Mosspits Lane Primary School

Using Feedback to Improve Learning Policy

Updated: February 2023

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6.1 What might effective verbal feedback look like in the classroom?

At Mosspits Lane Primary School, we recognise that **purposeful feedback** to pupils is a key component of high quality teaching and is an integral part of classrooms across all phases and subjects. It supports pupil progress, builds learning, addresses misunderstandings, and closes the gap between where a pupil is and where the teacher wants them to be.

Our **feedback policy** is based on what has been found to be effective in classrooms and is underpinned by the principles of **good feedback** rather than *just the methods of delivery*. It outlines **evidence-informed principles** at the heart of our school practice, and exemplifies this.

It is important to acknowledge a central challenge associated with the delivery of teacher feedback: **workload.** Feedback, and particularly some forms of written feedback, continue to take up a large amount of teacher time, limiting the time teachers can give to other vitally important tasks and often with a negative impact on their wellbeing. This policy has been written to support teachers in providing the **best quality feedback possible** within realistic parameters.

The school's feedback policy has been devised supported by recommendations from a guidance report from the **EEF, 'Teacher Feedback to Improve Learning' (2021)** and is referenced throughout.

Within the EEF report, **Dylan Willian,** Emeritus Professor of Educational Assessment, Institute of Education, UCL states that:

'…feedback is likely to be more effective if it is approached **systemically, and specifically**, by adopting three fundamental principles: **careful groundwork** before the feedback is given, providing **well-timed information** that focuses on **improvement**, and also taking into account **how learners receive and use that information**.'

1. What is feedback?

Feedback is information given to pupils to enable them to improve.

Feedback can:

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

These four aspects of feedback are expanded here: (EEF 2021)



2. Lay the foundations for effective feedback

To offer effective feedback, teachers must first **lay the foundations** well before feedback is provided. Specifically, by providing **high quality instruction**, including the use of key **formative assessment strategies**.

2.1 Providing high quality instruction

Good initial instruction will reduce the work that feedback needs to do. John Hattie and Helen Timperley noted that, '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' (2007).

The characteristics of effective instruction vary by phase and subject but the EEF outline some general principles:

In **delivering effective teaching**, teachers:

- build on pupils' **prior knowledge** and experience;

• avoid overloading pupils' **working memory** by breaking down complex material into smaller steps;
• encourage the **retention of learning** by using **repetition, rehearsal, practice, reworking** and **focused retrieval of critical knowledge** and skills;
• deliver a **carefully-sequenced curriculum** which teaches essential concepts, knowledge, skills, and principles;
• rigorous focus on ambitious **vocabulary acquisition**;
• use powerful analogies, illustrations, examples, explanations, comparisons, and demonstrations;
• are aware of **common misconceptions** and prepare strategies to counter them;
• **plan effective lessons**, making good use of explicit **modelling, definitions, explanations,** and **scaffolds** to support learning as well as **concrete and practical resources;**
• **adapt teaching** in a responsive way to support struggling and excelling learners while maintaining **high expectations for all**, such as pre-teaching vocabulary/less secure key concepts
• provide pupils with tools and strategies to **plan, monitor** and **evaluate** their learning.

2.2 Formative assessment

A key component of effective initial instruction is the use of **formative assessment strategies**, providing teaching that is **adaptive** to pupils' needs and using evidence about learning to adjust instruction to ensure that **learning moves forward**. Formative assessment strategies are required to:

- set learning intentions (which feedback will aim towards); and

- assess learning gaps (which feedback will address).

The EEF describe this as, *'clarifying, sharing, and understanding learning intentions'* and *'eliciting evidence of learning'.*

2.3 Sharing learning intentions

What *might* the **sharing of learning intentions** look like in the classroom?

