

## **SOUTHBOROUGH HIGH SCHOOL MARKING AND FEEDBACK POLICY**

### **PHILOSOPHY & PURPOSE**

Learning is the top priority for all of us at Southborough High School. It is our top priority because it is the principal way in which we achieve our purpose, which is to make the difference for all of our students.

### **VISION**

Our vision for our students and staff is:

- Aspiration – everyone should be aiming high
- Commitment – everyone should be working hard
- Excellence – everyone should achieve their best

### **VALUES**

Our values express how we work together at Southborough. They shape the culture we want to see in the classroom:

- Support
- Challenge
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Relationships
- Resilience

## **1. AIMS**

The school aims to:

- Provide clear guidelines on the Southborough High School approach to assessment.
- Establish a coherent approach to assessment across all subjects.
- Provide a system which is clear to students, staff and parents.
- Establish a consistent approach to marking and feeding back on learners' work so that students feel valued and have a clear understanding of how well they are doing and how they can improve their learning to reach their potential.

## **2. PRINCIPLES**

Southborough High School outlines three key questions which underpin high-quality marking and feedback:

- Where am I with my learning?
- Where am I aiming to get to with my learning?
- How do I get there?

## **3. TEACHERS' STANDARDS**

- Give students regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage students to respond to the feedback (MPS).<sup>1</sup>
- Model best practice in giving feedback to deepen learning both orally and through accurate marking and encourage students to respond to the feedback (UPS).<sup>2</sup>

## **4. OFSTED RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Teachers should provide pupils with incisive feedback, in line with the school's Assessment & Reporting Policy, about what students can do to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills. The students should use this feedback effectively.
- Ofsted does not expect to see a particular frequency or quantity of work in pupils' books or folders. Ofsted recognises that the amount of work in books and folders will depend on the subject being studied and the age and ability of the pupils.

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[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/665522/Teachers\\_standard\\_information.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/665522/Teachers_standard_information.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/careers/payandpension/teacherspayandconditionsdocument/performancethreshold/b00213490/upper-pay-range/annex-a--professionalstandards-for-post-threshold-teachers>

- Ofsted recognises that marking and feedback to students, both written and oral, are important aspects of assessment. However, Ofsted does not expect to see any specific frequency, type or volume of marking and feedback; these are for the school to decide through its assessment and reporting policy. Marking and feedback should be consistent with that policy, which may cater for different subjects and different age groups of students in different ways, in order to be effective and efficient in promoting learning.
- While inspectors will consider how written and oral feedback is used to promote learning, Ofsted does not expect to see any written record of oral feedback provided to pupils by teachers.
- If it is necessary for inspectors to identify marking as an area for improvement for the school, they will pay careful attention to the way recommendations are written to ensure that these do not drive unnecessary workload for teachers.<sup>3</sup>

## **5. WORKLOAD-MARKING CONSIDERATIONS**

- The quantity of feedback should not be confused with the quality. The quality of the feedback, however given, will be seen in how a student is able to tackle subsequent work.
- We recommend that all marking should be meaningful, manageable and motivating. This should be the perspective adopted by all engaged in education, from classroom teachers to the Department for Education (DfE).
- Marking should serve a single purpose – to advance student progress and outcomes. Teachers should be clear about what they are trying to achieve and the best way of achieving it. Crucially, the most important person in deciding what is appropriate is the teacher. Oral feedback, working with students in class, reading their work – all help teachers understand what students can do and understand. Every teacher will know whether they are getting useful information from their marking and whether students are progressing.
- Consistency across a subject, faculty or the school is still important, but this can come from consistent high standards, rather than unvarying practice. Shared expectations of marking will help everybody to be clear about what is required of them, but each subject and phase should be able to determine the policy in their areas, responding to the different workload demands of each subject/phase, and drawing on teacher professionalism to create meaningful and manageable approaches. Policies should be judged against the actual hours spent on marking, and adjustments to requirements made where necessary.

## 6. MARKING

### 6.1 Manageable, Meaningful and Motivating Marking

**Manageable:** marking practice is proportionate and considers the frequency and complexity of written feedback, as well as the cost and time-effectiveness of marking in relation to planning and teaching lessons.

**Meaningful:** marking varies by age group, subject, and what works best for the student and teacher in relation to any particular piece of work. Teachers are encouraged to adjust their approach as necessary and to incorporate the outcomes into subsequent planning and teaching.

