



# Brentwood School

## PREPARATORY

### **PREPARATORY SCHOOL MARKING POLICY**

*This policy is applicable to all Preparatory pupils including those in the EYFS.*

#### **Introduction and aims**

This policy is intended to promote a level of consistency in approach by all teachers marking work at this school. Please view it alongside the assessment policy and policies on Learning Support and Able and Talented pupils, as well as noting departmental assessment requirements as outlined in departmental policies.

#### **Purposes of marking**

Marking is one part of the process of assessment; it takes place to:

- motivate pupils and enhance their performance through appropriate use of praise
- assist in diagnosing problems and indicate areas of further improvement
- give instant feedback to pupils about their performance, so they can be aware of successes and what they need to do to improve
- assess recorded work and inform future planning
- indicate to parents that work is regularly monitored
- help a teacher to measure the effectiveness of his/her teaching

#### **For marking to be effective in Brentwood Prep School, we try to ensure:**

- it is positive and constructive in order to motivate pupils and promote a positive attitude to learning;
- it enables pupils to become reflective learners and helps them to close the gap between what they currently do and what we would like them to do;
- it is manageable;
- teachers focus on certain aspects of the work, not attempting to assess everything, and provide constructive criticism;
- effort is recognised as well as quality;
- children are given time to reflect upon and respond to their comments;
- it is given promptly and regularly to children:
- the language used is consistent, unambiguous, and appropriate to the child's maturity;
- there is a consistent approach throughout the school, in line with the overall policy on assessment, recording and reporting;
- it supports the target setting process and is an integral part of that cycle.
- the principles of the marking process can apply to all age groups.

#### **Processes of marking**

##### **EYFS**

Much of the pupils work in the EYFS is practical and the marking of work is only a small component of the feedback role of EYFS staff. The majority of feedback is given

orally where, through carefully planned questioning, children are given next steps to move their learning forward.

Within the EYFS, there are numerous opportunities for effective feedback and marking relating to the learning objective/intention:

- Written comments on work. Where possible this should take place in the presence of the child.
- Adult led activity records
- Observation records
- Tapestry entries
- Professional discussion between EYFS staff
- Annotation against development matters
- Constructive comments during and after practical activities

### KS1 and 2

As the pupils get older, it is progressively common practice for teachers to share learning objectives and explain the success criteria against which work will be assessed so it is important that marking relates to the success criteria.

'In depth' marking can be time consuming but can be extremely valuable. Time needs to be allocated accordingly, not every piece of work will be marked in detail, and teachers need to be selective.

**regularity** - Marking in the presence of the child is usually the most effective method of marking. As the child becomes older, the pattern of marking changes; there will probably be less time for marking in the presence of the child and, out of necessity, teachers will mark more work out of the classroom. Teachers should mark work at the point of writing, or as soon as possible after the task is completed, aiming to return the marked work in the next lesson. With older children, teachers will often mark as they move around the room, checking for understanding, and providing reminders and prompts as necessary.

**involving pupils** - Pupils should be encouraged to proof-read and edit their own work before it is marked or handed in, this may be done using a coloured pen; as mentioned earlier, it is desirable to mark work with the pupil present, although this is not always practical. Pupils could work with a response partner, looking through the agreed success criteria. Response partners may write comments in the partner's book or sometimes post-it notes or marking grids are used. Much of our marking has been influenced by the extensive research on formative assessment (Hattie, Dweck, Clark) and we aim to encourage independence so that pupils know themselves how they can improve their work.

**marking codes** - Any highly visible coloured pen may be used for marking; if the child has used a coloured pen to edit their own work, it would make sense to try to use a contrasting colour; use should be made of the agreed marking symbols for each subject; whenever possible, a constructive written comment should be given at the end of a piece of work, and a suggestion for future improvement or target. This target or next step for improvement must be clearly signalled.

**corrections** – time must be given for pupils to respond to the feedback given and apply the advice given. (Where a pupil is required to correct work after it has been marked, a different colour should be used, otherwise it could imply that the original marking was 'wrong'!)

**grading** – we are aware that research shows that comments have the most impact on pupil improvement ‘*Grading and marking has also been found to have a detrimental effect on some pupils, and can lead to lower self-esteem, since children tend to focus on the grade rather than comments.*’ (‘Inside the Black Box’ Paul Black and Dylan Wiliam, 1998). Concrete or percentage marks are shared with children only where appropriate; the focus is on comments – verbal or written – which help the child to further their learning.

This is an example of our marking code for Literacy skills, which should be used alongside each subject criteria. Each subject should have their own details for marking clearly displayed in their subject policy. This is not intended to take away the autonomy of the individual teacher. As long as pupils are clear about how their work is being marked, it is possible to use alternative notation and still provide a consistent approach to marking.