Teachers need to have a clear idea of what the learning intention is and should share this with pupils. The EEF draws on Dylan Willian research to suggest the following ideas:

• **Strengths and weaknesses discussion**: share with pupils anonymised examples of children's work, without informing them which you think is high or low quality; discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the work and use this discussion to construct a rubric for successful work in that area.
• **Model work:** share excellent examples of previous pupils' work; discuss with the class what makes this work high quality. You may wish to focus on particular elements of the model answers.
• **'What not to write'**: discuss with the class a list of 'what not to write'. This could follow a presentation to the class of an incorrect pupil response to a task; these are sometimes referred to as 'non-examples'.
• **Design questions**: this could be a strategy for KS2 pupils where, closely guided by the teacher, they design a question (and accompanying answer) for a topic they are learning.
• **'Choose-Swap-Choose'**: a strategy where a teacher asks pupils to do the same thing multiple times, before working with a partner to identify which attempt was most successful. In KS1 a teacher may ask pupils to write the letter 'd' ten times. Each student could then circle which is their best attempt before swapping with a partner and discussing whether they agree with their choice. This provides an opportunity to discuss the quality of work and this technique could be used across subjects and phases.

Establishing and sharing the learning intention provides the teacher and pupil with a **shared understanding** of the **'concept of quality'** that they are aiming for. Feedback can then be used to move pupils towards this concept.

2.4 What might 'eliciting evidence of learning' look like in the classroom?

To provide high quality feedback, a teacher needs to **assess where a pupil's learning gaps are** for a given task or skill. Only then can they provide feedback that targets these weaknesses. This will require **effective formative assessment** of pupils' understanding using carefully designed tasks, activities, and questioning to reveal pupil thinking before providing feedback on this thinking.

These strategies will be part of a teachers' daily practice:

- Effective questioning;
- All-student response systems;
- Carefully designed tasks

Effective questioning
This enables teachers to assess pupil understanding, interpreting pupils' responses to questions to determine what feedback to provide. Teachers should ensure they are asking all pupils for responses and consider using techniques such as 'no hands up'. They should provide sufficient 'wait time' for pupils to respond and carefully frame questions so that they reveal more about a pupil's thinking. This will inform the feedback the teacher then gives.

All student response systems
For quick checks, consider using practical approaches such as mini-whiteboards or true or false (or red and green) cards. 'Hinge point questions' also offer a potentially useful technique: these are multiple choice questions where each incorrect answer demonstrates a pupil error in understanding. Ideally, answers will be very quick to assess in the lesson, so a teacher can use these questions mid-lesson, to assess where to go next and what feedback to offer.

Carefully designed tasks
Teachers should design pupil tasks with feedback in mind so that these provide evidence on what a pupil understands, knows and can remember. Whether pupils are responding to a series of questions, writing an extended piece of work, engaging in practical tasks or conducting a discussion, whatever the task, the teacher should ask themselves, 'Will the task reveal pupils' learning, and can I use this to give feedback?'

3. Deliver appropriately timed feedback that focuses on moving learning forward

Once effective initial instruction has been delivered— and following the establishment of the learning intention and formative assessment of pupils' understanding— teachers should then provide **appropriately timed feedback**, which focuses specifically on the task, subject, and/or pupils' self-regulation strategies.