**Motivating:** Marking should help to motivate students to make progress. This does not mean always writing in-depth comments or being universally positive: sometimes short, challenging comments or oral feedback are more effective. If the teacher is doing more work than their students, this can become a disincentive for students to accept challenges and take responsibility for improving their work.

An important element of marking is to acknowledge the work a student has done, to value their efforts and achievements and to celebrate progress. There are many ways to do this without extensive marking and too much feedback can take away responsibility from the student, detract from the challenge of a piece of work, and reduce long term retention and resilience-building.

Students should be taught and encouraged to check their own work by understanding the success criteria, presented in an age appropriate way, so that they complete work to the highest standard.

### 6.2 Marking in Practice

#### Key marking

All marking and feedback undertaken by teachers needs to be carried out using a **purple** pen (or similar bright colour e.g. red, pink, orange). This should also be applied to any electronic marking and feedback.

Not all work should or can be marked in depth. Indeed, the use of meaningful self and peer assessment would lighten the marking load but also enrich the dialogue between teacher and student about the student's learning. Teachers are expected to use accurate marking and to feedback to students at regular intervals. Within each unit of work (see Schemes of Learning/Work), faculty/subject areas should identify regular key pieces of work for accurate marking and a response to feedback. These pieces of work will focus on the assessment of progress against specific learning objectives. These key pieces will also be identified in the subject plans which occur regularly.

Success criteria will be shared with students so that they can be involved meaningfully in the process of marking and feedback, knowing what constitutes good learning and how learning can be improved.

Students must be given the opportunity (i.e. through focused improvement opportunities) to respond to the marking and feedback in order to show

understanding of how they can improve their learning through redrafting, corrections, extension work or applying ideas to new situations or problems.

Teachers are responsible for regularly recording marks or comments for students' work, either electronically or on paper, in accordance with the faculty/subject area marking and feedback policy to ensure that written evidence is available to inform discussions with students, colleagues and parents.

Grades and levels can be added according to individual Faculty Policies.

Rewards should be given in line with Southborough High School's rewards procedures – for example, positive points awarded on Class Charts for '*Good Progress*'.

### **6.3 Marking Suggestions**

- On key pieces of work, more detailed comments should be made, highlighting good work in yellow and, using green highlighter to show what can be improved and how.
- Comments should be positive and subject specific. Expressions such as 'WWW – what worked well' and 'EBI – even better if' should be used.
- Literacy Across the Curriculum could be evidenced and reinforced in marking, through the use of, for example, pink highlighter for bad SPAG.
- At the end of the work next to a yellow mark, give feedback and praise where success criteria have been met; next to a green mark, specific and helpful suggestions on what can be improved could be made. This could then be reinforced with a green box for improvement. This should pertain to progress in subject content rather than SPAG/surface error.
- After a key piece of work, Focused Improvement Time (FIT) should be offered next lesson so that the students respond immediately to marking and can be set on the right track to progress as soon as possible. Student response to marking and feedback might be done in a highlighted green box. The green box is very noticeable so that teachers can use it to discuss the feedback and response by quickly turning to it. The redrafted work could also be marked by the teacher to confirm progress in learning. The key to this sequence is ensuring students know HOW to improve their work and that they have had an opportunity to respond to feedback.
- Reference could be made to the Habits of Mind aspect of the Learning Tree, particularly accuracy and persistence – see Appendix 1.

### **6.4 Verbal Feedback**

In practical subjects such as Art, Engineering, Music and PE, there is a recognition of the importance of verbal feedback, which can have a significant impact on progress and attainment. It is the responsibility of all faculty leaders to ensure that effective systems are in place to promote verbal feedback and to monitor its effectiveness. These systems will be outlined in detail in each faculty's marking and feedback policy.

### **6.5 Peer and self-assessment**

Other work can be marked with a lighter touch. However, the use of peer and self-assessment should always be encouraged since, when used effectively, this

deepens students' understanding of learning objectives, success criteria and what actually makes good work and learning. For this to work in a meaningful way, teachers need to model good learning and fully share success criteria in language which students understand. Feedback from peers should be about the work, not about the person, and it should be focused on specific, kind and helpful comments which will enable learning to progress. All peer and self assessment will be undertaken by students in **green** pen.

