THOMAS'S BATTERSEA MARKING AND FEEDBACK POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of marking and feedback is to further children's learning.

At Thomas's Battersea, we believe that marking and feedback should provide constructive guidance to every child, focusing on success and improvement needs against learning intentions; enabling children to become reflective learners and helping them to close the gap between current and desired performance.

Marking is a process that provides the teacher with information about a pupil's understanding, strengths and areas for development, and the pupil with feedback about what they have done well, and what they need to develop.

Quality feedback is one of the key features of Assessment for Learning, which can be summarised thus:
- The process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there.

AfL should inform what is taught and is integral to the effective planning of teaching and learning.

Best practice includes:
- sharing learning goals with learners
- helping pupils to know and recognise the standards they are aiming for
- developing pupils' capacity for self-assessment
- focusing on how pupils learn, underpinned by the belief that every learner can improve
- involving both the teacher and the learner in reviewing and reflecting on the assessment information
- providing feedback which leads the learner to recognise the next steps and how to take them

Feedback can take a number of different forms. Some types of feedback will be found in books, but much of pupils' practical work, and their learning experiences, results in verbal feedback. It is, therefore, important to focus on feedback as a whole, rather than on written annotations and comments alone.

Whatever form feedback takes, in order to move forward, pupils must understand their achievements and know precisely what they must do next to make progress.

AIMS/PRINCIPLES

High quality marking and feedback:
- is part of ongoing assessment, informing future teaching and learning
- is specific, accurate and clear – accessible to the child
- encourages a growth mindset by giving appropriate praise for effort
- helps children to understand that a 'wrong' answer can be a learning opportunity
- responds to individual learning needs, indicating success and areas for future improvement – scaffolding pupils' efforts towards such improvement
- recognises progress – acknowledging what a learner is doing correctly now with what they have done incorrectly before
- is regular and prompt, ensuring communication between teacher and child as soon as possible after the completion of a task/activity – 'live marking' with the children is particularly effective (and in many cases verbal feedback will be more immediate and effective than written comments)
- focuses on key aspects of the work, not attempting to assess everything, but providing constructive advice
- relates to learning intentions and success criteria, which are shared with and understood by the child – these should relate to appropriate age-related key objectives
- supports the target setting process as an integral part of that cycle, informing future planning and identifying targets for individuals or groups of children
- includes the pupils, where appropriate, giving them opportunities to become aware of their strengths and learning needs, and encouraging them to reflect on and correct/improve their own work
- incorporates teacher assessment, peer assessment and self-assessment
- is meaningful, useful, time-efficient and manageable for teachers – the impact is more important than the process
- allows time for children to read, reflect on and respond to marking, making improvements in response to the feedback that has been provided
- should be challenging – and used to encourage pupils to aspire to excellence
- moves pupils on in their learning

STRATEGIES

Different approaches to marking are appropriate to different types of task.

1.   Summative Marking

This usually consists of ticks and crosses and is associated with closed tasks or exercises. Closed tasks like these should be kept short and marked as soon as possible to ensure that they are worthwhile (full marks every time suggest that tasks are too easy) and that children learn from their mistakes. At times pupils may self or peer mark for immediate feedback of what is correct/incorrect.

Marks or scores out of a total are appropriate for this type of marking, but it should be noted that, once a grade or mark is awarded, this is what pupils focus on. Grades and marks should thus be avoided where formative marking is employed, when we want pupils to focus on the comments and targets/areas for development.

2.   Formative Marking

Wherever the task is more open, feedback is not simply a matter of marking what is right and wrong, but of providing constructive guidance and teaching points. This type of feedback should focus first and foremost on the learning intention/objective and success criteria of the task. The emphasis in marking should be both on success in relation to the learning intention, and areas for improvement. Feedback should help the child in 'closing the gap' between what they have achieved and what they could have achieved.

Pupils should be made aware of the learning intention/objective of the lesson or series of lessons, and this should be stated in child-friendly terms. It is important to separate the learning intention from the context.

Success criteria for the task can then be used to scaffold the learning activity, to guide feedback and to enable pupils to assess their own work and that of others. Success criteria can be differentiated or targeted to address particular needs. For example, less able pupils might be required to meet a few specified criteria, with the more able being required to go beyond these to meet more sophisticated requirements. Similarly, an all/most/some approach may be employed to differentiate success criteria.

Pupils can then use the success criteria to scaffold their own self and peer assessment. Traffic lights, smiley faces, tick lists, exit passes, and other forms of self-assessment may be used to allow pupils to reflect on, assess and give feedback in relation to learning.

Sometimes this self and peer assessment will be sufficient on its own, but at other times more detailed written feedback from the teacher will be required. Teachers should use their professional judgment to decide which work requires 'deeper marking'; it is recognised that 'response marking' is not appropriate for all types of work.

A colour other than blue or black should be used for marking, so that pupils can immediately see the feedback. A marking code can save time and is appropriate in some instances. Similarly, marking stampers and Post It notes may also be usefully employed in providing feedback.

When providing detailed written feedback, areas for success/improvement can be identified using 'Two Stars and a Wish' with younger pupils (LS/MS), while WWW and EBI ('What Worked Well/Even Better If') may be more suitable when feeding back to older pupils. Green and pink ('green for go' – to identify areas of success; and 'pink for think' – areas for improvement) pen marking is also appropriate.

Whatever form it takes, in order for marking to be formative, the information must be understood and acted on by pupils – i.e. the most important aspect of formative marking is the impact: how

the feedback moves the learning forward. Time should thus be set aside (either in class or for homework) for pupils to read and take on board the feedback they have been given, identifying the successes and the area(s) for improvement, and then, where appropriate, to make their improvement. The 'purple pen of progress', advocated by Claire Gadsby (where pupils respond to marking in purple ink), is one recommended approach to feedback.

It is not necessary for teachers to go back and mark pupils' responses to feedback ('triple marking'), but they should be looking out for – and picking up on – the impact of the feedback on future work.

If teachers wish, the code VF (or an appropriate stamper) may be used to indicate where verbal feedback has been given.

MONITORING

Feedback and marking will be monitored through lesson observation and through looking at samples of books/work, focusing on:
- evidence of the impact of feedback on future work
- evidence of feedback informing future teaching
- the level of difficulty/challenge of tasks set
- how feedback relates to success criteria, learning intentions and to age-related key objectives
- clarity of feedback
- appropriateness of feedback
- evidence of peer and self-assessment
- pupils' response – particularly improvements made in response to feedback
- frequency of marking/feedback – is it up to date?

See also: Assessment Policy, Battersea Teaching and Learning Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually			
Created: September 2011	By:	Clare Oswald, Head of Middle School	
Latest Review: January 2018	By:	Clare Oswald, Deputy Head Academic	Changes made
Next Review: January 2019	By:	Clare Oswald, Deputy Head Academic	