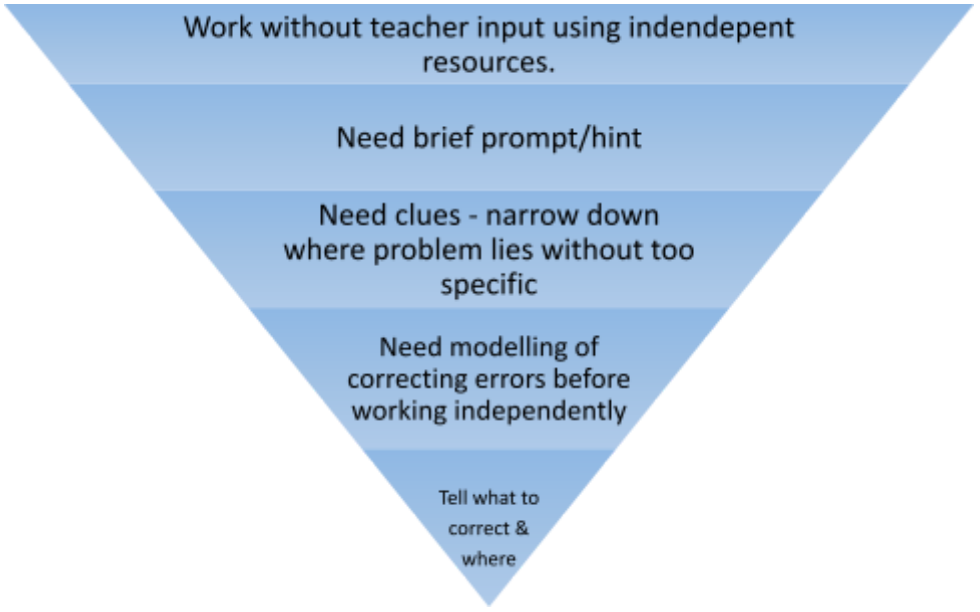
3.1 Delivering appropriately-timed feedback
Feedback can be timed in different ways. **Immediate feedback** may be effective as it could prevent misconceptions from forming early on. However, **delayed feedback** could also be beneficial as it may enable pupils to fully engage with the work before being given an answer. In turn, this may lead to them working hard to retrieve information they've already learned, which could help pupils to remember more of the learning.

3.2 What might appropriately-timed feedback look like in the classroom?
Teachers should use professional judgement on the timing of feedback across teaching and learning activities. To guide this judgement, three things need to be considered: **the task, the pupil** and **the class**.

The task
The **timing of feedback** will be adjusted depending on the task that pupils are undertaking. Some tasks may give feedback themselves i.e. mis-steps may also become self-evident in Maths or if, upon completing a task, a pupil has not produced the answer they expected. The specific task itself may have **inbuilt feedback** such as a computer-aided quiz or the teacher may have revealed answers in advance and has asked pupils to show their workings to get there.

Other tasks may not reveal errors, gaps in knowledge, or misconceptions so swiftly: when writing extended pieces, for example. Failure to correct these could lead to these misconceptions enduring and hampering later understanding so teachers would intervene earlier.

The pupils
Some pupils may benefit from more immediate feedback whereas others could improve as a result of delaying feedback. A teacher should monitor pupils' progress in tasks, assessing which pupils may be struggling unproductively (who may require a hint or a steer in the right direction or may want some immediate feedback in order to feel more supported) and which pupils may be progressing well. Providing feedback to pupils already working well may distract them or even deprive them of the opportunity to learn and get to the answer themselves. The feedback triangle might be applied:



The class
There may be **similar errors or misconceptions** across a large proportion of the class. If these emerge during a lesson, the teacher would stop and provide **whole class feedback**, involving modelling or clarifying teaching points. For patterns of improvements noted after the lesson through written work, feedback would be addressed in lessons to follow.

3.3 Focusing feedback on moving learning forward

Feedback should focus on **moving *learning* forward**, targeting the **specific learning gap** identified by the teacher, and **ensuring that a pupil improves**. Specifically, high quality feedback can focus on the task (its

outcome and advice on how to improve when doing that specific type of task), the subject (and the underlying processes within that subject), and self-regulation strategies (how pupils plan, monitor, and evaluate their work).

Task
Feedback focused on **improving a specific piece of work** or **specific type of task.** It can comment on whether an answer is correct and will offer specific advice on how to improve learning.

Subject
Feedback targets the **underlying processes** in a task, which are used across a subject. The feedback can, therefore, be applied in other subject tasks. It may be grammatical improvements in English which can be applied in different types of writing or it may be greater use of subject-specific terminology in foundation subjects, which will improve responses across all pieces of work thereafter.

