



Marking Policy

September 2026

Introduction

At Birtley House Specialist School we take a professional approach to the task of marking work and giving feedback. Effective feedback is integral to effective teaching and learning, going beyond the 'marks on the paper', where teachers make response to pupil outcomes.

We aim to have a consistent approach to the marking symbols used by individual teachers and have the school marking code (Appendix 1), which is displayed in each classroom. However, in addition to this code, teachers use their professional judgement to enhance it also to take into account the age and needs of the children. All children are entitled to regular and comprehensive feedback on their learning. Therefore, all teachers will mark work and give feedback as an essential part of the assessment process.

This policy defines the principles and strategies for achieving effective feedback and constructive responses to learning.

Aims & Objectives:

There are three main aims for marking work and/or feeding back to the pupils. These are as follows:

- To develop pupils who, as reflective learners, feel involved in their learning and are aware of their own progress.
- To raise attainment and maximise progress for all pupils.
- To ensure effective practice in and links between teaching and learning.

Teachers will mark work and give feedback, both written and oral as appropriate, as an essential part of the assessment process. This must be meaningful and constructive. Feedback should be based around the shared objectives and success criteria.

Children's work is marked and feedback offered in order to:

- show that their work is valued
- boost self-esteem and aspirations, through the use of praise and encouragement
- promote self-assessment, whereby they recognise any difficulties and are encouraged to reflect on themselves and their peers as learners
- ensure pupils are aware of the 'next steps' for progress in their learning and are increasingly involved in determining what these might be
- share expectations
- provide a basis for summative and formative assessment and inform individual tracking of progress
- provide the ongoing assessment that should inform future lesson planning

Strategies for Implementation:

The agreed practical strategies for marking and giving feedback are set out as follows.

Learning Objectives are always shared with the children at the beginning of each activity. They will be communicated:

- By being expressed in pupil friendly language (*I can/ I will be able to...*)
- They will be printed on labels to be stuck into pupils' books
- Verbally, with repeated reminders throughout the session
- By involving pupils in discussion as to what the desirable outcomes might be (developing criteria for success);
- By reinforcement through teacher intervention, for example "*think again about what you are trying to learn/achieve*" or "*can you remember why we said we were doing this activity?*" and so on

Pupils will be encouraged to reflect on their learning, development and achievement in relation to the shared objectives/criteria in the following ways:

- By maximising opportunities for reflective whole class and group plenary sessions across the curriculum
- By modelling and encouraging pupils to use questions which enable/require the learner to think about what they have learnt
- By group and paired discussions with peers
- By seeing themselves as 'first markers' of their own work by colouring in a traffic light to identify how successful they think they have been in achieving the learning objective (See Appendix 1)
- By using writing checklists placed at the front of children's Literacy and topic books (See an example in Appendix 2)

Marking Principles:

Assessed Writing:

The method used in our school for reflecting pupils' achievements and areas for improvement is '**1 success and an improvement**'.

This system is not designed for 'everyday' marking but during assessed writing

e.g. Lesson Objective: To use capital letters in our story writing

Well done, you remembered to use capital letters at the start of your sentences.

Target: Remember next time that places like "Birtley House" in your story must also have a capital letter

- Success is written in green pen
- Targets and improvements are written in red pen

Live Marking:

Live marking takes place throughout all lessons. Teachers give feedback to pupils during the lesson, while the work is being completed. It is often done through circulating, verbal feedback or brief written notes.

Benefits of live marking

For pupils:

- Immediate feedback – mistakes are corrected right away, before they become habits
- Improved understanding – Clarification happens in the moment, so misconceptions can be addressed immediately
- Greater motivation – Pupils see progress instantly and feel supported
- Personalised support – Feedback is tailored to the their exact needs at that point of learning
- Encourages independence – Children can act on feedback straight away, building resilience and self-correction skills

For teachers:

- Saves time – less after-school marking; more assessment happens during lessons
- Better insight – teachers can spot patterns, gaps or misconceptions across the class in real time
- Higher lesson engagement – children stay on task
- Informs teaching – feedback from live marking helps adjust pacing, explanations or differentiation on the spot

For the classroom environment:

- Feedback loop is immediate – creates a culture of progress, where improvement is ongoing
- Encourages active learning – children see feedback as part of their learning, not as an afterthought

As part of the live marking, pupils will be given purple pens to edit their work following any feedback given from the teacher.

When marking pupil outcomes:

- Teachers use a consistent and agreed system for marking and annotation (Appendix 1). This is displayed in each classroom;
- Pupils' learning objectives are highlighted depending on their achievement during the lesson:
 - A green highlighter means that the child has met the learning outcome
 - A yellow highlighter means that the child will need more time to consolidate their learning in order to meet the learning outcome independently
 - A red highlighter means that the child will require additional support from an adult during the lesson of the next lesson in order to progress their learning
- Teachers will note the support that they received for the lesson by highlighting either:

Independent	Supported	Group work
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- Pupils are clearly made aware of when corrections are to be made or when improvement is to be aimed for in subsequent work;
- Pupils can read and understand the marks teachers make (teacher annotations) on their work, or are made aware of them verbally. This may occur when the work is marked with the pupil and may only consist of a brief indicator to remind pupils of the focus of the discussion;
- It is vital that pupils are given a regular directed time in which to read, reflect and/or act on any comments or corrections that have been made as soon as they receive their marked work back. This will then ensure that pupils are aware of their own progress and thus adapt future work accordingly where necessary.

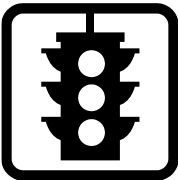
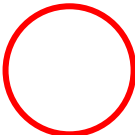
Monitoring and Evaluation

Marking and Feedback will be monitored regularly by the Leadership Team and will form part of our annual monitoring cycle

Marking Policy – September 2026

TO BE REVIEWED: September 2027 or as needed

Appendix 1

Symbol	What it means
	Did you achieve the learning objective / lesson? Colour in -- Green = yes Yellow = some Red = no
Learning Objective	You did not achieve the Learning Objective
Learning Objective	You achieved some of the Learning Objective
Learning Objective	You have achieved the Learning Objective
VF	You were given verbal feedback
✓	This is really good
	You have missed something