MULBERRY STEPNEY GREEN
MATHS, COMPUTING & SCIENCE COLLEGE

MARKING AND FEEDBACK POLICY

Ratified on:

Ratified by: Full Governing Body

Date of next review: March 2023

This policy has been adopted by the Mulberry Schools Trust and will be applied to all schools that belong to the Mulberry Schools Trust.

'What works best when and under what conditions?'

1.   Marking, Feedback and Assessment: key principles:

Marking, Feedback and Assessment (MFA) at schools which belong to the Mulberry Schools Trust (MST) must be **personalised**, **purposeful, constructive, planned for, regular** and **timely** in order to deepen learning and enable all pupils to progress. MFA takes the form of **written**, **verbal** and **audio** feedback the balance of which is determined by the specific needs of pupils and the demands of each subject. Subject teams are expected to regularly define and review their MFA practice to ensure it is **pupil-centred, high impact** and remains **fit for purpose.**

The Mulberry Schools Trust has a clear set of pedagogy, practice and principles that all our schools follow which includes a shared language of learning: PADDLE. Our approach to MFA is underpinned by this:

Planning for Progress: teachers use the information they gather from a range of MFA strategies to inform their planning

Assessment for Learning: Every week, pupils receive high quality, personalised **verbal feedback** from their teachers. As a result of **quality questioning** and **purposeful talk**, teachers and pupils quickly identify misconceptions and gaps in understanding and are able to stretch and challenge learners. Pupils are provided with activities that challenge them to apply the verbal feedback they receive to their own learning.

Differentiation: teachers adapt the verbal, audio and written feedback they provide so it is personalised. During lessons, pupils are provided with opportunities to **peer-assess** their learning and to identify next steps in their learning. MST is committed to developing increasingly independent learners so teachers, where appropriate, plan for learning sequences where pupils are challenged to **self-assess** their own or exemplar work in order to deepen their learning and to make greater progress.

Dialogue: one of MST's greatest strengths is the strong personalised professional relationships built between pupils and teachers and, as such, time for regular high quality personalised verbal feedback and assessment is essential. Teachers also plan lessons that facilitate **purposeful dialogue** between pupils to deepen understanding and to stretch and challenge learners.

Literacy: Pupils are also helped to develop their academic and subject-specific literacy through a range of teaching and learning strategies which encourage pupils to understand how they can improve their own writing and to increasingly self-assess their written communication – an essential skill for examinations and highly literate learners. Teachers do not correct all spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors but select the most appropriate MFA strategy to help pupils improve the quality of their written expression (see Appendix 1).

Engagement: As part of a pupils learning journey, pupils are expected to increasingly self-assess their learning, to identify how they can improve and re-draft their work in order to develop as independent inquisitive learners. As a result, all pupils' class and homework does not need to be marked by the teacher. Instead, it should be clear from the pupils' books, from visiting lessons and when speaking to pupils, that learning and progress over time has taken place and that teachers are providing MFA in line with the agreed subject protocols.

The **VLE** provides a platform for teachers to develop high-impact, time efficient MFA practice for pupils and to provide a space for pupils to peer assess and learn from one another. For example, the use of e-portfolios; online tests and audio feedback. Each subject will develop and refine the VLE as a tool for effective MFA and regularly evaluate its effectiveness.

Organisations such as the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) are striving to provide an increasing research-informed robust evidence base of effective MFA practice (see appendix 1) and MST is committed to engaging with this in order to check that our MFA approach at a subject and whole school level is effective and efficient. (This is essential when we consider that the Government's 2014 Workload Challenge survey identified the frequency and extent of marking requirements as a key driver of large teacher workloads). **We focus on: what works best under what conditions.**

2.   Structure of Marking, Feedback and Assessment

With recent reforms to GCSE and A-level curriculum there has been an increase in the amount of extended writing pupils are completing across subjects and the amount of knowledge that must be retained and applied over two year terminally assessed courses. These changes require MFA strategies to adapt in order to maintain high quality; high impact practice (whilst also taking seriously the workload and well-being implications for teachers).

Each MST school will consider how best to organise the school structure to maximise high impact, efficient MFA strategies.

As a result, each subject area identifies what work is deep marked by the teacher with written feedback for each year group each half term. Each subject area also clearly articulates the formative and summative verbal, audio and written MFA strategies they will deploy in class on a weekly basis to ensure that personalised, purposeful, regular and timely MFA is provided to and by pupils. (See Appendix 2)

Each year, subjects submit a copy of their MFA plan in order to minimise marking pressure points for the teachers and to provide clear guidance for the monitoring of the impact of MFA across the school.

