

## POLICY – Marking and Feedback

### Education

|                       |                                                                                     |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Policy Author         | Tonia Lewis, Education and Quality Improvement Lead<br>Laura Dickie, Head of Policy |
| Approval Date         | Feb 2026                                                                            |
| Policy Approver       | Jo Dunn, Compliance, Regulation and Quality Director                                |
| Next Review Date      | Feb 2029                                                                            |
| Version No.           | 001                                                                                 |
| Policy Level          | Education                                                                           |
| Staff groups affected | All Education                                                                       |

### Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis through the service's established governance and quality assurance systems. Responsibility for ensuring that the policy remains compliant with legislation and regulatory frameworks sits with the Proprietor Representative and Regional Lead.

A formal review of this policy will be undertaken no later than three years from the date of approval, or sooner if changes in legislation, regulatory guidance, or operational requirements necessitate it.

The Head of Policy will support this process by identifying relevant changes in legislation, regulation, national standards and emerging best practice. The Head of Policy will also incorporate learning from inspections, audits and practice developments into future revisions whilst overseeing all proposed amendments to the universal content to ensure accuracy, consistency and compliance.



Andrew Sutherland  
**Representative, Proprietor- Cambian Group**  
February 2026



Sean Di Sora  
**Headteacher**  
February 2026

## Terminology

Our aim is to use consistent terminology throughout this policy and all supporting documentation as follows:

| Term                             | Definition                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>‘Establishment’ or ‘Site’</b> | A generic term referring to the school/college owned by CareTech.                                                                          |
| <b>Learner</b>                   | Any child or young person under the age of 18, or young adult over 18 who receives education.                                              |
| <b>Service Head</b>              | The senior person with overall responsibility for the school/college.                                                                      |
| <b>Tutor/Teacher/tutor</b>       | Members of staff who have teaching responsibility for learners at the school/college.                                                      |
| <b>Parent/Carer</b>              | Parent or person with parental responsibility.                                                                                             |
| <b>Regulatory Authority</b>      | The independent regulatory body responsible for inspecting and regulating services (e.g., Ofsted, Estyn, Education Scotland).              |
| <b>Social Worker</b>             | The worker allocated to the individual learner; if none is allocated, the Duty Social Worker or Team Manager is responsible.               |
| <b>Placing Authority</b>         | The local authority/agency responsible for placing the learner or commissioning the service.                                               |
| <b>Local Authority</b>           | The local authority for the establishment’s location.                                                                                      |
| <b>Staff</b>                     | All staff working at the location, including employed staff, learners on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers and proprietors. |

## 1. Local School/College Profile

Linton School is an independent special school who caters for children and young people with social, emotional and mental health needs.

We are located in Freckleton, near Preston, and therefore benefit from some amazing outdoor space where we develop an extensive outdoor curriculum which includes farming, equestrian, horticulture and small animal care. The school provides full time education for up to 12 male or female students aged between 8 - 18 years old. Linton School aims to nurture pupils by offering quality learning experiences so that they can be the best they can be. Pupils are given the opportunity to learn and develop in a supportive and creative environment, ensuring that they feel safe and happy to progress and achieve.

## 2. Purpose

This policy applies to Linton School and sets out the organisational standards for safe, compliant and responsible Marking and Feedback.

It provides a universal framework and outlines the expectations that apply to:

- Staff
- Senior leaders
- Learners
- Visitors and contractors (where relevant)

This policy enables Linton School to meet statutory duties, uphold safeguarding responsibilities, comply with data protection requirements, and maintain high-quality provision.

To be read with:

- Curriculum Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- Appendix B - Marking Symbols

## 3. Scope

This organisational policy applies across all education sites, services and functions. It establishes the universal standards and expectations that must be followed consistently throughout the organisation.

Each site implements these standards in accordance with the statutory and regulatory requirements of the nation in which it operates as set out in **Appendix A**.

