



## **MARKING POLICY**

**The Palmer Catholic Academy**

# MISSION STATEMENT



The Academy's Mission promotes the academic and personal development of each member of its community, both students and staff alike.

We serve Christ in each other to the Glory of God and Service of all.



Adoption by Governing Body of The Palmer Catholic Academy:

Date of Implementation: February 2018

Signature of Chair of Governors: .....

Signature of Headteacher: .....

Review Date: February 2020

## The Palmer Catholic Academy Marking Policy

### Rationale

Giving students written feedback about their work is the most effective way of raising student achievement. Students will receive regular formative feedback on how to improve their work and make further progress.

Most importantly, students will be given 'Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time' (DIRT) within lessons to reflect upon their work and to provide a specific written example of an improvement as evidence of their enhanced learning or progress after further guidance is given by the teacher.

Marking should include the standardised use of the academy common literacy codes in respect of spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG). See Appendix 1.

### The purpose of marking

We believe that assessment lies at the heart of developing students as learners. The setting and marking of homework is an important element of this as it enables teachers to:

- assess what students have learnt;
- identify levels of attainment against students' expected target grades (on SIMS);
- build up a picture of how students are progressing through the recording of marks, levels and grades;
- provide information to other interested parties, especially parents/guardians.

It should also enable students to:

- understand where they are in terms of their own learning;
- be able to assess their own progress;
- become more independent learners through their ability to identify strengths and weaknesses of their work and set personal targets in order to improve;
- understand how to improve and move onto the higher grades.

We expect all staff to use the academy's **common approach** to marking as this enables consistency of practice to be developed across the academy.

### The frequency of marking

Students work and exercise books must be marked at least every three weeks. The CAP stamp must be used in the marking process at least once per half term and must always be used for the LAG at each data drop. The CAP may be used more frequently if appropriate.

**DIRT must be completed every time a book is marked.**

## **Guidelines for marking**

Written feedback should help students gain a clear understanding of how well they have gained new knowledge, learnt new concepts or acquired new skills. Therefore written feedback should:

- be constructive and encouraging with one or two positive comments (What Went Well);
- relate to the success criteria for that piece of work which students should be aware of;
- provide one or two clear targets for students to improve (Even Better If);
- challenge the students to think for themselves after further guidance has been given.

Marking:

- must be regular, up-to-date and promptly returned to students;
- have a band, level or grade indicating the qualitative nature of student's work. This might be a National Curriculum level descriptor or Board criteria;
- must indicate where appropriate significant errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar for correction by students as identified by the academy's common literacy codes;
- be recorded in teacher's mark books. The marks or grades should show progress and be a clear reflection of progress in student's books, tests or assessments that inform data drops at half-termly intervals. This is to be checked and verified by Heads of Department.

When the use of NC level descriptors or Exam Board criteria is not appropriate, homework should be marked using a number between 1-4 indicating the student's Attitude to Learning (ATL) followed by RAG (red, amber, green). This replaces the old effort and achievement grades.

## **Attitude to Learning**

### **1 – Excellent**

Students show very high levels of engagement, courtesy, collaboration and cooperation. An excellent, enthusiastic attitude to learning is shown through exemplary behaviour and application to both class and homework.

### **2 – Good**

Students are typically considerate, respectful and courteous to staff and each other. A good and positive attitude to learning is shown through good behaviour in lessons; class and homework will always be completed and to a good standard.

### **3 – Requires Improvement**

Students generally respond promptly to a teachers' direction and usually work co-operatively with each other. If there are issues with behaviour, it will be of a low level. Major disruption to lessons is uncommon. Class and homework will usually be completed.

### **4 – Unsatisfactory**

Students' lack of engagement and persistent low-level disruption impact more than occasionally to reduce learning. Students will show a lack of respect and intolerance for each other or staff and a lack of self-discipline. Class and homework will often be incomplete.

## **RAG**

**Red:** the student has not understood the work according to the success criteria for that piece of work. This work will need to be repeated by the student and re-marked. The student is working well below their expected MTG.

**Amber:** the student has partly understood the work. This work will need to be improved by the student and could include work that is incomplete or unfinished. The student is working below their expected MTG.

**Green:** the student has understood the work well and is working at or beyond their expected level.

## **Success Criteria**

Success criteria for presentation of written work should be shared with students so that there are clear expectations of what good work looks like. The use of model or exemplar work from current or previous years could be used to show what a good one looks like.

## **Marking for half-termly data drop assessments**

**The CAP must be used when marking this work.**

Year 7-8 students should be assessed using National Curriculum Levels and converted to the GCSE Flight Path equivalent (grades 9-1). The converted grades should be shared with students in books. This grade will also be required for SIMS.

Year 9-11 students should be assessed using GCSE grade descriptors. (Mixture of legacy grades and 9-1 where relevant).

Year 12-13 students should be assessed using A-Level band descriptors.

## **ALL GRADES SHOULD BE FINE GRADES**

Note: All other homework and classwork may be marked using either NC levels, GCSE or A-Level grades, or ATL & RAG, whichever is most suitable to the work being marked.

