

Feedback Policy

Mount C of E Primary and Nursery School

Approved by:	Mount C of E Governing Body	Date: June 2024
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Last reviewed on:	June 2024
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At Mount, we recognise the importance of feedback as an integral part of the teaching and learning cycle, and aim to maximise the effectiveness of its use in practice. We are mindful also of the research surrounding effective feedback and the workload implications of written marking, as well as research from cognitive science regarding the fragility of new learning.

Our policy is underpinned by the evidence of best practice from the Education Endowment Foundation and other expert organisations. The EEF's research shows that effective feedback should:

- Redirect or refocus either the teacher's or the learner's actions to achieve a goal
- Be specific, accurate and clear
- Encourage and support further effort
- Be given sparingly so that it is meaningful
- Put the onus on students to correct their own mistakes, rather than providing correct answers for them
- Alert the teacher to misconceptions, so that the teacher can address these in subsequent lessons

Notably, the Department for Education's research into teacher workload has highlighted written marking as a key contributing factor to workload. As such we have investigated alternatives to written marking which can provide effective feedback in line with the EEF's recommendations, and those of the DfE's expert group which emphasises that marking should be: **Meaningful, manageable and motivating**. We have also taken note of the advice provided by the NCETM (National Centre for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics) that the most important activity for teachers is the teaching itself, supported by the design and preparation of lessons.

Key Principles

Our policy on feedback has at its core a number of principles:

- The sole focus of feedback should be to further children's learning.
- Evidence of feedback is incidental to the process; we do not provide additional evidence for external verification.
- Feedback should empower children to take responsibility for improving their own work; it should not take away from this responsibility by adults doing the hard thinking work for the pupil.
- Written comments should only be used as a last resort for the very few children who otherwise are unable to locate their own errors, even after guided modelling by the teacher and should be accessible to students according to age and ability.
- Children should receive feedback either within the lesson itself or in the next appropriate lesson.
- Feedback delivered closest to the point of learning is most effective, therefore feedback delivered in lessons is more effective than comments provided at a later date.
- Feedback is a 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.
- New learning is fragile and usually forgotten unless explicit steps are taken over time to revisit and refresh learning. Teachers should be wary of assuming that children have securely learnt material based on evidence drawn close to the point of teaching it. Therefore, teachers will need to get feedback at some distance from the original teaching input when assessing if learning is now secure.

Within these principles, our aim is to make use of the good practice approaches outlined by the EEF toolkit to ensure that children are provided with timely and purposeful feedback that furthers their learning, and that teachers are able to gather feedback and assessments that enable them to adjust their teaching both within and across a sequence of lessons.

Feedback and Marking in Practice

It is vital that teachers evaluate the work that children undertake in lessons, and use information obtained from this to allow them to adjust their teaching. Feedback occurs at one of three common stages in the learning process:

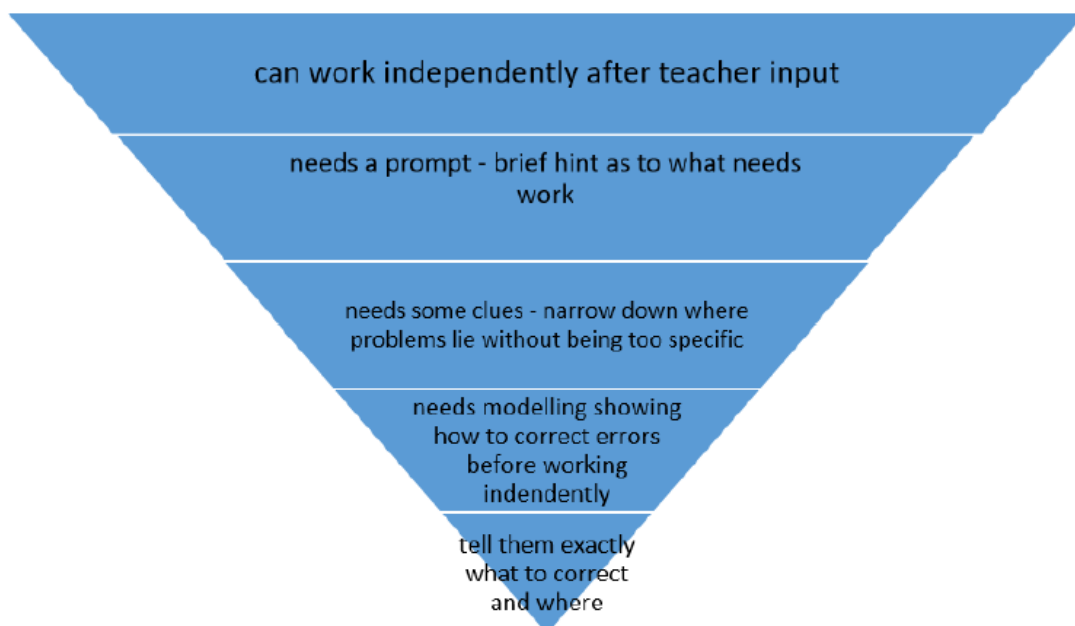
1. Immediate feedback – at the point of teaching
2. Summary feedback – at the end of a lesson/task
3. Review feedback – away from the point of teaching (including written comments where appropriate)