## 4. Legal and Regulatory Context

Linton School is governed by the statutory duties, safeguarding requirements and inspection arrangements of the nation in which it operates. The universal standards in this policy are implemented in line with the correct national frameworks set out in

**Appendices A**, which summarise the legal, regulatory and inspection requirements for England.

## 5. Aims

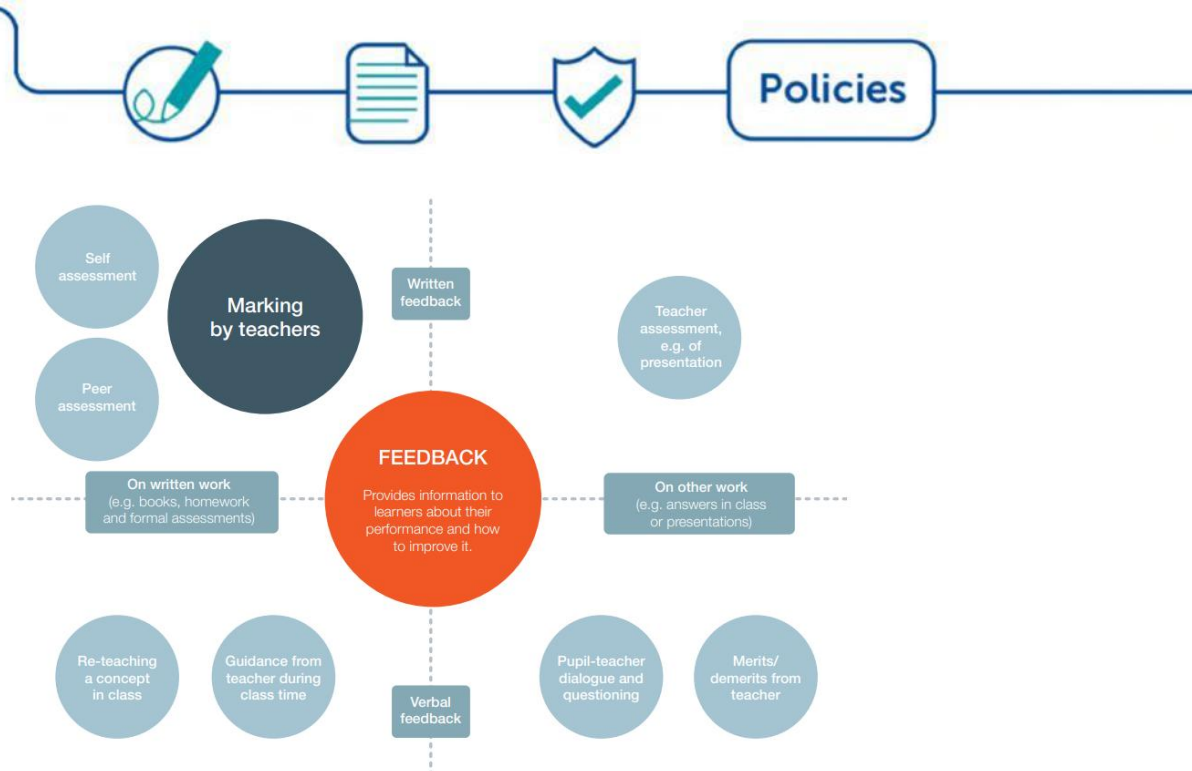
Marking is a central part of a teacher's role and can be integral to progress and attainment. Written responses offer a key way of providing feedback to pupils and helping teachers assess their students' understanding. However, the 2016 report of the Independent Teacher Workload Review Group noted that written marking had become disproportionately valued by schools, unnecessarily burdensome for teachers and that quantity of feedback has too often become confused with the quality. The group noted that there is no 'one size fits all' way to mark, instead recommending that all marking should be driven by professional judgement and be "meaningful, manageable and motivating". For all these reasons, there is a clear need for high-quality evidence to inform schools' decision-making about marking.

