



Policy No: 14d(3)

OUR LADY'S ABINGDON (OLA) MARKING AND FEEDBACK POLICY

The current version of any policy, procedure, protocol or guideline is the version held on the OLA website. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that they are following the current version.

Document Details

Information Sharing Category	School Domain
Version	1
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Responsible Area	Leadership Team

We comply with the Government guidance and regulations, currently in force, regarding COVID.

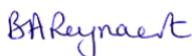
Availability: All who work, volunteer or supply services to our school have an equal responsibility to understand and implement this policy and its procedures both within and outside of normal school hours, including activities away from school.

Monitoring and Review:

Reviewed: January 2022

Next Review: January 2023

Signed:

Head	Deputy Head
Mr Daniel Gibbons	Dr Beth Reynaert
Signed: 	Signed: 

1. Introduction

Marking plays a central role in teachers' work and can provide important feedback to pupils and help teachers identify pupil misunderstanding. Previous research suggests that providing feedback is one of the most effective and cost-effective ways of improving pupils' learning. The studies of feedback reviewed in the Teaching and Learning Toolkit – an evidence synthesis produced by the EEF, Sutton Trust and Durham University – found that on average the provision of high-quality feedback led to an improvement of eight additional months' progress over the course of a year.

All teachers understand the importance of providing meaningful feedback. Done well, it supports pupil progress, building learning, addressing misunderstandings, and thereby closing the gap between where a pupil is and where the teacher wants them to be. This process is a crucial component of high-quality teaching. OLA draws upon the latest evidence-informed recommendations and the recent report on effective feedback from the Education Endowment Fund ([EEF Guidance Report: Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning October 2021](#)) and [EEF Written Marking Review \(2016\)](#) are both helpful in this regard.

Teacher feedback may be defined as: *'information given by a teacher to pupil(s) about their performance that aims to improve learning.'* When giving this information, teachers have a range of decisions to make, and can provide feedback in a variety of different ways. Feedback can:

- focus on different content
- be delivered in different methods
- be directed to different people; and
- be delivered at different times.

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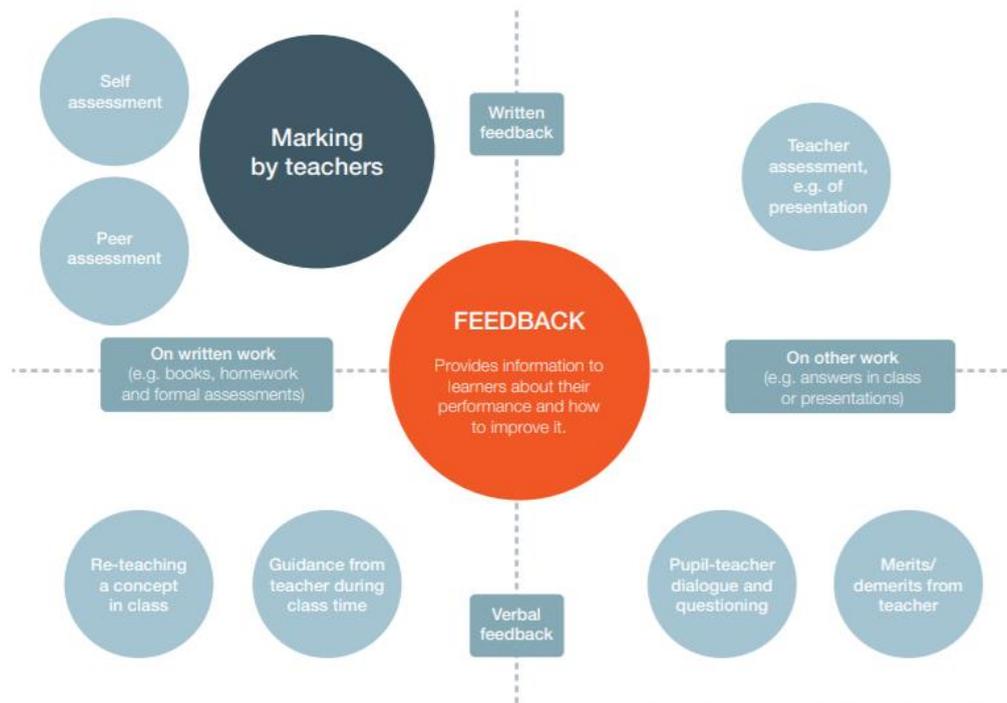


Figure 1. Examples of different forms of feedback.

