

Feedback and Marking Policy

At Willowcroft, we recognise that high-quality feedback is one of the most powerful levers for improving pupil progress, particularly when it is timely, focused on learning and acted upon by pupils. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) identifies feedback as a high-impact, evidence-informed strategy when it is well-designed and aligned with clear learning goals.

UK and international research on formative assessment shows that ongoing assessment and responsive teaching can significantly raise standards of achievement across a wide range of contexts. More recent UK work on “feedforward” emphasises that feedback has greatest value when it explicitly guides pupils’ *next steps*, enabling them to apply learning in subsequent tasks rather than only justifying assessment on completed work.

This policy sets out how Willowcroft will implement **live feedback** (given during learning, in real time) and **feedforward** (advice focused on future improvement) in line with current UK evidence and national expectations around curriculum and assessment.

Aims

This policy aims to ensure feedback and feedforward:

- Improve learning.
- Are manageable and sustainable for staff.
- Are clearly understood and used by pupils.
- Embed live feedback as a routine feature of classroom practice across subjects and phases.
- Make feedforward the primary function of assessment information, so pupils know *how to improve next time*.
- Reduce unnecessary written marking that does not demonstrably impact pupil outcomes, in line with EEF guidance on workload and implementation.
- Ensure feedback and feedforward processes are inclusive, equitable and effective for all learners, including pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged.

Definitions

Feedback (written or verbal)

Information given to the learner about their performance relative to learning goals, intended to close the gap between current and desired performance.

Live feedback

Feedback provided *during* the learning (e.g. in-class verbal responses, prompts, quick written annotations, use of visualisers or mini-whiteboards) that allows pupils to immediately adjust and improve.

Feedforward (written or verbal)

Guidance that looks ahead to *subsequent* work or assessments, helping pupils understand how to apply what they have learned from current feedback in future tasks.

Formative assessment / Assessment for Learning

The use of assessment information to adapt teaching to meet learners’ needs and help them progress, rather than merely to summarise attainment.

Principles of Effective Live Feedback and Feedforward

Drawing on the EEF guidance report *Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning* and wider UK research, Willowcroft adopts the following principles:

- Feedback is linked explicitly to curriculum aims and success criteria, not to vague notions of “effort” or presentation alone.
- Focused on the learning, not the learner.
- Comments target specific aspects of knowledge, skills and understanding, avoiding personal judgements.
- Timely and frequent enough to matter.
- Live feedback is prioritised over delayed written comments wherever it is likely to be more impactful.
- Pupils receive feedback in time to use it in the same or very next learning sequence.
- Feedback is actionable and specific.
- Pupils are given concrete steps they can take (e.g. “include two contrasting pieces of evidence to support this point”) rather than generic comments (e.g. “add more detail”).
- Feedback requires pupil response.
- Feedback is not complete until pupils have engaged with it (e.g. revising work, redrafting a paragraph, completing a “fix-it” task or responding to a prompt).
- Feedback is proportionate and sustainable to the individual learner.
- The *method* (verbal, written, digital, whole-class) is chosen for its effectiveness and efficiency, not habit or tradition.
- Developmental (feedforward).
- Feedback always includes an element of “what to do next time”, helping pupils transfer learning to future tasks and building self-regulation.

Expectations for Classroom Practice

Live Feedback During Lessons

Teachers will:

- Use **questioning, mini-whiteboards, cold calling, think-pair-share, and short low-stakes quizzes** to check understanding in real time and adapt teaching accordingly.
- Circulate and provide **brief, targeted verbal prompts** while pupils work, focusing on misconceptions, key concepts, and common errors.
- Use **interactive white boards or projected work** to model success criteria and address common issues through whole-class live feedback.
- Prioritise **in-lesson improvement** (e.g. editing, re-drafting, rehearsing responses) rather than simply highlighting errors for later.

Written Feedback and Marking

- Written feedback will be:
 - Selective, focusing on curriculum priorities and misconceptions.

- Legible, concise and understandable to the pupil.
- Accompanied by clear **pupil actions** (e.g. “pink pen response”, improvement tasks, or short re-teaching activities).

Willowcroft does **not** require extensive written comments on every piece of work. Written marking should be used where it has a clear impact on learning and is proportionate in terms of teacher workload.

Feedforward in Assessment Cycles

For key assessments (e.g. NFERs, hot writes):

- Staff will:
 - Analyse common strengths and gaps at class and cohort level.
 - Provide **whole-class feedforward** (modelling exemplars, using question-level analysis, reteaching concepts).
 - For hot writes, give each pupil at least one **personalised feedforward target** that is:
 - Actionable against the next phase of work. It must be transcriptional so they are able to act upon it in the next unit of work.
 - Revisited in subsequent work (e.g. success criteria, self-assessment against the same target).
- Follow-up lessons will be deliberately planned as “**feedforward lessons**”, where the majority of time is spent:
 - Applying feedback to improve existing work; and/or
 - Completing new tasks that require pupils to use their feedforward targets.