Please consider the following definitions and principles:

- ***Marking** = the routine activity of reading, checking, monitoring, (when appropriate) correcting, and (where appropriate) giving a mark to students' written work.*
- ***Feedback** = providing more detailed guidance to the learner in order to help them to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills*

| Marking                | Feedback                |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Summative              | Formative               |
| Assessment of learning | Assessment for learning |
| Measure learning       | Moves learning forwards |
| Directs thinking       | Provokes thinking       |
| Solves                 | Suggests                |
| 'You should...'        | 'How could you...?'     |

While it is important to note that written marking is only one form of feedback, as seen in the diagram below, marking offers an opportunity to provide pupils with the clear and specific information that the wider evidence base on feedback suggests is most likely to lead to pupil progress.



The type of feedback students get on their work will vary according to the subject. In drama, PE, Art and Music for example, much of the feedback will be verbal. In fact much of the best feedback in all subjects is verbal whilst the students are working. Teachers should consider the role of feedback during their lessons and should include a variety of marking and feedback across all subjects.

To establish a broad, consistent approach to the way learner's work is marked, so that learners feel valued and have a clear understanding of how well they are doing. Marking will help learners to improve their work and will inform teacher planning and monitoring.

We aim to:-

- assess Learner's work in a positive manner reflecting the ethos of the Establishment with Learners present as far as possible;
- mark written work regularly and return or give feedback quickly;
- mark work consistently in ways which highlight strengths and shortcomings, using approaches which are understood by learners and parents/carers using the approach of 'What Went Well, Even Better If and Action Points.' Spellings and Grammar will be supported also through this;
- provide helpful and constructive feedback to Learners so that their needs are identified and, where appropriate, discuss with them what they find difficult;
- recognise achievements giving encouragement and building confidence;
- focus on particular aspects of work at different times rather than correcting every mistake which is disheartening. Learners will need to understand what aspects of their work will be the focus of marking linked with the learning intention;
- comment specifically on the next step for learning at the end of each piece of work and where appropriate in other curriculum areas. The aim should be to summarise achievement and to set a further target which will link to the learning objective;



- make links to previous work where possible;
- provide a basis both for summative and for formative assessment;
- when giving a grade or mark, Learners should clearly understand what this means;
- encourage Learners to proof-read and check each piece of work, checking for errors such as repeated words, omissions, mistakes in tense, spelling and punctuation or errors of calculation;
- plan for and give Learners time to respond to marking by editing a section of work, make amendments or extend a piece of work;
- assure Learners that we value their work, and to motivate them;
- assess each individual's work, to identify problems and to help us to plan for the future;
- communicate regularly with Learners about their individual progress;
- inform the next step in a Learner's learning review;
- assist Learners by setting clear targets to focus on aspects of their work which need further development;
- motivate Learners to further effort by praising or celebrating current achievements and raising self-esteem;
- use marking to provide teacher/tutors with feedback of how well the Learners have understood the current work, so as to assist in forward planning;
- enable the teacher/tutor to make judgements about learners' attainments particularly relating to teacher/tutor assessments;
- inform individual, class and whole Establishment assessment and planning;
- promote high quality work;
- develop clarity of purpose;
- evaluate quality of teaching and learning;
- encourage reflection and self-improvement.

## 6. Principles

"Assessment for learning (AfL) is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teacher/tutors, to decide where learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there." J. Rowe, 2007. Marking and feedback in our Establishment will be consistent with the principles of Assessment for Learning (AfL), being:

- Focused on learner learning
- Based on shared learning objectives
- Periodically and selectively given
- Positive in tone and accessible by all learners
- Supportive of achievement in all its forms
- Helping learners to improve their work
- Promoting learner confidence
- Including opportunities to develop peer and self-assessment skills
- Informing future planning and thereby support individual 'target getting'



## 7. Strategies

Marking students' books is part of our professional duty. Routinely reading, checking and monitoring students' books connects us to their learning and helps to ensure that they care about the work they produce. It shows students that we value their work and provides us with crucial on-going information about how well they are learning. It also enables us to monitor the completion of class-based and home learning tasks.