## **Peer and Self-Assessment**

In order for students to become independent learners, peer and self-assessment should take place regularly throughout the year. It is acceptable for peer or self-marking to take place as long as clear success criteria have been presented to students in the form of a mark scheme and/or a teacher's model answer to be used as guidance. This might be created by the teacher or elicited from students with teacher facilitation. This marking must be completed using PURPLE ink to clearly indicate this is not teacher marked.

### **The use of literacy codes for marking**

Teachers should use the academy literacy code in the margin to highlight errors, ideally no more than three codes per piece of work to avoid overloading students. Codes should be chosen carefully to take account of ability and progression. Students must be given an opportunity to correct their spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors within lesson time during DIRT.

Literacy marking codes must be stuck on the front cover of ALL exercise books to ensure consistency across the academy. A common pro-forma will be supplied at the start of each year. See appendix 1.

### **The use of diagnostic coding**

All marked work should contain written feedback by the teacher instructing students how to improve their work. This might be in the form of written comments or a code. See appendix 1. Each department will need to agree on a set of subject specific focused targets for students to work on alongside the generic achievement and target codes which apply to all subjects. The department codes will be permanent and must be consistently applied.

### **How students' books should be marked**

- Teachers must mark in **green** pen
- Students must respond to teacher feedback in **purple** pen (otherwise known as the purple pen of progress).
- The Common Assessment Pro-forma (CAP) must be used at a minimum of once every six weeks for a substantive piece of work to inform the half-termly data drop. Either the stamp or the WORD template may be used. However, the CAP may be used more frequently as each teacher sees fit.
- Directed Improvement and Reflection Time (DIRT) must be given for every piece of marked work that has a target and all work that informs each data drop over the course of the academic year in class time. This should allow students an opportunity to refine and improve a section of their work. Dishing the DIRT may be used more frequently by teachers as they see fit.

### **Monitoring Student Response to Formative Feedback / Academic Targets.**

The subject teacher will be responsible for checking that students are acting upon the guidance being offered by their teachers and are responding to the targets they are being set using purple pen. Heads of Department will also be responsible for monitoring this policy as part of the school's quality assurance programme.

Where a student fails to meet a target the subject teacher should:

- check that the student's target is realistic;
- offer additional in-class support on the topic in question;
- provide individual, small group or/and additional booster/review lessons;
- provide an opportunity for the student to re-sit or repeat a piece of work or assessment.

Where a student fails to meet two successive targets the teacher should alert the Head of Department who will take appropriate action, which may consist of:

- an interview with the individual concerned;
- a phone call or letter home;
- increased curriculum support;
- referral to SEN Co-ordinator (should the teacher perceive there to be a cognitive issue);
- referral to tutor or HOY;
- additional intervention.

### **DIRT – (Personalised Learning)**

“Consistently high quality marking and constructive feedback from teachers ensure that pupils make rapid gains”

*Ofsted, School Inspection Handbook*

### **Suggested Process**

“Assessment for Learning (AfL) is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by students and their teachers, to decide where students are in their learning, where they need to go and how to get there”.

*Rowe, 2007*

In essence, this is the aim of doing DIRTY work in class time.

Do NOT just give student’s work back and expect them to be able to improve a section of their work by merely looking at a mark scheme. They will need to see examples of work that meet different levels of the marking criteria to be able to visualise what good or effective responses look like before they begin to assess their own work. It also allows students an opportunity to discuss and develop their own progress. The following is a stepped process that you may want to use. You may have your own routine that works but do ensure a process is followed.

**Step 1:** Begin by identifying examples of effective responses and common errors and misconceptions whilst marking student’s work. Transfer them onto a WORD document for display onto the whiteboard. Try to select different layers of response from students to graduate the level of thinking. For example, in essay writing in history try to look for examples of description, identification, explanation, analysis and evaluation.

**Step 2:** In class, elicit the success criteria from students so they have a clear understanding of how their work was assessed. To reinforce, you might display this on the whiteboard or already have the marking criteria stuck in their books already (against their assessed piece of work).

**Step 3:** Display the student's anonymised pieces of work on the whiteboard and question, question, question. For example, start off by asking students to rank in order of skill level the words 'describe', 'identify' and 'explain' and elicit a concrete example of each before moving on and asking students what is good about the examples they see on the board and how they can be improved. This is an organic process so expect to ask follow-up questions based on student's responses and expect questions from students for clarification. This can include common spelling mistakes, especially when they involve key terminology.

If students have completed a past paper, photocopy an unmarked paper or use one from a previous year and go through the whole marking process with students to gain a clear understanding of (i) the skills required in each level descriptor and (ii) the relevant knowledge needed to answer the question correctly. In essence, I'm training students to be examiners. It also acts as a valuable review (or revision if students have to re-sit another paper again). Once this baseline paper has been marked find students are a lot clearer about how their work has been marked and what they need to do to show an improvement. You can ask students to systematically go through each question on the paper, a combination of questions, or select the question with the most marks to improve.