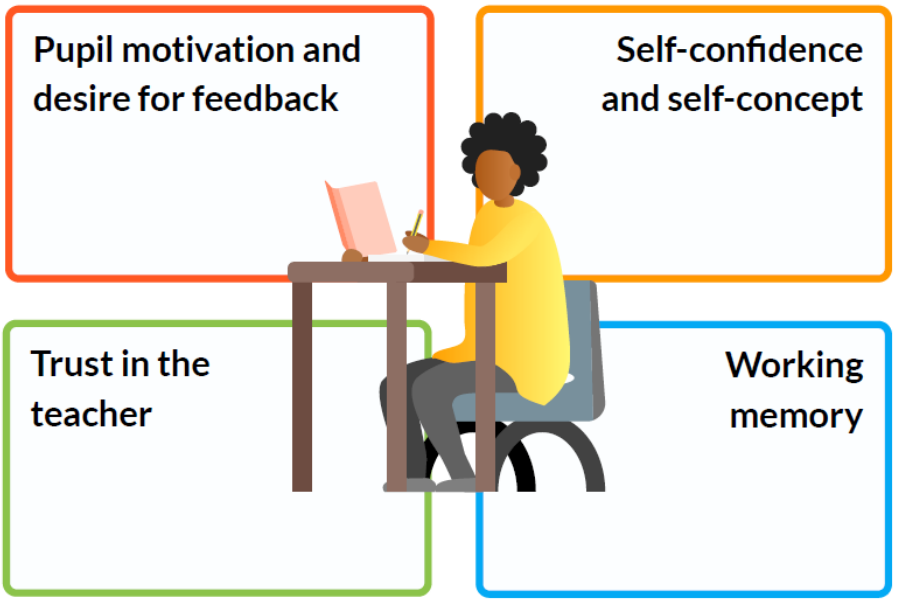
Self-regulation
Feedback is focused on the learner's **own self-regulation**. It is usually provided as prompts and cues—and aims to improve the learner's own ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning.

Use of praise
It is more effective to praise pupils for a specific task, subject, or self-regulatory achievement (rather than more general praise and comments such as 'great work!').

4. Plan for how pupils will receive and use feedback

The most important decisions taken in classrooms are not taken by teachers but rather by learners. A variety of pupil-level factors, such as **pupil motivation, self-confidence, trust in the teacher** and **capacity to manage information**, are all likely to impact the effectiveness of the feedback provided. Careful planning is required to provide time and opportunities for pupils to use the feedback given.

4.1 Receiving feedback
Careful consideration is needed when offering feedback to pupils; a 'one-size fits all' approach may not be so impactful. Factors that may influence a pupil's use of feedback include:



Pupil motivation and desire for feedback:
Whereas one pupil may be motivated by feedback targeted at improving their learning and skills, another may be more interested in feedback that directly addresses how they can perform better in tests.

Self-confidence and self-concept:
Pupil levels of **self confidence** in their academic performance and their **'self-concept'** (what they believe they can achieve) may impact whether they use the feedback provided, particularly when the feedback given contradicts their view of themselves.

Trust in the teacher:
If pupils do not trust their teacher, they may be unlikely to use the feedback provided. However, if they do trust their teacher, and believe that feedback is being provided because the **teacher has high expectations** of them and wants them to improve, the feedback is more likely to be effective.

'Working memory':
This is where information that is being actively processed is held but its capacity is limited and can be overloaded. Teachers may therefore need to consider ways that the feedback they provide does not **overload working memory**. Different pupils will have different capacities and so teachers may need to adapt and provide simpler, clearer feedback to some pupils.

4.2 How might a teacher prepare pupils for receiving feedback?

Discussing the purpose of feedback
Class discussions on why feedback is being given may support pupil motivation and desire to receive feedback. The key is to emphasise that feedback is provided not to be critical but because the teacher has high standards and fully believes pupils can meet them.

Modelling the use of feedback
Pupils may be more likely to use feedback if this is **modelled to them** by their peers. If a peer expresses a willingness to receive feedback and recognises that feedback is not designed to be critical of them but offered to improve their learning, a pupil is more likely to use feedback to improve their own learning. Teachers should look to explore ways of modelling the effective use of feedback. For example, whole-class discussions which focus on a learner who has improved their work because of feedback.

Providing clear, concise, and focused feedback
Sometimes **less is more**. Providing clear and concise feedback (which still features task, subject, and/ or self-regulation advice) may support teachers in offering feedback that does not 'overload' pupils.