This kind of routine light marking should be regular, timely and manageable. Frequency will vary from subject to subject, but as a general rule books should be taken in and marked before the next lesson. All subjects will have a range of marking to engage the young people and provided the children with next steps and/or challenges. Below are some of the things that you could see within the marking. Marking work too soon gives you no real indicator of a student's understanding or ability to apply newly taught concepts. As such, it is important to mark only when a sufficient amount of learning has taken place. Depending on your style of teaching, this may be sequentially or it may be dependent on the units which you teach, the identification of curricular targets and base lining supports this.

- **Curricular targets** – identified from a range of sources, curriculum targets identify typical areas of weakness in learners' learning, and become a focus for improvement.
- **Base lining** – at the start of a new unit of work teacher/tutors should ascertain what learners specifically already know and understand. Together this knowledge it will inform the identification of curricular targets objectives for whole year groups, classes, sets or even individuals, and more specifically the planning of learning objectives and learning outcomes by teacher/tutors. To support learners need to know in advance what they are learning, what they will be expected to do and how their work will be marked. The use of learning objectives/outcomes and the sharing of success criteria support this.
- **Learning objectives** – broad learning objectives will be shared with learners. These will focus on the learning e.g., on what learners "will know" and "be able to do ..." by the end of the learning process. They will be expressed in such a way that they are accessible to all and could be summed up as "We are learning to..." (WALT) .
- **Learning outcomes** – will also be shared. These will focus on what the learners will be doing, making or producing, this might usefully be summed up as "What I am looking for..." (WILF) or a teacher/tutor preferred alternative. Objectives and outcomes may also be combined e.g. "We are learning to..... by....."
- **Success criteria** – the marking criteria against which different pieces of work will be marked should be shared e.g. in support of peer/self-assessment, milestone pieces of work and end of unit assessment. These criteria may be generated in conjunction with the learners or by the teacher/tutor as appropriate.
- **Modelling** – before starting a task, learners find it helpful to see what a finished product/piece of work might look like. It can generate discussion about what makes a good piece of work and how examples might be improved



### 7.1 Marking and feedback should:

- Focus on 'What Went Well and Even Better If..' (WWW/EBI), ensure 'Action Points' in place to help the learner develop further;
- be manageable for the teaching team and accessible to Learners;
- relate to the learning intention;
- involve the teaching team working with Learners;
- give recognition and praise for achievement and clear strategies for improvement;
- allow specific time for Learners to read, reflect and respond to marking where appropriate;
- respond to individual learning needs taking opportunities to mark face-to-face where appropriate;
- inform future planning;
- ultimately be seen by Learners as a positive approach to improving their learning;
- provide clear feedback to learners about the strengths and weaknesses in their work and the next steps they need to take;
- provide a record of learner's progress;
- encourage learners to strive to improve by giving help, encouragement and constructive comments;
- direct learners to what they need to do to improve their work;
- help parents/ carers understand strengths and weaknesses in their Individuals' work.

The degree of maturity and ability of the Learner will affect the form and nature of marking. We mark not only to correct errors but also to celebrate successes and point a way forward. It is especially important that we have a consistent approach to how we mark Learner's work throughout the Establishment.

### 7.2 Marking may be done by:

- teacher/tutor alone;
- teacher/tutor alongside Individual/Whole class;
- Individual alone
- Peer to peer support
- other Individuals

### 7.3 Guidelines for Marking

- Staff mark all subjects in purple ink, including next steps and Action Points. Self-marking learners will mark in pink ink.
- Where a member of the teaching team other than the class teacher/tutor has been involved in the Individual's learning, the work should be initialled and commented on where appropriate.
- Symbols used for correcting work are consistent throughout the Establishment. Please refer to **Appendix D** for an overview of these.
- All learners work should be collected in regularly and marked within one week. However, in some cases, notably ongoing projects or independent enquiry work, weekly marking may be verbal with written marking at the culmination of the task.