**Step 4:** Give students their work back who now have to respond to your feedback by improving a section of their work on the Common Assessment Pro-forma (CAP) stamp or WORD document (same thing). Another option when going through past papers is to ask students to improve each question immediately after the class diagnostic has been carried out for that particular question so that it is still fresh in their memory.

## Top Tips for DIRT

1. **Keep your comments focused**  
Identify a specific improvement
2. **Model and scaffold**  
Provide examples for students to look at and work through before improving their own work
3. **Provide targeted feedback**  
Be precise about the skill you want them to improve.
4. **Make verbal feedback matter**  
Plan your questions out in advance and anticipate possible responses. Be clear about what you are looking for.
5. **Exploit the power of peers**  
Use the feedback from your students to build understanding.
6. **Design a menu of 'feed-forward tasks'**  
Students should complete these in response to your feedback. For example;
  - Annotate three changes you would have made in your work and say why;
  - Rewrite a section of your work;
  - Look again at the success/marking criteria – now add these to your work;
  - Make n (number) of improvements to your vocabulary choices, i.e. use more specialist terms
  - Annotate your work against the success criteria
  - Provide another example
7. **Consider the use of feedback frames**  
Here's an example in the form of a mnemonic (RADICAL);

Read feedback carefully.

Ask if you don't understand what is written down.

Decide which improvement you are going to make first.

Indicate which success criteria you are working on (from the mark scheme).

Colour of progress is purple so use your purple pen of progress to respond to the teacher.

Ask your partner to look at your improvements and to give you honest feedback.

Link your work to the feedback given by your teacher by telling them what you have done and why.

## Marking Management

1. Create a marking rota to manage your workload. Stagger the data capture assessments across the whole half-term – don't do all of them at once at the same time.
2. Give oral feedback in lesson time for students to address whole class, particular useful for common errors.
3. Don't mark everything by predetermining substantive and assessed pieces of work according to departmental policy.
4. Refuse sub-standard work and ask students to repeat or improve with a shortened deadline.
5. Use marking codes instead of comments to save having to write everything down.
6. Use self and peer-assessment to mark code, but do elicit/provide clear marking criteria and/or a model answer for students to use as an exemplar.
7. For homework that does not lend itself easily to a NC Level or GCSE or A Level band or grade, use ATL (Attitude to Learning) and RAG (red, amber, green) to assess the quality of student's work.
8. The assessment or piece of work for the half-termly data capture should be a NC Level for Years 7-9, a GCSE grade for Years 10-11 and an A-Level grade for Years 12-13.

## References

- Gadsby, Claire (2012), [Perfect Assessment for Learning](#)  
Beere, Jackie (2010), [The Perfect Ofsted Lesson](#)

## APPENDIX 1

TPCA – Common Marking Codes	
<b>^</b>	Word/s missing
<b>Sp</b>	Spelling error
<b>P</b>	Punctuation error
<b>Gr</b>	Grammar error
<b>T</b>	The wrong tense has been used
<b>?</b>	Meaning is unclear
<b>Cp</b>	Capital letter is needed/should not be used
<b>//</b>	A new paragraph is needed
<b>WW</b>	The wrong word has been used
Comment	Target/Question
<b>C1</b> You have demonstrated excellent effort in this task	<b>T1</b> You need to extend your answers
<b>C2</b> You have understood the key concepts in this piece of work	<b>T2</b> You need to improve your presentation
<b>C3</b> Good use of subject terminology	<b>T3</b> Try to use more subject terminology in your answer
<b>C4</b> You have completed the work in detail	<b>T4</b> Use clear sentences with full stops and capitals
<b>C5</b> You have used sophisticated vocabulary in your writing	<b>T5</b> Reduce your word count by writing more concisely
<b>C6</b> You used key words and phrases effectively in this piece of work	<b>T6</b> Always include an introduction and conclusion
<b>C7</b> You achieved the aims. Well done!	<b>T7</b> Develop your explanations further
<b>C8</b> Your ideas are well organised.	<b>T8</b> Learn and use key words and phrases from the lesson.
<b>C9</b> Your work was challenging to mark as your handwriting is unclear	<b>T9</b> Plan your work before you start and use paragraphs to organise ideas
<b>C10</b> Your sentences are sometimes confusing.	<b>T10</b> Use more compound sentences in your writing.
<b>C11</b> You have used an appropriate writing style for the task	<b>T11</b> Practise using complex sentences clearly.
<b>C12</b> You have not addressed all parts of the question in your answer	<b>T12</b> Refer back to the question to ensure you have answered fully
<b>C13</b> You have clearly shown how you reached your answer	<b>T13</b> Try to read between the lines and analyse language and ideas.
<b>C14</b> You have made effective interpretations in your writing	<b>T14</b> Proof-read your work to check for errors
<b>C15</b> Keep up the excellent standard!	<b>T15</b> Redo this task please – it is not your best work