Taken from [A Marked Improvement? A review of the evidence on written marking \(EEF 2016\)](#)

OLA draws upon the six best practice principles of effective feedback:

- 1) **Lay the foundations for effective feedback:** Before providing feedback, OLA teachers will provide high quality instruction, including the use of formative assessment strategies. High quality initial instruction will reduce the work that feedback needs to do. Formative assessment strategies are required to *set learning intentions* (which feedback will aim towards) and to *assess learning gaps* (which feedback will address).
- 2) **Deliver appropriately timed feedback that focuses on moving learning forward:** teachers will judge whether more immediate or delayed feedback is required, considering the characteristics of the task set, the individual pupil, and the collective understanding of the class.
 - Feedback should focus on moving learning forward, targeting the specific learning gaps that pupils exhibit. High quality feedback may focus on the task, subject, and self-regulation strategies.
 - Feedback that focuses on a learner's personal characteristics, or feedback that offers only general and vague remarks, is less likely to be effective.
- 3) **Plan for how pupils will receive and use feedback:** Careful thought is given to how pupils receive feedback. Pupil motivation, self-confidence, their trust in the teacher, and their capacity to receive information can impact feedback's effectiveness. Teachers will implement strategies that encourage learners to welcome feedback and also provide opportunities for pupils to use feedback. This closes the feedback loop so that pupil learning can progress.
- 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. The method of delivery (and whether a teacher chooses to use written or verbal feedback) is likely to be less important than ensuring that the principles of effective teacher feedback (Recommendations 1–3) are followed. Written feedback may be effective if it follows high quality foundations, is timed appropriately, focuses on the task, subject, and/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 when compared to some forms of written feedback. However, as with written feedback, the effects of verbal feedback can vary and the method of delivery is likely to be less important than ensuring the principles of effective teacher feedback (Recommendations 1–3) are followed.

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- 6) **OLA's Marking and Feedback policy prioritises and exemplifies the principles of effective feedback (Recommendations 1–3):** This Policy does not over-specify features such as the frequency or method of feedback.

2. Aims and Principles

This policy supports the development of *'the whole person in order to fulfil each one's potential'* and thus helps us to realise a key aspect of our Mission Statement. Marking should be manageable, meaningful and motivating.

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

- 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; enabling staff to assess and track pupils' learning and progress and to inform teaching and move pupils' forwards
- all work should be reviewed by teachers at the earliest opportunity so that it might impact on future learning. When work is reviewed, this should be recorded and/or acknowledged in books;
- there should be regular opportunities for children to assess each other's work and give each other feedback and to assess their own work;
- feedback can be oral or written and can be immediate (at the point of teaching), summary (at the end of an activity) or review (after an activity);
- the main aims of feedback should be to further children's learning and/or to raise children's esteem by celebrating and praising their achievements and efforts;
- whether it refers to effort or learning, feedback should be specific, accurate and clear, so children know exactly what they have done well and what they need to do to get better, for example, 'I like the way you have thought carefully about your punctuation. Can you include a wider range of vocabulary in your writing?' not 'Lovely work.'
- where the teacher thinks that the child has made a careless mistake, the child's attention should be drawn to it, but he or she should be expected to correct it independently. If on the other hand, the teacher thinks that the child has made an error resulting from a misconception, the teacher may choose to correct the error, write a comment and/or adapt their planning to resolve the issue.
- feedback should be communicated to children appropriately, taking into account the subject, the child's age, ability and SEND/SEMH needs.
- there should be opportunities for children to respond to feedback.