3.   Monitoring and Impact-Evaluation of Marking, Feedback and Assessment

Middle leaders are expected to regularly monitor the impact of MFA through standardisation, moderation and sampling checks. All forms of MFA must be considered when considering the impact of MFA on the quality of learning and progress over time. This includes: verbal, audio and written MFA provided by teachers as well as pupils' self and peer assessment. Evidence of MFA can be found in pupils' exercise books, assessment folders, e-portfolios, by talking to pupils and observing lessons. A holistic appreciation of MFA in all its forms is essential for an accurate understanding of impact. (See 'Judging the quality of teaching and learning over time' for more details).

Every half term whole school marking samples take place to review the quality of MFA across the school. SLT lead these checks and all post holders are invited to take part. Areas of development are prioritised in each faculty and line managers review the work completed towards this in their weekly line management meetings. Senior leaders will then provide weekly updates during SLT meetings.

Every 3 months MFA is prioritised as an area of focus for lesson drop-ins. It is also included as part of our SEF cycle. As a result Heads of Faculty/Department respond to a series of self-evaluation statements about MFA. This process will usually include a learning walk and/or pupil voice activity where the quality of MFA inside and outside of lessons is reviewed.

A brief report is produced and submitted to the Senior leader responsible for Teaching and Learning with a summary of key findings and agreed actions.

The quality of MFA is also monitored through:

1.   Annual subject and year SEF summaries
2.   Half termly SEF cycles (which include learning walks, pupil voice and book looks)
3.   Appraisal cycle (including formal lesson observations)

Appendix 1: Education Endowment Foundation information

EEF's definition of feedback:

Feedback is information given to the learner and/or teacher about the learner's performance relative to learning goals or outcomes. It should aim to (and be capable of) producing improvement in students' learning. Feedback redirects or refocuses either the teacher's or the learner's actions to achieve a goal, by aligning effort and activity with an outcome. It can be about the output of the activity, the process of the activity, the student's management of their learning or self-regulation, or them as individuals. This feedback can be verbal or written, or can be given through tests or via digital technology. It can come from a teacher or someone taking a teaching role, or from peers.

Extract from: [A marked improvement? A review of the evidence on written marking (EEF: April 2016)](#)

Further reading: [Feedback High impact for very low cost, based on moderate evidence](#). (EEF Jan2018)

Education Endowment Foundation

Main findings

- **The quality of existing evidence focused specifically on written marking is low.** This is surprising and concerning bearing in mind the importance of feedback to pupils' progress and the time in a teacher's day taken up by marking. Few large-scale, robust studies, such as randomised controlled trials, have looked at marking. Most studies that have been conducted are small in scale and/or based in the fields of higher education or English as a foreign language (EFL), meaning that it is often challenging to translate findings into a primary or secondary school context or to other subjects. Most studies consider impact over a short period, with very few identifying evidence on long-term outcomes.

- **Some findings do, however, emerge from the evidence** that could aid school leaders and teachers aiming to create an effective, sustainable and time-efficient marking policy. These include that:

  - 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

  - 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

  - The use of targets to make marking as specific and actionable as possible is likely to increase pupil progress

  - Pupils are unlikely to benefit from marking unless some time is set aside to enable pupils to consider and respond to marking

  - Some forms of marking, including acknowledgement marking, are unlikely to enhance pupil progress. A mantra might be that schools should mark less in terms of the number of pieces of work marked, but mark better.

- **There is an urgent need for more studies so that teachers have better information about the most effective marking approaches.** The review has identified a number of areas where further research would be particularly beneficial, including:

  - Testing the impact of marking policies which are primarily based on formative comments and which rarely award grades

  - Investigating the most effective ways to use class time for pupils to respond to marking

  - Comparing the effectiveness of selective marking that focuses on a particular aspect of a piece of work to thorough approaches that focus on spelling and grammar, in addition to subject-specific content

  - Testing the impact of dialogic and triple marking approaches to determine whether the benefits of such approaches justify the time invested.

Appendix 2: Subject protocols template (to be adapted by each school to mirror year group intake)

Subject:							
Post holders with responsibility for monitoring consistency and impact:							
The following work is deep marked by the teacher with written feedback:							
	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
Autumn 1							
Autumn 2							
Spring 1							
Spring 2							
Summer 1							
Summer 2							
The following personalised, purposeful, regular and timely Marking, Feedback and Assessment strategies are deployed on a weekly basis to ensure all pupils deepen their understanding, learn and progress:							