Peer and Self-Assessment

- Train pupils explicitly to use **success criteria and exemplars** to review work.
- Structure peer assessment through prompts and checklists so it is focused, kind and helpful.
- Use self-assessment regularly.

Use of Digital Tools (where appropriate)

- Where suitable and accessible, technology may be used to:
 - Provide **timely automated feedback** on low-stakes quizzes.
 - Capture audio or video feedback for complex tasks.
 - Support retrieval practice and formative assessment, with careful consideration of workload and equity of access.

Inclusion, Equity and SEND

- Feedback and feedforward will be adapted to meet the diverse needs of learners, including:
 - Using clear, accessible language and visual supports.
 - Providing additional scaffolding or modelling.
 - Offering alternative formats (e.g. oral feedback, symbols, checklists) where appropriate.
- Teachers will pay close attention to:
 - **Disadvantaged pupils**, ensuring they benefit fully from live feedback, are prompted to respond, and receive targeted feedforward where necessary.
 - Pupils with **SEND**, ensuring strategies are consistent with pupils' individual plans and external professional advice.

Possible Methods

The Pink Box Method (Selective Marking)

Written feedback can have a huge impact on students development, but it also needs to be concise, purposeful and manageable for teachers to keep moving the learning on. The pink box method identifies a key area for development which is further enhanced by live assessment during the lesson. This practical approach to marking ensures that staff provide students with a clear focus, effectively moving the learning forward in smaller chunks.

Teachers mark a section of the children's work with a pink box. The children will then edit this section in line with either the verbal feedback given, success criteria, the identified key area for improvement or by using the appropriate symbol signpost.

Praise, Probe, Identify, Plan and Lock (PPIPL)

Verbal feedback is immediate, efficient and adds huge value when motivating students. If delivered well, it can be transformational for teachers workload and wellbeing and for student outcomes. Verbal and written feedback should be personalised and not just a token "well done". The PPIPL format can be used for classroom feedback conversations but also for conversations in the corridor (purple folder) or managing low level behaviour.

Praise (step 1)

Refer to any known previous actions to validate previous effort. For example, how far the student has moved forward in the time. List specific strengths and what impacts their actions have had.

Probe (step 2)

Ask some probing questions, then narrow the focus. For example, why did you do it this way?

Identify (step 3)

State the issue and make 1 or 2 actions. If possible, ask the student to generate the possible actions – what is missing, have you checked the success criteria, or use the symbol signpost.

Plan (step 4)

Plan ahead and set a timeline. What are the barriers? What support or scaffolding is needed?

Lock (step 5)

Lock those plans in. Make sure the student knows exactly what to do next. Ask them to summarise the conversation and state the next steps.

Non-Verbal Feedback

Non-verbal feedback can develop a positive learning environment, encourage participation and provide immediate feedback. By being conscious of it, we can understand the power of gestures, facial cues and body language. Non-verbal feedback is subtle, but it can significantly impact on how students perceive and respond to teacher instruction. When students are given the opportunity to take ownership of their learning, make connections and evaluate ideas in a safe and welcoming environment with their peers, their opportunities to succeed in the classroom and in life increase.

Non-verbal formative strategies, especially those centred around feedback are varied and can be subtly integrated into daily classroom interactions, these include:

- Thumbs up/down
- Hand signals for self-assessment
- Facial expressions for encouragement/concern
- Proximity for silent monitoring and support
- Visual aids for clarification
- Miming action for behaviour expectations

Students should see and feel the positive affirmation they receive for their teachers during lessons. During lessons, teachers should circulate the classroom providing non-verbal feedback where needed. These students then have the confidence to continue to work independently. The benefits to non-verbal feedback are –

- The flow of the lesson is not lost
- Feedback is given without interruption
- Positive communication happens silently
- Students receive more feedback at regular intervals.

WalkThrus to enhance live feedback

Using WalkThrus enhances marking and feedback by providing a shared, visual language for actionable steps, making feedback clearer for students (focusing on *how* to improve, not just *what's* wrong) and teachers (consistent, targeted strategies for professional growth). They shift feedback from just grading to fostering self-regulation, ensuring feedback is understood, accepted, and drives future performance by focusing on the next steps rather than past errors. The following Walkthrus are a solid starting point for enhancing verbal and written marking and building relationships in the classroom and beyond.

- No opt out
- Selective marking
- Spot your mistakes
- Success Criteria
- Cold Calling
- Think Pair Share
- Show call

Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction

Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction enhance feedback and marking in the classroom by ensuring that teaching at Willowcroft is structured in a way that makes feedback more timely, targeted and effective. By presenting material in small steps and providing clear modelling, teachers create precise success criteria that allow pupils to understand and act on feedback more easily. Regular checking for understanding and guided practice mean misconceptions are identified and addressed during the lesson, reducing the need for extensive written marking afterwards. In addition, frequent review helps pupils retain key knowledge and prevents recurring errors, allowing marking to focus on meaningful next steps rather than repeated corrections. Overall, Rosenshine's principles shift feedback from a retrospective written exercise to a responsive, in-lesson process that improves pupil progress while reducing teacher workload.