- Not all mistakes will be corrected. These may be subject specific. Corrections within a piece of work should be neat and legible. Remarks should be in the margin, with final comments at the end of the piece.
- If a mark, level or grade is included as part of the marking to be shared with the learner, they must have a clear understanding of what it implies.
- Time should be allowed for learners to read comments and scores. They should have time to discuss the feedback when the work is returned.
- The work of learners with Specific Learning Difficulties should be marked in accordance with their IEP. There should be some indication of the amount of support given.
- Work should be treated with respect. When many errors are made, marking should be selective or dealt with through discussion. Harsh criticism should always be avoided. Requests for further action should be followed up within one week.
- **Learning milestones** – not all marking can or should be marked in detail. Within each unit of work the Establishment will identify a finite number of key pieces of work for more in depth, quality marking. A minimum of six such pieces will be identified by foundation subjects over the course of a year, though core subjects would probably need to identify additional opportunities for quality marking to take place. These pieces of work will focus on the assessment of progress in relation to specific learning objectives or if required curricular target/s.
- **Success criteria** will be shared with learners and at the end of the marking process it should be clear to the learner “what they have done well” and “what they need to do to improve” - ‘WWW/EBI.’
- **Comments** will be positive and subject specific. Linking words such as BUT are best avoided. “Even better if...” (EBI), is a more helpful way of focusing teacher/tutor and learner feedback.
- **Light touch/“tick and flick” marking** – in order to support the giving of quality feedback at key points in the learning process, other work should be marked in less detail. Light touch marking will develop the skills of peer and self-assessment, and will stand along-side whole class and teacher/tutor led marking of more closed tasks, class notes and exercises. Teacher/tutors will acknowledge such work variously through oral feedback as well as the use of an effort grade, ticks, simple marks (10/10), stickers, initials, and/or brief attainment-based comments.
- **Formative marking** – both the marking of milestone pieces and light touch marking are examples of formative marking. They inform the teacher/tutor and learner of learning progress, identify the next steps and how they can best be taken. It informs teacher/tutor planning. This type of work/marking is distinct from end of unit assessments which are summative, judging learner attainment and therefore progress made at a given point in time.
- **Comments** - These should be positive, highlighting the Individual’s strengths. Comments should include advice on how to improve and targets may be set.



They serve as a record for the Individual, teacher/tutor and parent (and outside agencies such as an Ed Psych. if needed).

- **Oral responses to Learners' work** - It is important for all Learners to have oral feedback from a member of the teaching team from time to time. This dialogue should focus upon successes, areas for development and to set targets for future learning. This would be particularly appropriate within the performing arts areas.
- **Summative Feedback / marking** - This is associated with closed tasks or exercises where the answer is either right or wrong. The Individuals, as a class or in groups, can also mark this.
- **Formative feedback marking** - Not all pieces of work can be quality marked. Teacher/tutors need to decide whether work will simply be acknowledged or given detailed attention. Acknowledgement should always relate to the learning intention.

## Verbal Feedback

Verbal feedback is specific information given to the learner their performance relating to their learning goals and/or the learning outcomes. Verbal feedback should aim to be (and be capable of) producing improvements in students' learning.

There are four ground rules for giving effective verbal feedback:

1. Be specific, accurate and clear (e.g. "It was good because you..." rather than just "correct")
2. Compare what a learner is doing right now with what they have done wrong before (e.g. "I can see you were focused on improving X as it is much better than last time's Y...")
3. Encourage and support further effort and be given sparingly so that it is meaningful
4. Provide specific guidance on how to improve and not just tell students when they are wrong.

Verbal feedback should be done every at least once per week in core subjects (English, Maths, Science and ICT) and every 2-3 weeks in all other subjects.

## 8. Making our marking effective

When we return work to older Learners' we will give them a short time (two-three minutes) to read our comments and think about the targets they need to work towards.

### How we involve Learners

It will be apparent from the section above that we are involving Learners. We do this best by sharing the criteria for the marking with them. This is done in several ways:



- Through a standard type of learning objective – the WALT
- Individual Learners having set targets in English and Mathematics and for all vocational subjects termly, these are reviewed with the individual every half term.
- By inviting Learners to think of what it is they have to do in order to succeed (Thomas, when you have finished the writing, how will you know if it is good? What will you be looking for?)
- Fluent writers can write their own learning targets in their book.

