James Bateman Junior High School

Marking Policy

Introduction

Assessing the learning of pupils is a fundamental aspect of teaching and learning and is vital in order to help learners make progress.

- Marking demonstrates a respect for pupil's learning, provides feedback and indicates the ways in which the learner can improve.

- Effective marking also communicates high expectations, develops self esteem and provides opportunities for self assessment.

- Marking should influence future planning to help ensure that learning meets the needs of all pupils.

Teachers have the professional freedom to mark the learning in a way that meets pupils' needs. However, a whole school framework based on the four principles below will provide guidance and consistency across the school.

Broad Guidelines

Effective marking occurs when it:

1. Cleary relates to the learning process
2. Used to inform future planning
3. Positive and constructive
4. Encourages a dialogue between teacher and child.

For purpose of this policy 'marking' includes

- Verbal feedback
- Written feedback
- Pupil self-evaluation
- Peer assessment

Verbal Feedback

Every pupil has a right to effective verbal feedback. Verbal feedback will be closely linked to the process of learning rather than the outcome; this helps to encourage a 'growth mindset[1]'
For example:-
"Well done you got ten out of ten," comments on the outcome.
"Well done, I can really see that you've been working on your timetables," comments on the process.

All pupils receive verbal feedback to help them with their learning. Verbal feedback will be the primary sources of 'marking' for learners who are still acquiring the basics of reading and writing. If verbal feedback is given then books must be marked with 'VF'.

Written Feedback

Written feedback will be clearly related to the learning. Comments such as 'Good work' or 'Fantastic' are not adequate. Using clear success criteria helps to achieve this aim; it means the pupils understand the relationship between the learning and the marking; therefore the teacher is able to clearly identify the strengths and weaknesses of the pupil.

Written feedback will be different for different pupils. Pupils who are unable to read the marking will need more verbal feedback in order to help them reflect on their learning, pupils who are able to read and understand marking will receive written feedback.

Target setting/Next Steps

As a guide, every one in four pieces of learning will be marked with 'next steps'. This gives the learners clear guidance in relation to their next stage(s) of learning. This will encourage pupils to focus on areas to develop and help them to make progress. Teachers have discretion over how to present next steps to the children. The 'next step' may be in the form of a question, a piece of advice or a target for improvement.

Pupil's self-evaluation

Pupils are also given the opportunity to mark their own learning. This should be based on clear success criteria; this will help the children identify their strengths and weaknesses. Success criteria will be pitched to meet the needs of all pupils. As part of the self-evaluation process, learners will be given the opportunity set themselves targets.

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[1] Dweck, Carol. Growth Mindset. Ballantine Books; (2007)

Peers assessment

Pupils are also be given the opportunity to mark their peers learning. This will also be based on clear success criteria; this will help the pupils identify the strengths and weaknesses of their peers. Success criteria will be pitched to meet the needs of all pupils.

KEY POINT:

Practitioners are free to develop their own approaches to self and peer assessment in line with this policy. This will promote innovation, creativity and a personalised approached to assessment for learning. It is however, imperative that where great ideas are being used, they are shared.

Responding to marking

Pupils will be encouraged to respond to the written marking of the teacher. This will ensure that learners understand the comments made, are aware of their next steps and it will open a dialogue between the teacher and learner. When pupils respond to marking they should consider whether they agree or disagree with the comment and offer their reasons why.

What colour should written marking be?

There is no specific colour that needs to be used, however it should be distinguishable from the colour used by the pupils. This will help the learners identify comments quickly.

Special considerations

It is not uncommon to have a whole school writing target that will require cross-curricular support. On these occasions the English leader may ask all teachers to focus some of their marking on specific writing skills. This will be communicated to staff as appropriate.

Monitoring

Marking will be monitored as part of a 'book scrutiny.' Staff will receive feedback based on the book scrutiny criteria. Comments will highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the marking and offer advice to support continued professional development.