Ensuring pupils understand the feedback given.
Careful thought should be given to the **language and content** used in feedback to ensure that pupils understand what the teacher is saying. If providing written feedback, **teacher handwriting** also needs to be clear enough for pupils to comprehend.

Whichever strategy opted for, teachers should **monitor whether feedback is being used by pupils** to ensure that pupils are **acting on the information** provided.

4.3 Planning time and opportunities to use feedback

Effective feedback should be a '**recipe for future action'**. It is crucial that pupils are given the time and opportunity to use the feedback given so that it **moves learning forward**. Rather than just commenting

on work that has been finished, it needs to impact the future work that a pupil will undertake.
After identifying a learning gap with effective formative assessment, feedback is then offered to close this gap. Only when that feedback is used by the pupil is the learning gap, and therefore the feedback loop, closed. Specific activities undertaken during this time include correcting errors, redoing work, or discussing feedback. One idea is for teachers to plan short, powerful activities that could be deployed to enable pupils to act on feedback.

4.4 What might effective post-feedback activities look like in the classroom?

- **Detective activities**

A teacher may put dots in the margin where there may be errors and ask pupils to find and correct them (which could be further scaffolded for some students if they replace the dot with codes which identify the type of correction needed, such as 'e' for 'include more evidence').

- **Class discussion of feedback**

Providing opportunities for the class to collectively discuss the feedback provided may improve pupil use of feedback and their subsequent attainment. Teachers could, therefore, use a class discussion to explore, explain, and clarify feedback before pupils use it in their next activity.

- **'Three questions'**

In this strategy, a teacher poses three focused questions at the end of a written piece of work. The pupils then respond to these. Teachers should ensure that questions are meaningful and focused and they will be different for different students.

- **Correcting errors and editing work**

Teachers may ask pupils to make specific corrections and edits to previous work. A checklist of common errors, with appropriate modelling of use by the teacher, may helpfully steer this approach.

- **Completing similar problems with feedback in mind**

This technique is very compatible with practical subjects such as PE, music, and art where pupils can instantly repeat performances but it can also be used across the curriculum. A maths teacher, for instance, could set a pupil another problem which requires them to use the feedback provided.

- **Redrafting work**

4.5 Using feedback to inform next year's teaching

Using feedback to **inform future teaching and learning** may not only be confined to a teacher's current class. Teacher should also use the feedback they provide to inform how they teach the topic next year. By identifying the feedback that they regularly need to give, this informs them of the **learning gaps and misconceptions** that often arise. In turn, this can be used to adapt the initial instruction provided to pupils next time the teacher teaches this topic, improving the quality of initial teaching.

5. Purposeful and time-efficient, written feedback

Written feedback—whether that is written comments, marks, scores, or a combination of these—has traditionally been at the heart of school feedback practices and has been viewed more broadly as a fundamental aspect of teaching. In many cases, written 'marking' has often been conflated with 'feedback'. More recently it has been recognised that written feedback can be heavily time intensive for teachers—that it comes with significant burden on teacher time – time that might be spent on high quality lesson planning. **Written marking is only one form of feedback** and it is important to consider how written feedback is delivered and how it sits alongside verbal feedback. Written feedback is useful if delivered effectively.

5.1 What might effective and time-efficient written feedback look like in the classroom?

Written feedback, if delivered effectively, can support pupil progress. As outlined earlier in this policy, it will be preceded by **effective instruction** (including considered formative assessment), will be **timed appropriately**, will focus on the **task, subject, and/or self-regulation** and there will be careful consideration of how pupils receive and then use feedback. The following strategies can be employed:

• **Live marking**
Where marking is given during rather than after the lesson. It may be undertaken with individual pupils during typical class teaching or it may be modelled to the whole class collectively using tools such as a visualiser. The approach may also allow for additional verbal interaction with pupils, which may support the understanding of feedback. Live marking involves the teacher moving around the room, reviewing work, and giving instant feedback, and only writing in books as required. It may include **deep feedback conversations**, to prevent feedback becoming solely concerned with surface features such as spelling and punctuation errors. It may be important to pick these out, but feedback also needs to focus on other elements of the task and subject in addition to supporting pupils' self-regulation.
• **Coded marking**
Using the shared understanding of the 'concept of quality' that teachers have devised for a task, a teacher can use simple codes which they can use to mark pupil work. The teacher could add these codes in the margin where these elements are present—or lacking—and may then prompt a child to make specific corrections or improvements.
• **'Thinking like the teacher'**
The quality of written feedback may be constrained by the quality of planning, editing, and reflection exhibited in pupils' written work. Before the teacher expends significant effort on targeted written feedback, pupils could spend time pre-empting teacher comments and editing and revising their work (with scaffolds and modelling used where appropriate).

Written comments can be effective and should not be rejected by teachers because of the time cost associated. Indeed, they may offer an invaluable opportunity to provide task, subject, and self-regulation feedback. The key is to carefully consider when they are offered, ensure they include useful information, and carefully monitor the time being spent on them. A teacher may not need to give them all the time, for every task, and if they are taking the time to provide them, they should ensure that this time is not wasted, ensuring that pupils are then given ample opportunity to use and act on the feedback.

6. Purposeful verbal feedback

Verbal feedback is an integral aspect of effective instruction that can be delivered in a variety of different ways. It can be pre-planned and highly structured, such as whole-class feedback or a structured one-to-one discussion; alternatively, it can be instantaneous and spontaneous, such as quick prompt task advice. It can be directed to an individual pupil or a specific group or to a whole class. It can accompany written feedback, whether that be comments or marks or it can stand alone. Verbal feedback is not simply an 'easy' alternative to written feedback. While it may offer a time-efficient alternative to some forms of written feedback, careful thought and consideration is still required when delivering it. Verbal feedback
can be impactful if delivered effectively. **The principles of effective feedback are more important than the methods of delivery.** Before it is provided, effective instruction should be deployed, feedback should be timed appropriately, it should focus on moving learning forward, and teachers should plan for how pupils receive and use it.

6.1 What might effective verbal feedback look like in the classroom?

The following methods can be used in classrooms:

- **Targeting verbal feedback at the learning intentions**

Using verbal feedback that explicitly uses the language set out in your initial learning intentions and directs pupils' attention back towards this could support more structured and focused verbal feedback. This may involve a checklist set out with the success criteria for the task, ensuring that all were clear about the learning intentions. Verbal feedback, whether at an individual or whole-class level, could refer specifically to this, providing a targeted and focused discussion.

- **'Action points'**

Pupils may find it challenging to process detailed verbal feedback. As such, encouraging pupils to write down (or record in a recording device) and summarise the actions or goals resulting from a detailed verbal conversation may overcome the often transitory nature of verbal feedback. It is crucial that opportunities are then provided for pupils to act on this feedback and close the feedback loop.

- **Verbal feedback using a visualiser**

By offering feedback whilst showing previously completed or currently ongoing work via a visualiser, the teacher can both maintain focused feedback on the task whilst also using the example to model and discuss learning intentions.

- **Peer assessment and feedback**

Work can be reviewed against an agreed set of criteria such as a writer's toolkit devised by the class for a specific genre.

7. Guidance for reviewing and marking pupils' work

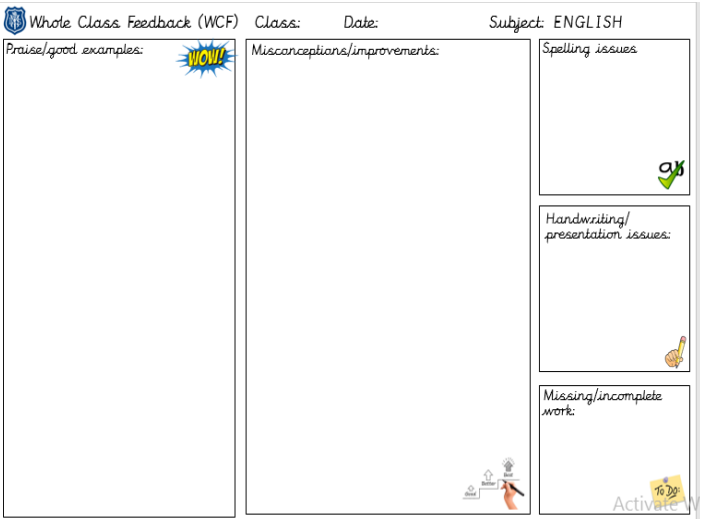
Teachers are not expected to complete extensive written marking in books. Green pen will be used by teaching staff. **All work completed should be read and reviewed** and a small tick made to acknowledge this.

