

# Chenderit marking policy: “a consistent and rigorous approach”

Revised November 2017

## Why is marking important?

Marking students’ work plays a central role in raising achievement.

Effective marking supports effective teaching. It encourages students to make an effort, because they know their work is being taken seriously. Effective marking helps establish good behaviour, because students take more care with their work.

The increased focus on terminal assessment and extended writing, and Ofsted’s desire to see evidence of teaching over time, means that exercise books and portfolios of work need to be well-organised records of learning and progress from which students can revise effectively.

Marking is a key part of the assessment process: teachers can see what their students know, understand and are able to do, and what they need to do next. This can inform planning for future learning.

Marking is also an investment of time. Therefore, we need to ensure it is as effective as possible.

## The importance of marking for literacy

All teachers are expected to support the development of literacy skills across the curriculum: the third teaching standard states that all teachers should

Demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher’s specialist subject.

Ofsted have stressed the importance of marking in supporting literacy

“A consistent and rigorous approach to marking and correction helps pupils to reinforce their skills.”

## How to make marking manageable

If we teach large numbers of students there are a variety of ways we can manage our workload, within our three-week cycle.

- Students can mark aspects of their own work or pair mark. This can be easily done when closed questions have straightforward answers. Students can also self or peer-assess using criteria. Staff should monitor this type of marking, and join in the dialogue.
- Students can present work orally and receive oral feedback.
- Tests can be set and marked electronically.
- Marking can be selective: some is marked in detail, other pieces are checked to ensure students are committed and presenting work appropriately.
- Teachers can feedback orally to individuals or the class.
- **Clear instructions and high expectations can reduce the number of errors or weaknesses the teacher needs to identify and address.**

## Using marking to support the progress of disadvantaged pupils

In order to support the progress of disadvantaged students we should mark their work first.

## Using marking and assessment to support literacy

We can make marking more manageable, and focus on content and not just presentation, by ensuring the process of writing is effective.

### Before students write

If we set high expectations and insist on high quality presentation and accuracy we will have fewer errors to correct.

If we use Wagolls to make clear what a good one looks like we can promote high standards and ensure good progress.

- Every time we ask students to write we should expect them to produce writing as good as or better than that which they produced at primary school.
- We should insist that writing is neat and legible; it should be at least as neat as the work they produced at in year 6 or in transfer week.
- Every time we ask students to write we should explain the purpose of the writing, and therefore its conventions. (For example: notes can be in bullet points, extended writing must be in sentences and paragraphs.)
- We should model the kind of writing we want to see, with examples available on the electronically, as handouts or on display: teachers should develop a good range of Wagolls to use in lessons.

### Good practice in the classroom

- When we introduce new words, we should write them up or display them and encourage students to look at them – underlining important letter groups that help understand the meaning eg lactose and lactase: what difference do the different spellings make?
- When students are learning new words we should encourage them to look at the whole word, not copy one letter at a time.

### Responding to written work

- We should respond first to the content of what has been written; treat the writing as a genuine communication, not as an exercise designed to reveal weaknesses.
- Work should be assessed against criteria, with which the students are familiar: in key stage 3 these are age-related expectations; in key stage 4 and 5 they should be linked to subject criteria: or examination grades, should be used for substantial pieces of work, and allow reports to be written and data collected, three times per year.
- Students should receive feedback in some form at least twice a short term, or every three weeks as a minimum. This could be in a variety of forms: for example oral feedback, peer feedback, teacher written comments
- We should use the teacher's pen to communicate, correct and explain, not as a punishment.
- In our marking, we should ensure our writing is legible.
- We should be selective in our marking and identify what the student needs to learn next.
- Whenever we mark, we should make sure students **do something** with our marking. For example they should answer our questions, or correct mistakes or misunderstandings we highlight.

## Creating a dialogue

When we return work to students we should give them time to correct their work and respond to their comments. We should have appropriate activities available for those who finish so that we ensure this is a focused learning activity, not a time when some students are waiting for others to finish.

As a way of making the process of responding to assessment clear and consistent we have decided to use different colours of pen to show our comments and student response.

Teachers should make their comments using purple pen. Students should reply using green. Their replies can be the corrected spelling in the margin, or an extended answer to a question.

When students peer-assess they should use a different colour to the one the student wrote in originally: if the writing is in blue ink, use black or pencil and so on. Purple pen is reserved for the teacher; green pen is for feedback based on assessment.

We may want students to correct a whole section of text. This might be the case where they have misunderstood something or, for example, have a number of punctuation errors.

In English teachers use a pink highlighter (“think pink”) to highlight a section to be rewritten, and a green highlighter (“go green”) to indicate where in their books the students should rewrite the text. The different colours allow teacher, student or anyone else looking at the book to see the development of a piece of work.

## Subject-specific approaches

We want overall consistency of key messages, which is one reason why we do not want sixty different teachers developing sixty different marking systems and acronyms or abbreviations.

However, a team might agree on a *brief* list of subject-specific marking symbols. If this is the case, they should be agreed by the team and constantly reinforced through sheets at the back of books, on wall displays and so on. The marking should make sense to a student looking through their work at home, not just in the lesson when the teacher is explaining.

## Supporting spelling, punctuation and grammar

- We should identify a manageable number of errors – no more than five per page. If there are many errors in the piece we might correct every error in the first few lines and ensure these are corrected.
- We should prioritise: key subject vocabulary, sentence punctuation and common errors and confusions: for example “were/where”, “there/their”, “could of”.
- Key spelling errors should be identified (using “sp” in the margin with the error underlined.) Students should write the correct spelling once in the margin and once in the back of the book, on a “spellings” page.
- Students should be encouraged to check and test one another using the list at the back of the book: this allows for personalised, differentiated spelling tests.
- We should involve students and parents in checking the spelling lists and practising spellings.

## Ensuring high standards of presentation

All exercise books and folders should have target stickers inside the front cover. There should be no graffiti or “rough notes”.

The backs of books should be as neat as the front and should have a spelling page.

In key stage 3 the benchmark pieces (hot and cold tasks) should be stuck inside the back cover.

If teachers want students to do tests or make notes in the back of their books they should be labelled as such, just at the front, with "Classwork" or "IS" and date, and a title.

## Developing a consistent and effective approach

As far as possible we should use only the following symbols. Any other symbols must be agreed by a department and used consistently by that team.

Ticks for good or correct work; question marks for unclear or muddled work

“Sp” for a spelling error and the error underlined

np with // or [ in the margin to indicate a new paragraph

Underlining with a wavy line – areas of weakness (with a comment or question to explain the point)

A cross “X” can be used for a factually incorrect answer

A caret (^) can indicate something missed out – with a comment in the margin to clarify

**If we wish to say anything else, use words.**

## Monitoring our practice

Team leaders should support the agreed marking policy whenever they observe lessons or carry out work scrutinies.

## Chenderit marking policy summary: “a consistent and rigorous approach” (November 2017)

### Responding to written work - the main points

- Work should be assessed **against criteria**, with which the students are familiar.
- Students should receive feedback in some form at least twice a short term, or every three weeks as a minimum.
- We should be selective in our marking and identify what the student needs to learn next.
- Whenever we mark, we should make sure students **do something** with our marking by answering our questions and correcting their errors.
- To make this process clear we write our comments in **purple** and students respond using **green** ink. Students use a different colour pen to the original work, or pencil, to peer assess.
- We should mark the work of disadvantaged students first.

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