The stages are deliberately numbered in order of priority, noting that feedback closest to the point of teaching and learning is likely to be most effective in driving further improvement and learning, especially for younger pupils.

We place emphasis on the provision of immediate feedback. Where feedback is based on review of work completed, the focus will often be on providing feedback for the teacher to further adapt teaching. At Mount, these practices can be seen in the following:

Type	What it looks like...	Evidence (for observers)
Immediate	• Includes teacher gathering feedback from teaching, including observation, questioning, book work, mini-whiteboards flashbacks, etc. • Takes place in lessons with individuals and small groups • Often given verbally to pupils for immediate action • May involve use of a teaching assistant to provide support or further challenge • May re-direct the focus of teaching or the task • Use of red pen marking/annotations by the teacher ('Red Pen Live Marking')	• Lesson observations/Learning Walks • Some evidence of 'Red Pen Live Marking' • Use of the VF code for brief verbal feedback provided to children and appropriate responses/action (purple pen), including editing • Flashbacks that have been given immediate feedback (usually self-assessment by children using purple pen)
Summary	• Takes place at the end of a lesson or activity • Often involves whole groups or classes • Provides an opportunity for evaluation of learning in the lesson • Target Books completed by the child • May take the form of self- or peer-assessment against an agreed set of criteria • May take the form of a quiz, test or score on a game • In some cases, may guide a teacher's further use of review feedback, focusing on areas of need	• Lesson observations/Learning Walks • Self-assessed • Timetabled pre- and post- teaching based on assessment • Some evidence of self- and peer-assessment • Quiz/Test results may be recorded in books or logged separately by the teacher
Review	• Takes place away from the point of teaching • May involve written comments/annotations for pupils to respond to • All marking will be completed in green pen • Target books updated by the teacher • Provides teachers with opportunities for assessment of understanding • Leads to adaptation of future lessons through planning, grouping or adaptation of tasks • May lead to targets being set for pupils' future attention, or immediate action • End of unit/'Sticky Knowledge' tests or quizzes	• Acknowledgement of work completed (ticks/stamps) • Written comments where appropriate ('Next Step' stamp and green pen) and appropriate responses/action (purple pen), including editing • Use of S code to show that the child was supported by an adult throughout the lesson • Use of I code to show that children have worked completely independently • Further adaptations to teaching sequences on Cornerstones/ planning • Quiz/Test results

The Strategic Minimal Marking Triangle



Start out with the assumption that all children can work independently given prior input and only increase the amount of intervention if the pupil really can't get on without it. Give children take up time; let them struggle for a bit, but above all, make sure they are the ones doing the hard work; not you.

Marking Approaches

All work will be acknowledged in some form by class teachers (English, Maths and Foundation Subjects). This may be through ticks, use of appropriate stickers or initials (if acknowledged by someone other than the class teacher). Feedback codes are also used and these are available in classrooms for them to refer to (see Appendix A).

In Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, review marking will only lead to written comments for those pupils who are able to read and respond independently. Where pupils are unable to read/understand such comments, these are shared verbally with children at the earliest appropriate opportunity.

In Key Stage 2, written marking and comments should be used only where meaningful guidance can be offered which has not been possible to provide during the classroom session. In the case of groups of pupils having a common need, it may be appropriate for teachers to adjust planning or grouping rather than providing a written comment. Where a child has achieved the intended outcome and is well-prepared for the next stage in learning, this need not be annotated. In most cases, written comments will be focussed on extended pieces of written work, or extended tasks to provide further guidance for future learning.

At the end of each lesson, any review marking written comments will relate to the learning objective.

For correct/incorrect activities within lessons, a tick will be used to identify correct responses and a dot will be used next to incorrect responses, which children will then be given the opportunity to correct if appropriate. Spellings can also be identified for children to correct by underlining them in red/green pen and writing 'sp' underneath. Staff should decide on which words to identify and how many to identify based on the child's ability.

Proofreading and Editing Writing

Most writing lessons will be followed up with an editing lesson where children receive whole class feedback about strengths and areas for development and direct teaching to help them identify and address their own weaknesses.

Teachers will have looked at pupils' work soon after the previous lesson and identified strengths and weaknesses, looking at both the technical accuracy of the writing; spelling errors, punctuation omissions, and other transcription mishaps as well as things to do with the sophistication of the writing; the actual content.

The editing lesson will be divided into two sections:

► **Proofreading**

Changing punctuation, spelling, handwriting and grammar mistakes

► **Editing**

Improving their work to improve the composition

The proofreading section will usually be short: about 10 minutes or so, whereas the editing element may take the rest of the lesson. The teacher will share extracts from pupils' work, using either an iPad or by typing out a couple of lines and displaying them on the interactive whiteboard, at first showing good examples of work. For example, within the proof-reading section, the teacher might showcase someone whose letter heights have the ascenders and descenders just right, then asking pupils to look at their work and rewrite one sentence from it, really making sure they are paying attention to letter heights. Then s/he might share a section of text with poor punctuation (usually anonymously) and reteach the class/small groups the various punctuation rules. They might then point out some spelling errors that several children are making, and remind children of the correct spelling and how to remember it. Children will then have a short period of time to proof read their work, checking for similar errors and putting them right. Children sit in mixed ability pairs and support each other in the identification and correction of mistakes.

Within the editing section of the lesson, the teacher might show some different pieces of work where the children have described a character very well, pointing out what has made the description so effective. The teacher might then share a less successful example, which might be from an anonymous or fictional piece. The children would then suggest how this might be improved. Next, the children would work in pairs to read each other's work and suggest improvements, alterations, replacements and refinements. The author can then use a purple pen to edit their work.

Intervening when children find editing hard

A few children will need more support than this in order to be successful at improving their own work. Younger children in KS1 in particular may need more support as they learn to become more independent. Although many young children are quite able to proofread and edit independently after teacher modelling.

As with all intervention, teachers should always seek to use the minimal level possible, only escalating to the next level if the child still needs further support. Some children may need a **gentle prompt** to narrow down their focus when looking for mistakes. For example, a written comment alerting them that there are some missing full stops, without telling them how many or where. Or a simple pointer – 'description' perhaps or 'ambiguous pronouns' or 'figurative language' or 'and then' with a red cross through it. This would be in addition to, and not instead of, the teacher modelling editing for these before the independent section of the lesson.

Others might need even more support and need to be provided with **clues** to help them. For example, the teacher might need to draw a box around a section of text to narrow down the search area for the pupil, alongside the comment that there are speech marks missing or the same sentence structure over-used. Or they might need to write a comment at the end saying there are 8 missing capital letters or 5 instances of non-standard English.

Where mistakes are deeply entrenched, or the children are very young and lack confidence, the teacher may need to do some direct work **modelling** how to overcome these: for example, to clear up the confusion with apostrophe use. The teacher might set a group of children an editing challenge based, not on their own work, but on a fictional piece of work with only one, recurrent error. An adult might then support the group in identifying where apostrophes do and do not belong. They might do this instead of editing their own work or as a prelude to it, depending upon their learning needs. But what the teacher is not doing, is using a marking code that does all the error identification for the pupil as this takes away any responsibility from the pupil at thinking about how to improve.