3. Assessment, marking and feedback at Departmental level

While there will naturally be differences in the ways in which departments assess and mark pupils' work, there should be consistency in the *underlying principles of our assessment procedures* between one academic department and another (See OLA's *Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy*)

'Assessment' is any activity that checks learning. Ideally most lessons will include some form of assessment, which is a developmental/formative activity that moves learning on. Assessment may be done in many different ways and will depend on the subject and what is being assessed. Teachers should choose assessment methods that are appropriate. For example, a written test, a quick check-on-learning activity at the end of a lesson, a practical activity or a conversation. Assessment must be valid ie: be checking what it is supposed to be checking. Summative assessment of topics/units should be done when appropriate to the scheme of work and not be driven by the reporting schedule. Information on pupils' performance should be recorded and tracked (see section on tracking and monitoring). The main purpose of assessment data is to encourage self-evaluation rather than comparison with others.

- **In assessing and marking pupils' work** we aim to assist them to understand what they have achieved in terms of the requirements of the task and the criteria by which it should be judged and to understand how the work might be improved.
- **At its best, assessment should be a collaborative process between teacher and pupil** in which both are fully aware of the criteria by which work may be judged, though stark reliance on the criteria only, which can be baffling and even intimidating to pupils, is to be avoided. Put simply, pupils should know why they are doing a particular task, how it is being assessed and how the outcome might be improved.

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- **Each departmental marking policy should be clear and unambiguous.** It is the responsibility of each HoD to publish and to justify departmental policy to the Leadership Team. Pupils, teachers, parents, Form Tutors and Heads of Section should be able to understand the meaning of a particular assessment or mark within the context of forthcoming public examinations and/or internal school assessments. Pupils should be encouraged to discuss assessments with teachers if it is not clear to them how they have been made.
- **Marks should recognise individual achievement** and not be awarded en bloc. At all levels the full range of grades for achievement should be employed in normal circumstances.
- **All marks/assessments should be recorded by the teacher.** HoDs should ensure that records are kept up to date.

Departmental Marking Policies: OLA aims to create effective, sustainable and time-efficient Departmental marking policies which consider:

- Grading and comments:** Research suggests that awarding grades for every piece of work may reduce the impact of marking, particularly if pupils become preoccupied with grades at the expense of a consideration of teachers' formative comments. In some cases, grades can reduce the impact of formative comments by becoming the main focus of learners' attention. *Departments must consider:*
 - *What is the right balance of grades and comments in our marking?*
 - *Do our pupils ignore formative comments if there is a grade on the page?*
 - *Can we consider alternative ways of expressing pupils' progress to them that avoids simple grades?*
 - *How can we ensure that none of our students underestimate their potential and are aware of their current and future level of performance?*
- Corrections:** Careless mistakes should be marked differently to errors resulting from misunderstanding. The latter may be best addressed by providing hints or questions which lead pupils to underlying principles; the former by simply marking the mistake as incorrect, without giving the right answer. *Departments must consider:*
 - *How do we distinguish between mistakes and errors?*
 - *Does our marking approach require our pupils to work to remember or reach the correct answer?*
 - *What strategies can we use to ensure that our pupils' underlying misunderstandings are addressed?*
- Thoroughness:** *Departments must consider:*
 - *Would marking time be more effective with less acknowledgement marking?*
 - *What would a marking approach look like based on 'mark less, but mark better'?*
 - *What balance should we strike between marking for SPAG and marking for subject specific content?*
 - *Does our marking focus on the learning objectives related to the piece of work that has been completed?*
- Pupil responses:** Unless some time is set aside for pupils to consider written comments it is unlikely that teachers will be maximising the impact of the marking that they have completed out of class time. *Departments must consider:*
 - *What are the best ways to provide the time for pupils to consider and respond to written comments?*
 - *How do we check that pupils understand all written comments and are purposefully engaging with them?*
 - *Are pupils given an opportunity to redraft or improve their work after receiving written feedback, or are our comments intended to improve future pieces of work?*
- Creating a dialogue:** *Departments must consider:*
 - *What is the most effective way to check that pupils understand our marking?*
 - *Have we attempted to assess the 'time-effectiveness' of dialogic or triple impact marking?*
 - *Are we clear about the purpose of responding to pupils' responses to create a written dialogue?*
 - *To what extent do acknowledgement steps enhance pupil progress?*
- Targets:** providing clear success criteria for a piece of work is associated with higher performance. The use of targets to make marking as specific and actionable as possible is likely to increase pupil progress. there is no difference between