Once feedback has been given, students need to be enabled to respond. When giving feedback, therefore, we should offer students time to reflect critically on how to craft and improve their work and then to develop new techniques to put their feedback into practice. A dialogue is opened up with students about their feedback, and we offer time and space for this to happen.

There are three ground rules for the effective use of time to develop more disciplined learner, these are:

1. **Reflect critically** – we expect students to spend approximately twice their time reflecting on their feedback as we have devoted to giving it. This is most effective when done individually, in silence.
2. **Developing techniques** – although this time is about independent reflection, teacher guidance is crucial. We model and scaffold to exemplify the feedback we have given and show students how to improve.
3. **Crafting and improving** - As well as encouraging students to critically reflect on their feedback, this time can also be effectively used for crafting and improving work. This allows students to immediately apply their feedback and put the techniques into practice.

The time given for pupils to reflect on their work should be no more than 15 minutes per lesson although, sometimes teachers may wish to dedicate a whole lesson to it, for example if a significant piece of written work is being re-drafted. The purpose of this is to allow the learners time to address the errors/omissions/misconceptions which will give them the opportunity to bridge the learning gap. Closing gaps in learning needs to be prioritised in order for learning to progress and move forwards.

### What should students do during this time?

There are many different tasks that pupils can do during this time. It depends on what they got wrong or missed out in their assessed work. The following list is by no means exhaustive:

1. Redrafting of a whole piece of work
2. Redrafting of a section of the work
3. Redoing something (for example a graph)
4. Answering a question / questions



## 5. Editing

Pupil participation should be done every 2-3 weeks in core subjects (English, Maths, Science and ICT) and every 4-6 weeks in all other subjects.

## 9. Attainment

Grades aren't always necessary. They can for example be meaningless given the size/nature of the task, and distract from improvement comments. Grades can undermine confidence in some learners and result in complacency for others. However, it is still important for teacher/tutors, parents and learners to know periodically how well the learning is going and what still need to be done. Learners need to be clear about what they need to do to progress from one level/grade to the next, and equally should be clear about the expected progress they should be making through the key stage. In order to support this process:

- levels and grades should be 'translated' into learner speak and shared with learners.
- key pieces of work or learning milestones, will be awarded an attainment grade expressed in terms of an interim KS level or grade.
- at the end of each term a formal assessment will take place and a KS level or grade will be awarded.

## 10. Rewards

To motivate and reward Learners for their effort and work, each year group consistently gives out the same rewards. Rewards may include:

- Daily Reward Points (Class Dojo)
- Pupil of the week
- End of term rewards
- Marks, grades and assessments.
- Stickers, stars, stamps or certificates.

## 11. Specific Learning Difficulties

Learners with specific learning difficulties in both English and Mathematics will have detailed individual learning plans, which will be found on their Individual Education Plan. (IEP targets).

## 12. Parental/Carer Involvement

How Individuals' progress is reported to Parents/ Carers

It is important that we inform parents/carers of our strategies. We will do this by:

- Information sent home to parents/ Carers daily through Class Dojo
- By talking to parents/ Carers at termly review afternoons
- By sharing work and tests with parents
- Writing reports at the end of each term for each Individual

### 13. Roles and Responsibilities

#### Headteacher

- To ensure marking is consistent throughout the Establishment.
- To ensure that the Marking Policy of the School is being effectively implemented.
- Adequate resources and training are available for development.
- To monitor the quality of marking.
- To assess the quality of teaching, learning and assessment through marking.

#### Proprietor Representative

- To approve, ratify and monitor the Marking and Feedback policy.
- To ensure that they are well informed about standards in Marking and Feedback
- To be familiar with the types of information gained from marking and assessment.