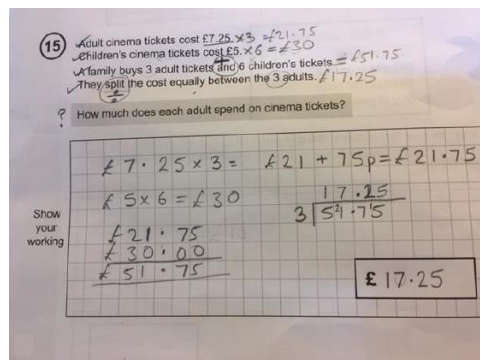
Sometimes it is the children who find writing easy, who do not challenge themselves to improve their writing through editing, settling too readily for their first attempt. These children may initially

need specific clues about what an even better piece of writing might look like. The teacher could also set group or individual challenges or editing menus e.g. “before you’ve finished editing, you need to have...”

Feedback in Maths

In terms of day-to-day maths learning, teachers should have the answers to problems available, and after doing 4 or 5 calculations, children can check their answers themselves. That way, if they have got the wrong end of the stick and misunderstood something, they can alert the teacher immediately. Another benefit is that less confident children might want to start at the easiest level of work provided, but with instant feedback available, after getting their first few calculations correct, they feel confident to move to the next level. Another strategy teachers can use is to get children to compare answers in a group and where answers do not agree, challenge each other and try and find where the other person has gone wrong.

The onus should always be on the learner checking their own work and if they’ve got an answer wrong, trying to identify their own errors. Children need to be taught how to do this purposely; otherwise they think it just means scanning quickly through their work, reading but not really thinking. Checking involves thinking deeply about the work you have just learnt. When you think deeply about something, it is much more likely to get stored in your long-term memory, available to be recalled at will. As Daniel Willingham says ‘memory is the residue of thought.’ So as an alternative to providing the answers, teachers should sometimes model ways of checking and then expect children to do the same, in effect ‘**proof reading**’ maths. So for example, children might repeat a calculation in a different colour and check they’ve got the same answer. Another example is for addition calculations involving more than two numbers, adding the numbers in a different order is an even better way of checking. Teachers should also model how children can use the inverse operation to go and check they get back to where they started. With 2 or 3 part word problems, a classic error is to give the answer as the first part of the problem and forget about following through to the second (or third) part of the question. Often, word problems are written with each instruction on a different line, a bit like success criteria. Again, teachers should show children how to check work as we go, returning to the question and ticking off each line –writing each answer alongside, being really clear we are answering the final question, having done all of the previous steps.



Where children have made mistakes, and are finding it hard to identify where they have gone wrong, a prompt sheet, shared with the class at the start of the lesson, can help. In effect, this is just some process success criteria, but recasting it as a checklist to be used to identify errors means children use it thoughtfully and only when needed.

Finding my mistake... (Column Addition)

- Did I put each number in the right place value column?
- Did I forget to regroup?
- Did I forget to add the regrouped ten/hundred?
- Did I make a careless mistake with my adding?
- If you can't find your mistake, ask your partner to go through this checklist with you and see if they can help.
- If none of these things can help, ask an adult.

Finding my mistake... (Identifying fractions of shapes)

- Did I check all the parts were equal?
- Did I count how many parts the shape had been divided into?
- Did I write that number underneath (remember **denominator** is **Down**)?
- Did I count how many parts were shaded in?
- Did I write that number on top (remember **numerator** is **on** top)?
- If you can't find your mistake, ask your partner to go through this checklist with you and see if they can help.
- If none of these things can help, ask an adult.

It is important that the children move towards internalising what they are doing (over the course of several lessons) so that they no longer need a written checklist because they have their own mental checklist stored in their long term memory, which they are able to retrieve at will. Giving children work to 'mark' from fictitious other children, which includes all the common misconceptions, is a really good way of helping them develop this.