Marking and Feedback in Writing

Revised 2026–27

Intent

The intent of this policy is for marking and feedback in writing to move pupils' learning forward efficiently, not to maximise the volume of teacher annotation. Drawing on the EEF's Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning (2021), feedback should build on effective initial teaching, focus on the task and the process, and be planned so that pupils have time to understand and act on it — whether that means correcting a proportionate number of mistakes, reflecting against the learning objective and success criteria, addressing a common misconception identified across the class, or responding to live verbal feedback given during the lesson. In line with the DfE's Eliminating Unnecessary Workload Around Marking (2016), this feedback should remain meaningful, manageable and motivating: written comment is used only where it earns its time, and oral, in-the-moment feedback is treated as an equally valid, evidence-informed approach.

Marking: Mistakes including spellings

Implementation: Learners spend 2–3 minutes at the start of each writing lesson correcting mistakes from the previous session, using a purple pen. Mistakes are identified against what a child should independently know by the end of the previous year group; the number set should match what the pupil can accurately correct in that time (KS1: 1–3; KS2: up to 5). In Autumn, the teacher identifies errors directly, using an orange highlighter; this reduces through Spring and Summer as learners become more independent. Live marking is preferred for SEND learners where codes are not appropriate. Statutory spellings are corrected by the teacher, highlighted yellow, and written out for the pupil to practise (KS1 1-3, KS23–5). Codes should support, not detract from, the core purpose of writing.

Marking codes: ^ Missing word ~ (under the word or phrase) Re-read for sense • Mistake

Marking and Feedback: Learning Objective and Success Criteria

Implementation: Following a piece of writing, the teacher highlights or refers to the success criteria to show where the learning objective has not been met by using the orange highlighter to identify this. Pupils use the following day to reflect and adjust their writing in response. In UKS2, success criteria should be seen in books approximately once per week to allow for more complex writing tasks and reduce teacher workload.

Feedback: Errors

Implementation: While reviewing work daily, the teacher identifies common errors or misconceptions to unpick with the class, using Rainbow Grammar references where possible. These are addressed through short, focused whiteboard activities at the start of writing lessons that week (a 'what is it / what is it not' approach, as in Maths). This feedback is not recorded in books. Where appropriate, pupils may revisit and edit earlier writing in light of the new understanding.

Feedback: Live Feedback

Implementation: Teachers give verbal feedback that minimises disruption to the writing flow. A common error or misconception identified during the session is addressed individually, through small-group intervention or with the whole class, as appropriate, and reviewed at the end of the lesson to check it has been applied in further writing.

Feedback: Handwriting

Implementation: Teachers give verbal feedback or written feedback after the session, when a persistent error with letter formation arises. This should be identified in yellow highlighter just like a spelling error. The teacher should remodel the letter formation and allow time for the learner to practice. One strategy is asking the learner to complete a line with the correct formation of the letter following remodelling.

Marking Resources Appendix

Item	Intended use
Orange highlighter	Teacher: shows errors in grammar and punctuation.
Yellow highlighter	Teacher: identifies spelling errors.
Green pen	Teacher: writes comments in books.
Purple pen	Pupil: makes corrections and/or revisions.
TFG (top of the page)	Teacher: signifies that the learner worked in a teacher focus group for support.
TAFG (top of the page)	Teacher: signifies that the learner worked in a teaching assistant focus group.
S (top of the page)	Teacher: signifies the learner was given support to complete this task.
SS (top of the page)	Teacher: signifies the learner was given a little support to complete this task.

Reader Review Sentence Stems

Once Rainbow Grammar is fully embedded, teachers will use these stems to help pupils reflect on their writing, with a focus on authorial intent.

Year	Sentence stems
Year 1	We have been writing a ....., we wanted to .... / After reading my work, I feel ... I want to ... I know ...
Year 2	I think that my writing is effective because .... / To make my writing even better, I could ...
Year 3/4	In this piece of writing, I wanted to .... I have done this by .... Next time I could... / I think your writing is effective because .... To make it even more effective you could ....
Year 5/6	The effect I was trying to create was ... I have done this by ... I think this is effective because ... / When I read your writing, you made me think/feel ... by ...