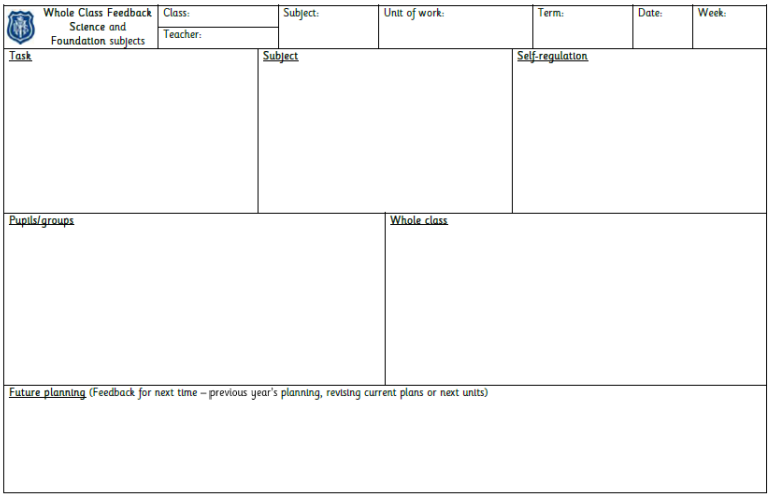
7.1 Codes for marking.

T = A teacher can demonstrate the level of support that has been offered to a child when completing work. 'T' will be written to show support has been given by a teacher/teaching assistant.
Sp = Up to two spelling errors should be identified in any piece of work and they should be highlighted depending on the child and their ability. In foundation subjects, this will only be subject-specific vocabulary.
CL = This is to indicate that a word (or sentence opening) needs a capital letter. In foundation subjects, this will relate to subject-specific words that are proper nouns.
C = Make a correction.

7.2 Recording feedback notes/action points

Teachers will make use of **Whole Class Feedback sheets** to note feedback needed after reviewing books in any subject using the techniques listed earlier i.e. individual feedback, groups or whole class; task or subject feedback.