## 6.6 Attainment

Grades and levels are not always necessary but can be added to marking and feedback where appropriate.

## 6.7 Commitment to Learning/Effort

The commitment to learning/effort made by students in producing work might well be acknowledged by the teacher, and might even be tied into the school's '*Vision and Values*' – for example, Commitment, Challenge etc. Commitment to Learning/Effort grades can be used across all key stages and the grades of **4** (outstanding), **3** (good), **2** (satisfactory) and **1** (inadequate/ unacceptable) should be used.

## 6.8 Presentation of work

It is important that students are encouraged to present their work in an acceptable and professional manner. The following are minimum expectations for written work:

- Titles underlined with a ruler.
- Dates in the margin or at the top of worksheets.
- No incomplete work or gaps in the books.
- Where work is missed it is caught up as quickly as possible.
- Use **blue or black** biro/gel pens.
- Diagrams and tables should be drawn with a pencil and a ruler.
- Use all of the space in exercise books whilst all work is devoid of doodles or graffiti.
- All work is done to each individual's best standard: exercise books will be used as a key revision aid.

If work is to be completed electronically, then the guidelines and expectations for the presentation of work should be aligned to the expectations as set out in each faculty's individual marking and feedback policy.

## 6.9 Marking for Literacy

In assessing work, attention needs to be given to literacy. All faculty/subject areas must focus on agreed subject specific key words as well as common grammatical errors.

Teachers are not expected to mark/correct every *punctuation and grammatical error* in every piece of writing. Neither will every spelling mistake need to be corrected. **NB: Some subjects may correct spellings that are subject specific rather than all spelling errors.** In the lower school, or for lower ability students, it may well be necessary to write the correct version for the student. As

learners gain confidence and knowledge, they should be able to identify and correct their own mistakes. Spelling tests as starter activities are encouraged.

It is the expectation that all teachers utilise the literacy marking codes as set out in Appendix 2.

### **6.10 Tracking and Monitoring Student Progress**

Each faculty area must ensure students have a tracking sheet where they are able to track their progress towards their targets (yearly, termly etc.). Students should be involved in tracking and monitoring their individual subject progress and should be guided by staff as to how best this is maintained. All teachers must keep a record of student progress across the academic year. Exact procedures for tracking and monitoring student progress must be outlined in each faculty's individual marking and feedback policy.

### **6.11 Monitoring and Evaluation**

The monitoring of this policy will be the responsibility of all Heads of Faculty/Subject Leaders, in addition to all members of the school's Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Heads of Faculty/Subject Leaders must ensure that their Faculty/Subject marking and feedback policy supports the over-arching school policy, in addition to the school's Assessment and Reporting policy.

Faculty/Subject Leaders should undertake work sampling in all relevant subject areas throughout the academic year as part of their faculty monitoring schedule. The exact timing of this process will be discussed and agreed with the relevant SLT line manager. Furthermore, members of SLT will also undertake formal marking reviews throughout the academic year, in addition to undertaking annual Quality of Learning Reviews (QLRs) as part of the school's quality assurance processes. Where marking reviews and/or QLRs highlight individual or subject inconsistencies, then appropriate support and intervention will be put in place in a timely manner, with associated success criteria and key performance indicators being agreed.

Members of the SLT will oversee the above process and provide opportunities for middle leaders to share and discuss practice. The findings will be fed back to staff with suggested actions for improvement.

## **7. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES**

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Curriculum Policy
- Learning and Teaching Policy
- Assessment & Reporting Policy
- Homework Policy

## **8. REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed by the Governors every two years in accordance with the school's review cycle.



## **APPENDICES**

# **Appendix One**

## **Habits of Mind**

What is a habit of mind?

A Habit of Mind is knowing how to behave intelligently.

A Habit of Mind is knowing what to do when we are unsure or unclear of the next step or when we don't know the answer.

A Habit of Mind means having a disposition towards behaving intelligently when confronted with problems, the answers to which are not immediately known: contradictions, dilemmas, uncertainties.

21st century learning is not about gathering information but about knowing how to act on it, knowing what questions to ask of it and being able to think critically about content and origin. The Habits of Mind give us the behaviours that shape effective inquiry and encourage independent learning.

