



Marking and Feedback Policy

(An evidence informed approach)

Updated: March 2026

Review Date: March 2028

Signed:

1. Policy Purpose and Core Principles

The primary aim of this policy is to ensure that all teacher feedback facilitates genuine pupil progress by closing the gap between a pupil's current performance and the intended learning goal. At Dover Park Primary School, we define feedback as: *"information given by a teacher to pupils about their performance that aims to improve learning."*

This policy marks a deliberate shift from a "methods-based" approach - the historical "see-saw" between exhaustive written marking and verbal feedback - to a **principles-based approach**. We recognise that the medium of delivery (written or verbal) is secondary to the quality of the pedagogical principles underpinning it. The policy has been formulated upon the significant research into effective feedback conducted by the EEF: [EEF Teacher feedback to improve learning](#) (See appendix 1 and 2).

All practitioners are expected to adhere to the three fundamental principles that drive our feedback strategy:

- **Laying the Foundations:** Prioritising high-quality initial instruction and robust formative assessment.
- **Moving Learning Forward:** Delivering appropriately timed feedback focused on the task, the subject, and the pupil's self-regulation.
- **Planning for Pupil Receipt and Use:** Ensuring pupils have the motivation, trust, and capacity to act upon the information provided.

2. Laying the Foundations: High-Quality Instruction

Feedback is a supplement to, not a substitute for, high-quality initial teaching. At Dover Park Primary School, we recognise that feedback is ineffective if the initial learning has not occurred or if the curriculum is poorly sequenced.

"Feedback can only build on something; it is of little use when there is no initial learning or surface information. Feedback is what happens second." (Hattie and Timperley, 2007)

2.1. Formative Assessment Strategies

Before feedback can occur, teachers must implement strategies to clarify where the learner is going and where they are now.

Clarifying Learning Intentions

To establish a shared "concept of quality," teachers should use a range of strategies including:

- **Strengths and Weaknesses Discussion:** Using anonymised examples to co-construct success rubrics.

- **Model Work:** Critiquing high-quality previous examples to identify successful features.
- **Choose-Swap-Choose:** For example, in KS1, pupils write a letter 'd' ten times, circle their best attempt, and justify their choice to a partner.

2.1.2. Eliciting Evidence of Learning

To reveal pupil thinking and identify specific learning gaps, the school mandates the use of a range of feedback and response initiatives, including:

- **Effective Questioning:** Using "no hands up," providing "wait time," and listening to the pupil's thought *process* rather than just the final answer.
- **All Student Response Systems:** Using mini-whiteboards, true/false cards, or **hinge questions** (multiple-choice questions where incorrect options reveal specific misconceptions).
- **Exit Passes:** Collecting short responses at the end of a lesson to assess the class's readiness to move on.
- **Carefully Designed Tasks:** Creating activities specifically to reveal thinking, such as targeted apostrophe placement exercises rather than general grammar rules.

3. Delivery: Appropriately Timed Feedback

There is no school-mandated schedule for feedback frequency. **Teacher professional judgement** is the primary driver for timing. Teachers must judge whether immediate intervention is required to prevent a misconception from embedding, or if a delay is necessary to encourage the retrieval of information.

Table 1: Factors Influencing Feedback Timing

The Task	The Pupil	The Class
Some tasks provide their own feedback (e.g., music, art, or computer-aided quizzes). Immediate feedback is vital for tasks where errors are not self-evident, such as science practicals or drafting an essay.	High-attaining pupils should often be deprived of immediate feedback to encourage "productive struggle." Struggling pupils require scaffolded hints to remain productive without being given the full answer.	If a misconception is widespread (e.g., Year 1 pupils confusing intervals on a number line), the teacher must provide immediate whole-class feedback or re-teach the concept.

4. Content: Focusing on Progress

Feedback content must provide a "recipe for future action" and target the specific learning gap.

Table 2: Feedback Content Comparison

Feedback More Likely to Move Learning Forward	Feedback Less Likely to Move Learning Forward
Task: Focused on the outcome of a specific piece of work and advice on how to improve it.	Personal Characteristics: Focused on the pupil's innate ability or personality (e.g., "You are so smart").
Subject: Focused on underlying processes and skills used across the subject.	Vague Praise: General comments that lack specific information for improvement (e.g., "Good effort").
Self-regulation: Prompts that help pupils plan, monitor, and evaluate their own work.	Grades Alone: Scores provided without preparatory work or clear criteria for what the grade signifies.

5. The Feedback Loop: Pupil Recipience and Response

The feedback loop is only closed when the learner uses the information to progress. Teachers must consider the "Recipience Process" and plan for how pupils will handle the information.