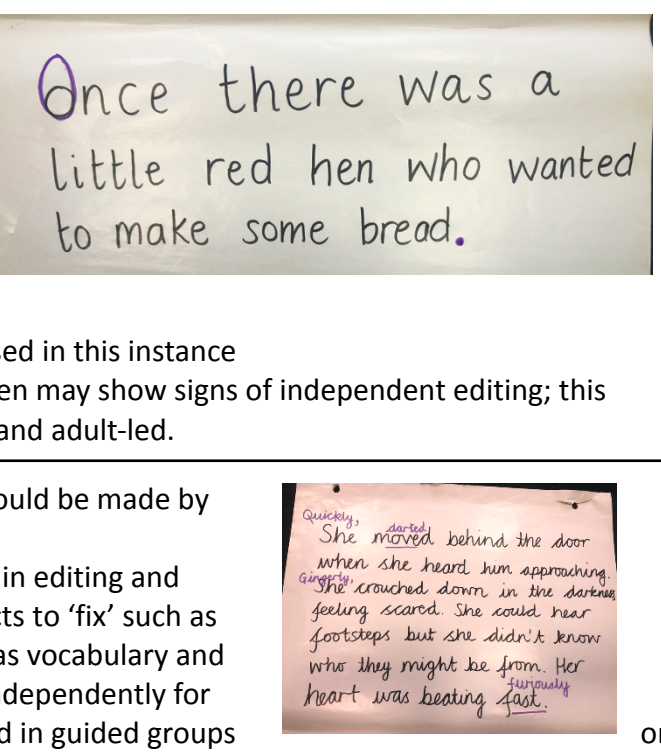


7.3 Subject-specific marking/feedback: Writing

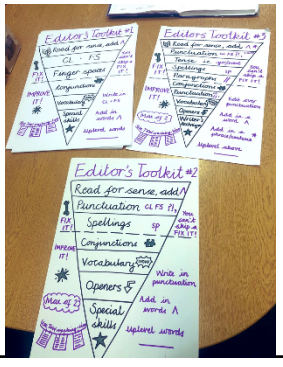
Where feedback is given for pupils to improve aspects of their writing, time should be built in for improvements to be practised.

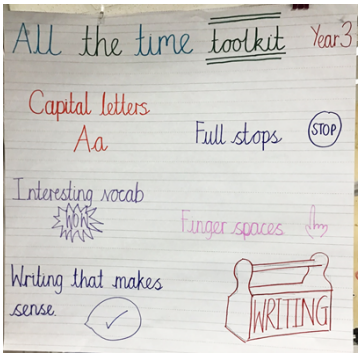
Editing and improving writing using feedback:

Reception and Y1	- Editing sessions should be done on a whole-class basis; - Staff should model how to make improvements to work to their classes using, for example, a flipchart or visualiser; during shared writing activities, for example, a teacher could demonstrate how to find and edit mistakes; - Purple board-marker pens should be used in this instance - Towards the latter part of Year 1, children may show signs of independent editing; this should be undertaken in smaller groups and adult-led.
Year 2 onwards	- Regular modelling of improvements should be made by the teacher. - The **'Editor's Toolkit'** supports children in editing and improving their writing. It includes aspects to 'fix' such as punctuation and those to improve such as vocabulary and literary techniques. These can be used independently for those pupils who are able, or can be used in guided groups on a one-to-one support basis, depending on the child's needs. - Whole class editing activities are important but it is expected that children take on the majority of editing tasks independently; - Editing could be in response to a feedback session, freshly delivered by the class teacher. This would be as part of daily classwork or in response to a 'hot' writing activity. - To support pupils making improvements and to illustrate examples from feedback, children have access to a range of visual



or



	resources such as T4W washing lines, All-the-time toolkits, English working wall prompts, writing toolkit books and independent resource banks; these can be used to support, reinforce and model what is needed to make improvements. - Other classroom resources should be made available, specific to the writing needs of the year group, to support children making independent improvements. - Key stage 2 pupils have a Writer's toolkit to collect language features, writer's techniques and vocabulary, grammar and punctuation prompts and word banks to support independent improvements.	

7.4 Subject-specific marking/feedback: Maths

All work should be reviewed and an acknowledgement tick given to show this. A small tick or dot should be used to identify where a calculation of question has been completed correctly or incorrectly. Where corrections are required, a letter C can be used. Corrections will be made in purple.

Pupils can **self-mark** where answer sheets are given, or whole class answers as this gives instant feedback and opportunity for correction. This is age-appropriate and should be done in purple pen. Additional marking is not necessary, unless, for example, a child has a SEND or where a teacher is working in a 'live' scenario and they would benefit from having a **calculation/question modelled to them.**

8 Checking on learning through formative and summative assessment

School has adopted several different schemes of work across subjects. All schemes are underpinned by the same assessment principles:

-finding out what pupils initially know;
-checking on knowledge throughout a unit; and
-ensuring that the key knowledge is retained.

Throughout a unit of work, a teacher will check on **what pupils know and remember** and ensure that this is retained. It should be conducted at points during the unit of work and checks on learning over time. These activities should be short, allowing children to recall knowledge. **Information from formative assessments** allow teachers to identify knowledge has been retained, what misconceptions have arisen and what more may need to be done to improve this.

At the end of a unit of work, a teacher should conduct a **summative assessment** of a child's progress over time. Feedback from this task will inform future planning, give information about individual pupils and whole class, about subject-specific aspects to review and improve as well as assessment of how previous units (including in previous years) have been taught.