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the effectiveness of coded or uncoded feedback, providing that pupils understand what the codes mean. *Departments must consider:*

- *Do we set specific targets that can be immediately acted upon?*
- *Do pupils understand the targets we set them?*
- *Are there occasions when we could use coded targets to reduce workload?*

g) Frequency and speed: Departments must consider:

- *What is the right balance between speed versus quality in our approach to marking?*
- *How should our decisions about the speed or frequency of marking affect the type of marking that takes place?*
- *How do we balance the speed with which marking is completed against the speed with which pupils are able to act on the feedback they receive?*
- *What role can verbal feedback play in giving quick, precise and frequent feedback?*

4. Marking and Feedback Process

Making the Focus Clear

Before a piece of work is undertaken, pupils should be clear about what is going to be assessed when the work is marked. We set out clear learning objectives and success criteria, which enable teachers (and pupils to peer or self-assess) to mark effectively against the success criteria. Where appropriate (i.e. if the work is not intended for display), the learning objective and/or success criteria should be displayed on the piece of work – this could be typed onto a worksheet or printed onto a slip that children stick in at the top of their work. A shortened form of the learning objective may be used if it is easier for the pupils to copy. Success criteria can also be effectively and quickly embedded into Teams assignments.

There are some skills, such as sentence punctuation and spelling, which need to be reinforced regularly, whether or not they are part of the learning focus. When marking a written task, teachers should correct punctuation and spelling that they think the pupils should know, using their professional judgement, and taking care not to distract from the learning objective.

Feedback

- Feedback can be a written comment or given verbally. It can be delivered to an individual or to a group of pupils. The feedback method will be appropriate to the task being assessed.
- Feedback may not always involve a grade or numerical mark but will make it clear to pupils how well they have done and how to improve. It is constructive and enables the pupil to move forward in their learning.
- Pupils should be encouraged to discuss feedback with the teacher if further information is needed or feedback is not understood.
- All teachers, not just English teachers, should correct spelling and grammar within reason. If this becomes a distraction to the assessment of the task's main learning objective then teachers will be selective.
- Feedback to pupils should include indications of their current Attainment and Effort levels as per the School Report grades. This should include explanation of how to get to the next level if appropriate.

Immediate Feedback

This is part of the formative assessment process and could include feedback from mini-whiteboards, bookwork etc. and is usually given verbally to pupils for immediate action. Immediate feedback could involve the use of a teaching assistant to support or challenge a child or group or a redirection of the focus of the teaching or task. Where pupils are supported in a task, the appropriate code (T or TA) should be used, and the code 'VF' should also be used as a reminder that pupils have received verbal feedback.

Summary Feedback

This takes place at the end of an activity and may take the form of peer or self-evaluation against the agreed criteria. This could include ticking down a checklist of the success criteria or writing feedback for a partner on a post it note, which is then stuck into the exercise book. Summary feedback may inform the teacher's focus or use of review feedback.

Review Feedback

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Review feedback takes place some time after the activity and, for this reason, is usually written, but it could involve teacher-pupil conferences, especially for younger or less confident children.