5.1. Factors Influencing Pupil Use of Feedback

1. **Motivation:** Pupils must welcome feedback. Teachers must frame feedback as a result of **high expectations** and a belief in the pupil's potential, rather than a lack of ability.
2. **Self-confidence:** Feedback that contradicts a pupil's "self-concept" can be disheartening. Teachers must monitor emotional responses to constructive criticism.
3. **Trust:** Pupils only act on feedback if they trust the teacher's motives and professional expertise.
4. **Working Memory:** Feedback must be **clear and concise**. Long, rambling comments overload a pupil's processing capacity.

5.2. Post-Feedback Activities

Teachers are required to plan specific time for pupils to engage with feedback by utilising strategies such as:

- **Detective Work:** Instead of correcting a spelling, place a dot in the margin. The pupil is expected to find and fix the error.
- **Three Questions:** Providing three **gap-specific** prompts at the end of a piece of work that require the pupil to think and respond.
- **One-to-One Conferencing:** Short, verbal discussions (the **Ash Grove model**) conducted while the rest of the class is engaged in meaningful independent work.
- **Completing Similar Problems:** Setting a new, similar task immediately to allow the pupil to apply the feedback.

6. Methods: Written and Verbal Feedback

The **content** of the feedback takes precedence over the **medium**. Teachers should select the method that offers the highest impact for the lowest opportunity cost.

- **Written Feedback:** Must be purposeful. Time-efficient strategies such as **marking codes** and **live marking** (marking during the lesson) are encouraged over lengthy post-lesson comments.
- **Verbal Feedback:** This is often the most time-efficient method. It can be directed at individuals, specific groups with a shared misconception, or the whole class. To maximise impact, verbal conferencing should be targeted and specific, occurring while the class is focused on high-quality independent tasks.

7. Workload Management and Opportunity Cost

Dover Park Primary School prioritises impact-driven feedback over compliance-driven marking.

- Feedback should always be "more work for the recipient than the donor."
- School leaders will monitor feedback requirements to ensure teacher wellbeing is protected and that planning time is not sacrificed for low-impact administrative marking.

8. Presentation Expectations

- Each lesson will have a Learning Objective (LO) sticker, which the pupils stick into their books at the top left hand of the page. Where appropriate the lesson will also have success criteria and pupils may also be asked to find evidence for each success criteria they have fulfilled as part of their learning.
- Teachers will mark and give verbal feedback related to the LO but also comment on spelling, presentation and other key points for improvement.


Date(s):
LO:

- In work where there is a written outcome, teachers will identify next steps/areas for improvement through THINK PINK marking. Pupils will then respond to these comments, where necessary, and improve their work through a BETTER IN BLUE response.
- All handwriting should follow the school scheme (YR, 1 and 2 begin using pencil. When children are ready, or by the end of year 3, children should be writing in pen. Children in years 4,5 & 6 will use a handwriting pen) Once a child is writing in pen, this should be used across all subjects with the exception of maths, which will need to be in pencil.
- All underlining must be completed with a ruler
- Errors to be crossed out with a single straight line
- In mathematics, pupil should only write one digit per square
- All paper must be trimmed before being stuck into book and should be stuck in straight with no overhang
- All work MUST be dated and a LO sticker used.

TEACHER FEEDBACK TO IMPROVE PUPIL LEARNING

Summary of recommendations






Education
Endowment
Foundation


Teacher feedback to improve pupil learning

Check. Adapt

Scan to access our guidance on giving effective feedback




Select from a menu of approaches to move learning forward, responding to pupils' understanding.




Check

understanding of all learners


Most misunderstand, so **pause and fix**




Some are unsure, so **adapt support**



Most understand, so **extend and support**





Adapt

to move learning forward

Re-teach (not repeat)

- Explain differently
- Use new examples or analogies
- Model the task or your thinking step by step

Add or remove scaffolding

- Give verbal, visual or written help
- Share a checklist or template
- Show an example or model

Extend understanding

- Ask for reasoning or explanation
- Use peer teaching
- Build links across topics

Address misconceptions

- Ask diagnostic questions
- Compare or vote on answers
- Ask pupils to explain their thinking

Support understanding

- Link to prior knowledge
- Use text or images to help memory
- Connect to real life examples

Use flexible groupings

- Group pupils by skill or understanding
- Pair pupils for peer support
- Use targeted teaching assistant support

Give immediate feedback

- Feedback to individuals or groups, verbal or written
- Use prompts or cues
- Give time to improve

Adjust task or challenge

- Clarify or chunk challenge
- Set one short, clear goal
- Guide or model steps to follow

Adapting future lessons

- Anticipate pupils' needs
- Pre-teach key concepts
- Plan for gaps or misconceptions