

Trust Education Group Ltd

Marking and Feedback Policy

Policy Statement

At Trust Education, we believe marking and feedback are powerful tools for promoting pupil progress, emotional development, and academic confidence. Our policy reflects our commitment to trauma-informed practice, consistency, and relational pedagogy. It recognises the unique needs of learners with SEMH profiles and seeks to build self-worth and resilience through positive, respectful, and developmental feedback.

Aims of the Policy

This policy aims to:

- Provide high-quality, timely, and purposeful feedback that enhances learning.
- Celebrate effort, engagement, and progress rather than perfection.
- Embed feedback as a restorative and reflective process.
- Foster learner independence and metacognition.
- Ensure consistency and clarity across all subjects and staff.
- Support staff workload through manageable and meaningful marking routines.

Principles of Effective Feedback

Effective feedback at Trust Education is guided by the following principles:

- **Timely:** Feedback should be provided as soon as is practically possible.
- **Trauma-Informed:** Encouraging and never punitive, avoiding overcorrection or public criticism.
- **Purposeful:** Focused on learning objectives and tailored to the learner's needs.
- **Dialogic:** Encourages two-way communication and reflection.
- **Actionable:** Provides specific, practical steps for improvement.
- **Manageable:** Balances teacher workload with meaningful impact.

Types of Feedback

- **Verbal Feedback:** Immediate, supportive, and interactive. Example: “Great resilience – you didn’t give up on that calculation.”
- **Written Feedback:** Highlights strengths and provides next steps in writing. Example: “Well done – next time try explaining why this happened.”
- **Peer Feedback:** Builds confidence, collaboration, and critical thinking. Example: “I liked your opening – maybe add more detail in the middle.”
- **Self-Assessment:** Encourages ownership and reflective learning. Example: “What did I do well? What could I improve?”

Whole-School Marking Expectations

Frequency of Marking

- Core Subjects (English, Maths, Science): Feedback provided weekly.
- Foundation Subjects: Feedback provided at least once every two weeks.
- Marking should focus on quality over quantity, prioritising evidence of progress and engagement.

Colour-Coding System

To ensure clarity and consistency across classrooms, the following colour system will be used:

- **Teacher Feedback:** Written in purple pen. This includes all comments, corrections, targets, and questions. Purple is chosen as it represents authority, guidance, and visibility.
- **Pupil Responses:** Written in green pen. This includes responses to teacher comments, improvement tasks, corrections, and reflections. Green is chosen as it symbolises growth and progression.

Posters, planners, and exercise books will reinforce this system to embed the habit.

Structure of Feedback

All feedback should include three key elements:

1. **Positive reinforcement:** At least one genuine and specific comment celebrating effort or achievement. For example: “*Excellent explanation; you’ve clearly understood today’s objective.*”

2. **A clear target for improvement:** This may be framed as “Even Better If...”, “Next Step...”, a probing question, or a short task/redraft instruction. For example: *“Next, try using a simile to enhance description.”*
3. **A response opportunity:** Pupils must be given time to respond during DIRT (Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time), using green pen.

SPAG and Literacy Across the Curriculum

To support literacy, staff must use the **Trust Education SPAG Code** consistently when addressing errors.

- **Sp:** Spelling error
- **P:** Punctuation error
- **G:** Grammar issue
- **//:** New paragraph needed
- **?** : Meaning unclear
- **^** :Missing word

Guidance for staff:

- Focus on two or three priority errors per piece of work.
- Avoid highlighting every error, to reduce anxiety.
- Encourage self-correction and use DIRT for pupils to amend errors in green pen.

Verbal Feedback Protocol

Verbal feedback is often the most effective form for SEMH learners, particularly when written feedback may feel overwhelming. Staff should:

- Use verbal praise frequently and authentically.
- Ask restorative and reflective questions such as *“What do you think worked well here?”*
- Record significant verbal feedback with a stamp, brief note, or comment in purple pen.

Peer and Self-Assessment

Pupils will be taught how to:

- Reflect on their work meaningfully using sentence starters such as *“I am proud of...”* or *“Next time I will...”*.
- Provide respectful and constructive feedback to peers.

- Use green pens for all peer and self-assessment activities.

Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time (DIRT)

Teachers must allocate time weekly for pupils to:

- Read and process teacher feedback.
- Ask questions for clarification.
- Complete improvement tasks or corrections in green pen.
- Reflect on their progress and learning journey.

DIRT should be modelled consistently by staff as an embedded routine.

Feedback in the SEMH Context

For learners with SEMH needs, feedback must always be:

- **Supportive:** Celebrating effort and achievement rather than focusing on what is missing.
- **Restorative:** Used to build trust, respect, and understanding.
- **Non-judgmental:** Avoiding harsh language, red pens, or excessive correction.
- **Flexible:** Adapted for the pupil's emotional readiness, with verbal feedback prioritised when written feedback might cause stress.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Senior Leadership Team and the Teaching & Learning Lead will regularly monitor marking and feedback through:

- Book looks
- Learning walks
- Pupil voice interviews

These will check for quality, consistency, and pupil progress, while ensuring marking remains appropriate to individual learners' needs. Findings will be shared through staff coaching, CPD, and curriculum meetings.

Staff Support and Training

- All staff will receive induction and CPD on trauma-informed marking, consistent use of purple/green pens, and effective feedback strategies.
- Termly moderation sessions will support consistency across subjects.

- SLT will monitor marking workload to ensure it remains purposeful and sustainable for staff well-being.

Pupil Engagement with Feedback

Teachers are responsible for ensuring pupils:

- Understand the purpose of feedback.
- Know what is expected when responding in green pen.
- Embed reflection and improvement as habits across their learning.
- Experience feedback as a tool for building confidence rather than creating fear of failure.

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Teaching & Learning Lead in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team. Updates will reflect current research, school priorities, the needs of pupils, and feedback from staff.

Policy Lead	Melissa Wainman Proprietor
Date:	1st September 2026
Policy Review Date:	1st September 2027
Version:	1
Approval:	Matthew Embley Chair of the Governing Body