In the Lower School, for efficiency and clarity, a marking code is used (See **Appendix 1**). This is shared with and explained to the pupils at the beginning of the year. It is stuck into the pupil's exercise books and put on display in the classroom for easy reference. Teachers mark in green using the marking codes provided. Comments at the end of a piece of work should be in the style of handwriting that the children are being taught to use – i.e. print for younger children, cursive in the school font for older children. They could include the following:

- what went well - a comment about what the child has done well (you lined up your numbers in columns);
- even better if - a comment about what the child should do to improve their work (don't forget to check whether you are adding or subtracting);
- now try this – a suggestion of what the child could do to make more progress (here is a harder question for you to try);
- a question for children to answer (How could you check that your answers were right?)

It is expected that teachers will use their professional judgement as to how much detail is appropriate when marking a given piece of work but a minimum of four pieces of extended writing a term should be marked in detail.

Follow Up

Particularly in the case of review marking, children need to engage with it to be meaningful. Time should be set aside regularly for pupils to read comments and respond to them. In the Lower School, pupils use a purple pen to respond. Responses could include copying out spellings, correcting mistakes or responding to questions and challenges that the teacher has set. Wherever possible, pupils should be encouraged not to rub out mistakes but instead to write the correct answer nearby. Teachers should not change their marking, but should instead mark the correction. We want pupils to be proud of the fact that they are making progress, rather than trying to hide their mistakes.

Tracking, Monitoring and Intervention

Subject teachers keep records of marks for homework, class tests and examinations. In addition, departments keep central records of examination results and other 'key' marks. Subject Teachers should inform Form Teachers and Year Tutors if there are significant issues with a student's achievement or effort. The Subject Teacher, Form Teacher or Year Tutor will speak to parents. Section Heads maintain a pastoral and academic oversight of each pupil in their Year Group. If a pupil is underperforming significantly across multiple subjects, the Year Tutor will be responsible for putting an action plan in place to address this.

Quality Assurance

- The Head of Department will ensure that marking in his/her Department is of a high standard and complies both with the School and Departmental marking policies. This could include:
 - File/exercise book scrutiny to check marking is happening and feedback is appropriate.
 - Discussion in department meetings or with individual teachers.
 - Discussions with pupils.
- If deficiencies emerge, the Head of Department might first decide to examine a wider sample of work and widen discussions. If concerns appear well-founded, he/she must discuss them with the member of staff concerned and offer support and further monitoring to remedy the situation.
- Ongoing issues with marking and feedback should be referred to the department's LT Line Manager in the first instance.

Books are scrutinised regularly for evidence of effective feedback. Further evidence will be gained through learning walks, formal lesson observations and planning checks. The following list is suggestive of evidence of effective feedback taking place.

Book Looks

- learning objectives and/ or success criteria at the top of each task
- clear where a child has had support
- acknowledgement of work completed with teacher's initials
- written comments and responses

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- editing and improvement of work
- evidence of peer and self-assessment

Planning Checks

- annotations to demonstrate changes in grouping
- adaptations to planning according to feedback

Learning Walks and Lesson Observations

- teachers giving immediate or summary feedback
- teachers directing teaching assistants to support or challenge an individual or group
- peer and self-assessment activities
- teachers not following the lesson plan if it is clear that children need a different activity

Availability of Information

The Principal has access to the files of all pupils. Any student data stored by staff must be within the guidelines of the Data Protection Act and GDPR (from May 2018)

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KS1 Marking Symbols

I	Independent work
T	Teacher support
TA	Teaching assistant support
VF	Verbal feedback
✓	Correct
✘	Incorrect
•	Incorrect – please correct
Sp	Spelling mistake
^	Missing word or phrase
≡	Missing capital letter
○	Missing punctuation
HP	House point

KS2 Marking Symbols

T	Teacher support
TA	Teaching assistant support
VF	Verbal feedback
✓	Correct
✘	Incorrect
•	Incorrect – please correct
Sp	Spelling mistake
^	Missing word or phrase
≡	Missing capital letter
○	Missing punctuation
P//	Start a new paragraph
HP	House point