#### Teacher/tutors:

- Develop an atmosphere in which Learners are motivated to learn from mistakes and targets given from marking.
- Challenge and support all Learners to do their best.
- Have a thorough and up-to-date knowledge of the marking and feedback policy for the Establishment.
- For marking to reflect individual Individuals' needs.
- Keep comprehensive records of Individuals' work.
- Use marking and assessment data to set targets and give Learners clear and constructive feedback.
- Have the agreed marking symbols displayed in the classroom for Individuals, parents and supply teacher/tutors to refer to.
- To ensure that assessment information informs further curriculum planning.

### Equality Impact Statement

This policy has been developed to promote equality, safeguard individual's rights, and ensure fair and inclusive practice across all services. The potential impact of the policy on children, young people, young adults, families, and staff with protected characteristics has been considered in line with the Equality Act 2010.

No negative impacts have been identified. Staff must apply this policy with sensitivity to individual need and make reasonable adjustments to ensure equitable access, safety, wellbeing, and participation for every individual. Any emerging risks of differential impact should be reported and addressed through ongoing review and quality assurance.

This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher every year.

At every review, the policy will be approved by the Richard George, Regional Lead.

This policy will be due for renewal in April 2027.

## Appendices

### Appendix A – Legal and Regulatory Framework in England

#### Appendix A — England

England's legislative and regulatory framework for feedback and marking is governed by equality duties, SEND law, statutory careers guidance, and Ofsted expectations, including for further education and skills providers.

##### 1. Ofsted – Education Inspection Framework (EIF)

For schools, FE colleges and other skills providers, Ofsted's published position is that:

- Ofsted does not prescribe how often, in what format, or to what extent marking or written feedback must occur.
- Inspectors evaluate whether assessment is used effectively to check understanding, inform teaching, and support learner progress across all provision types (schools, FE, apprenticeships, adult learning).
- Marking/feedback should be aligned to the provider's own assessment policy and must not create unnecessary workload for staff.

This applies equally to FE colleges under Ofsted's unified EIF.

**Link - [Education inspection framework \(EIF\) - GOV.UK](#)**

##### 2. Statutory Guidance (DfE) — Careers Guidance & Provider Access

Sites must:

- Provide impartial, accessible guidance, ensuring learners can understand options and progress.
- Publish clear programme information (including how progress and readiness for next steps is supported).

While not prescribing marking systems, this duty reinforces the requirement for clear communication of progress, including through feedback processes.

**Link - [Careers guidance and access for education and training providers - GOV.UK](#)  
[Contains national statutory expectations for impartially supporting learner understanding and progression which includes](#)**



### 3. Equality Act 2010

Sites must:

- Make reasonable adjustments so those with additional needs/disabilities are not disadvantaged in assessment, feedback methods, or marking expectations.
- This directly governs how feedback must be delivered (formats, timing, accessibility, adaptations).

Link - [Equality Act 2010](#)

### 4. SEND Code of Practice (0–25) — Statutory Guidance

Sites must:

- Make marking and feedback accessible, adapted, and designed to remove barriers to learning.
- Involve learners in understanding progress and next steps.

Link - [SEND Code of Practice January 2015.pdf](#)

### 5. Publication Requirements – School Information (England) Regulations 2008

- Schools must publish specified curriculum information, but there is no statutory requirement to publish a marking or feedback policy.

Link - [The School Information \(England\) Regulations 2008](#)

#### **What this means for marking & feedback:**

- Provision of marking and feedback that supports learner progress but are not bound to any marking frequency or format.
- Approaches must be accessible and reasonably adjusted under the Equality Act 2010.
- Provision of feedback that supports progression, clear communication and readiness for next steps (aligned to careers guidance duties).



## Appendix B: Marking Symbols

✓ = correct  
x = incorrect  
sp = spelling  
p = punctuation  
// = new paragraph/ line needed  
\* = Positive comments (WWW) – star  
• = Points to improve (EBI) – bullet point  
VF = Verbal Feedback given  
NS = Next Steps

Please note that some teacher/tutors may have additional symbols which they share with their class at the start of the year.