*The Habits of Mind:*

- Persisting
- Managing Impulsivity
- Listening with Understanding and Empathy
- Thinking flexibly
- Thinking about Thinking (metacognition)
- Striving for Accuracy and Precision
- Questioning and Posing Problems
- Applying Past Knowledge to New Situations
- Thinking and Communicating with Clarity and Precision
- Gathering Data through All Senses
- Creating, Imagining and Innovating
- Responding with Wonderment and Awe
- Taking Responsible Risks
- Finding Humour
- Thinking Interdependently
- Remaining Open to Continuous Learning

The Habits of Mind give learners of all ages and at all stages a framework for autonomous, lifelong learning.

### ***Teaching Habits of Mind***

- Valuing Habits of Mind ourselves.

- Direct Instruction - teach each of the habits in turn, allow students to develop their own understandings and examples.
- Habits of Mind across the curriculum – e.g. which ones will help a student of mathematics?
- Habits of Mind central to all learning, e.g. target setting.

### ***Thinking Maps***

Thinking Maps, developed by Dr David Hyere are visual learning tools that students can use to help them with their learning.

The 8 Thinking Map tools correspond with eight fundamental thinking processes.

#### *Benefits:*

- Students can learn more effectively and more efficiently.
- Thought processes are represented similarly across the curriculum.
- Students gain effective tools to use throughout their lives.

### ***Bubble Map (describing)***

The Bubble Map is used for describing using adjectives. It is a tool for enriching students' abilities to identify qualities and use descriptive words.

"Use vivid language to describe the characters in the story".

### ***Circle Map (defining in context)***

The Circle Map is used for gathering ideas and for showing prior knowledge about a topic by providing contextual information.

"Tell me everything you know about pollution and how you know these things".

### ***Flow Map (sequencing)***

Used for sequencing and ordering information.

"Explain the steps you followed to solve the mathematical problem".

### ***Brace Map (part/whole)***

The Brace Map is used to analyse physical objects.

"Analyse the structure of a computer to determine its parts and subparts".

### ***Tree Map (classifying)***

The Tree Map is used for classifying things and ideas.

"Classify the instruments of the orchestra".

### ***Double Bubble Map (comparing and contrasting)***

The Double Bubble Map is a tool for comparing and contrasting things.

"Examine the similarities and differences between two geometric figures".

### ***Multi-flow Map (cause and effect)***

This is used for showing and analysing cause and effect relationships. In the centre is an important event. On the left side of the event is the cause and on the right side of the event are the effects.

"Discuss what might cause tooth decay and explain some of the effects of poor dental hygiene".

### ***Bridge Map (seeing analogies)***

The Bridge Map is a tool for applying the process of seeing analogies.

"Choose two historical leaders and show their relationship to important movements or conflicts".

### ***Thinker's Keys***

Thinker's keys, developed by Tony Ryan place emphasis on the development of innovative and creative thinking.

They are a set of 20 different activities that can be adapted to suit a wide range of subject area. They are designed to engage and motivate students and promote critical and creative thinking.

### ***Thinking Hats***



Thinking Hats, developed by De Bono, allow particular focus upon different types of thinking. The method is particularly useful for problem solving in any subject.

There are 6 different hats, each representing six different ways of thinking about a problem. Each "hat" looks at a situation or a problem in a different way and will therefore offer different suggestions/questions/conclusions.

Each type of thinking is useful, but a balance between "hats" needs to be found in order for a solution or agreement to be reached.

## Appendix Two

### Literacy Marking Grid

 <b>How we mark your work to help you make it better</b>	
<b>Symbol</b>	<b>What it means</b>
<b>sp</b>	<b>Spelling error (mistake will be circled).</b>
<b>P</b>	Punctuation incorrectly used or missing (mistake will be circled or punctuation added).
<b>C</b>	Capital letter is missing (circled).
<b>G</b>	Grammatical error, perhaps the tenses in your writing are muddled up.
<b>//</b>	New paragraph needed (the // shows where it should have been started).
<b>? or</b> 	Your writing does not make sense; you should have proof read it to check.
<b>WWW</b>	<b>What Went Well</b> in your work, the positive aspects of your work.
<b>EBI</b>	How your work could have been <b>Even Better If</b> , a target for the future.

It matters where we put our mark (code):

- Next to the line - means you can find it in the line.
- Against a vertical pen line means you can find it in the section.
- At the end means it is a problem throughout.