<b>Target</b>	<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Action</b>
indicating correctness	(a tick) √	possible improvements could also be suggested
indicating an incorrect point	(a cross) X	it may be appropriate to indicate what would be correct, or to ask the child to self-correct their error
indicating that something does not make sense and needs redrafting	?	this may be explained to the child verbally, or an explanation written on the child’s work
indicating a spelling mistake	(word underlined or highlighted) sp	either write the correct word for the child to practise or ask the child to find out the correction
indicating a word or phrase is missing	(arrow) ^	discuss with pupil what might be missing and suggest they correct or the teacher corrects
indicating a missing punctuation mark	(circle around error, or where mark should be)	discuss with pupil and suggest they check their work for similar errors
indicating where a new line should be started for a new paragraph, or for poetry	NP NL //	discuss with pupil and suggest they check their work for similar errors

### **Literacy Across the Curriculum**

Effective marking should also help to reinforce good literacy skills across all curriculum areas (though keeping in mind manageability for staff and not bombarding pupils with too many areas for improvement).

#### **General strategies:**

- focus attention on those literacy skills which coincide with the meaning and purpose of the work (refer to features of different texts available from the English expectations).  
e.g. *Good use of causal connectives like ‘consequently’ has made your argument stronger and clearer.*

- select high-value features for marking, commenting on features from which the pupil can generalise and apply advice to other written tasks.  
e.g. *Try to make your writing sound more scientific by using the*

*key words or choosing words like 'I predict...' instead of 'I think...'*

- Give specific prompts which tell pupils exactly where and what they need to improve  
e.g. *Reread your second paragraph. Ask yourself what was the main point you were trying to make. Rewrite the first sentence so that this point is clear to your reader.*

- Expect pupils to respond to the prompts – give them time to do so!

#### **Suggested strategies for spelling:**

- Make key words available for pupils within each topic – highlight them on worksheets, display topic word lists, provide lists to stick into books for those who need it, etc.
- Be aware of those pupils on the learning support register and suggest only one or two key topic-words which may help to enhance their work, if spelt correctly. Allow them to use an electronic spell checker (refer to SENDCO for details).
- When errors are made, decide which is the best method of correction for each child: higher ability pupils may be asked to look up in a dictionary the spelling of 3 or 4 words you have underlined; lower ability pupils may be asked to practise the spelling of 1 or 2 words which you have written for them at the end of their writing; common errors may be added to the pupil's personal spelling list in a word book or back of their exercise book.
- Be aware of the common key words which should be known in each year group (see appendix).

#### **Suggested strategies for punctuation:**

- Do not automatically correct their omissions – e.g. ask a pupil to find the 3 places where they should have used full-stops and add them in; another pupil might need to indicate the start of 3 paragraphs within their writing.
- Refer to the English scheme of work relevant to each year group to see what type of phrasing and punctuation has been covered – e.g. year 4 pupils should know what you mean about paragraphs in their writing, but it is not until year 5 that semi-colons start to have more of a focus.

#### **Suggested strategies for presentation:**

- Handwriting is expected to be neat and joined (unless writing information for posters, etc. where a choice of graphics is made). Joined writing aids fluency and helps the kinaesthetic memory for spelling – all teachers need to reinforce this to pupils throughout all areas of the curriculum and marking is one way to draw attention to this.
- Date and titles should be underlined with a pencil and ruler; this helps to organise written tasks and show consideration of audience – again marking could draw attention to organisational features where appropriate.
- It is not desirable for pupils to rub out their writing (time-consuming, messy, too much is rubbed out, etc. etc.), except for display purposes. A neat line should be put through errors and the word/phrase/paragraph rewritten – again, endorse this when marking.

## **Responsibilities**

- **individual teachers** - marking the work they have taught and adhering to marking policy. Keeping up to date with current policy and attending INSET sessions.
- **cover lessons** - where a teacher has covered another colleague's lesson, the teacher who has set the work must make it explicit the procedure for marking. Whilst it is difficult to mark work you have not taught, it is equally difficult to mark work you have not set!
- **Departmental Heads of Subject (including SENDCO, Academic Enrichment Co-ordinator, Literacy Across the Curriculum Co-ordinator) and Phase Leaders** - monitoring the quality and consistency in marking in their subject/phase area; developing agreed code for marking with teachers. Performing a regular work scrutiny, at least one per year group per subject.
- **Deputy Head (with academic responsibility)/Head of EYFS and KS1** - regular monitoring of marking policy; regular reviewing of pupils' work to monitor practice in marking; advising colleagues on effective approaches to marking and offering training to enhance teachers' skills and knowledge further; liaising with colleagues in adjacent key stages to ensure consistency in marking between KS1,2 & 3.

## **Review of this document**

This is intended to be a working document and should be reviewed, at least annually, by the SMT, following on from points raised in work scrutiny and staff meetings.