



Highfields Marking Policy 2025-26

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Core Principles

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all marking and feedback practices at Highfields Primary School are meaningful, manageable, and focused on improving pupil outcomes. Feedback should always serve a clear purpose: to accelerate pupil progress and provide clarity on next steps. Written feedback should be used sparingly and only when it directly benefits learning. Marking should focus solely on the stated learning objective for the task, avoiding unnecessary corrections beyond the objective unless they relate to fundamental skills. Teachers are trusted to use their professional judgement to decide when verbal or written feedback is most effective. Above all, this policy prioritises staff wellbeing by reducing unnecessary workload associated with marking.

Basic Skills and Cross-Curricular Application

At Highfields Primary School, we recognise that the accurate use of basic skills is of utmost importance in supporting children's overall progress. Marking and feedback will consistently address fundamental errors such as incorrect use of capital letters and full stops in writing, as well as number reversals in mathematics. These core skills form the foundation for success across all areas of learning and will be prioritised in feedback to ensure children develop accuracy and confidence. Furthermore, this policy applies to all subjects, including foundation subjects, to maintain high standards and consistency throughout the curriculum.

Live Marking

Live verbal feedback is the most immediate and effective method for addressing misconceptions and guiding children during lessons. Teachers should circulate and provide real-time guidance, ensuring children understand how to improve their work. Apart from using the marking code VF (see below), verbal feedback does not need to be recorded in writing.

Written Feedback

Written feedback remains an important tool but should be proportionate and purposeful. At Highfields, staff marking work should be completed in green ink using the following codes.

- TA (Target Achieved)
- FW (Further Work required)
- SW (Supported by adult)
- GW (Group Work)
- VF (Verbal Feedback)
- ST (Where work is marked by someone other than the class teacher)
- ✓ for correct answers,
- X for incorrect answers

Importance of Self and Peer Assessment

Self and peer assessment play a vital role in developing children's independence and ownership of learning at Highfields. By reviewing their own work and that of their peers, children learn to identify strengths, spot errors, and apply success criteria effectively. This process encourages reflection, critical thinking, and collaboration, while reducing reliance on teacher feedback alone.

- In Reception this will be done verbally and supported by adults in the room.
- In KS1 children will be given opportunities to self-assess their own work in class by colouring in a small green (understood) or red (unsure) circle that will be printed by the class teacher next to the target of

the piece of work they are assessing. Children can verbally feedback to their peers whilst in KSI using sentence starts such as

- "I like the way you..."
- "You did well when you..."
- "My favourite part is..."
- "I noticed that you..."
- "Next time you could..."
- "It would be even better if..."
- "Maybe you could try..."

- In KS2, where a child has self assessed their own work, this will be written in **blue** ink and where a child has improved or edited their work, this will be written in **purple** ink. Using blue and purple coloured pens makes the process accessible and helps children take responsibility for improving their work.

SEND and Differentiation in Marking

Marking should be inclusive and accessible for all learners, including those with SEND and EAL. Teachers will adapt feedback to individual needs by using verbal feedback where written comments may not be understood. Where appropriate, marking should reflect personalised targets from IPP's.

EYFS Practice

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, feedback is primarily verbal and observational. Teachers should focus on rich interactions that develop vocabulary and understanding. Achievements can be celebrated through verbal praise and recorded using platforms such as 'Evidence Me'. Stickers may also be used to provide visual recognition of success.

Monitoring & Book Scrutiny

Monitoring processes should evaluate the impact of feedback on pupil learning rather than the quantity of marking. Book scrutiny should involve sampling work to assess whether feedback is effective, not to judge individual teachers. SLT and Subject Champions should work collaboratively with staff to agree on clear success criteria and ensure consistency without adding unnecessary workload.

Supporting Teacher Wellbeing

This policy is designed to protect teacher wellbeing by ensuring marking and feedback are purposeful, manageable, and focused on pupil progress rather than compliance. It prioritises high-impact strategies such as live verbal feedback, uses simple marking codes to reduce workload, and limits written corrections to a small number of key errors. Administrative tasks that do not require professional expertise are streamlined, and monitoring focuses on the impact of feedback rather than the quantity of marking. By trusting teachers' professional judgement and removing unnecessary burdens, the policy promotes a balanced approach that safeguards time for teaching and learning.

Alignment with Ofsted Expectations

This policy reflects Ofsted's current approach to marking and feedback, which emphasises that inspectors do not expect any specific quantity, format, or frequency of marking. Instead, they look for evidence that feedback is purposeful and has a clear impact on pupil learning. By prioritising live verbal feedback, using simple marking codes, and limiting written corrections to key errors, our approach ensures feedback is effective, manageable, and focused on progress rather than compliance. This aligns with Ofsted's expectation that schools adopt strategies that support both pupil outcomes and staff wellbeing