wellbeing

The school is committed to safeguarding the needs of teachers when it comes to reducing teacher workload and marking, where possible.

ACT Schools encourages teachers to only mark pupil books when necessary and when meaningful to learning. The school does not expect teachers to mark for the sake of marking. Professional judgement should be exercised regarding the following and adjusted according to class and pupil needs.

Teachers are **not** expected to:

- Provide a comment for or mark every page or piece of work completed
- Provide extensive written dialogue- targets can be taken from our progression step documents to reduce workload
- Provide repetitive feedback when not necessary
- Mark for compliance rather than for learning opportunities. All feedback should be meaningful and acted upon
- Provide extensive comments regarding effort or engagement when this could be done verbally

The quality of feedback is judged by its impact on pupil learning rather than the quantity of written marking.

Document / Policy Change Request

Any changes to the policy and procedure will be overseen by the Deputy Head of Curriculum and ALN.

Document / Policy Reviewing and Approving

The policy will be reviewed yearly by the Deputy Head of Curriculum and ALN.

References

ACT Schools Curriculum Policy
ACT Schools Assessment Policy