



Feedback and Marking Policy

September 2026

Review September 2027

1. Purpose

At Cotton End Forest School, feedback is a central part of the teaching and learning cycle. Our approach is grounded in the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) *Teacher Feedback to Improve Pupil Learning* guidance, the DfE's workload principles, and the NCETM's emphasis on high-quality teaching.

Our aims are to ensure that feedback is:

- Timely - given closest to the point of learning
- Specific - focused on the learning intention
- Actionable - enabling pupils to improve
- Manageable - reducing unnecessary workload
- Meaningful - supporting progress over time

Feedback exists to improve learning. It is not used to generate evidence for external scrutiny.

2. Research Basis

According to the EEF, effective feedback should:

- Redirect or refocus teacher or pupil actions
- Be specific, accurate and clear
- Encourage further effort
- Be used sparingly so it remains purposeful
- Provide guidance on how to improve

The DfE identifies written marking as a significant workload pressure. The NCETM stresses that the most important teacher activity is high-quality teaching, supported by effective lesson design.

Our policy reflects these principles.

3. Rationale for Consistency Across the School

Consistency ensures that:

- Pupils experience a predictable, supportive feedback system
- Staff workload is protected through shared expectations
- Feedback is understood by pupils across year groups
- Vulnerable pupils and those with SEND benefit from clarity and routine
- New staff, supply teachers and ECTs can quickly adopt school practice

A consistent approach strengthens equity and improves learning outcomes.

4. Key Principles

- The sole purpose of feedback is to further children's learning.
- Verbal and live feedback are the most effective and therefore the most frequently used.
- Evidence of feedback is incidental; teachers do not create additional written evidence.
- Written comments are used only when they are accessible, meaningful and necessary.
- Feedback forms part of our formative assessment process.

- Teachers prioritise teaching first, ensuring feedback enhances learning without adding unnecessary workload.
- Pupils are active participants in the feedback process.

5. Feedback in Practice

Teachers evaluate pupil work during and after lessons to identify misconceptions, adapt teaching and plan next steps.

5.1 Immediate Feedback (Live Feedback)

This is our core approach and includes:

- Verbal prompts
- Modelling and re-teaching
- Use of mini-whiteboards
- Teacher/TA conferencing
- Highlighting the WALT at the end of the lesson

Evidence: lesson observations, learning walks, pupil voice.

5.2 Summary Feedback

End-of-lesson or whole-class review, including:

- Use of the visualiser
- Peer or self-assessment
- Identifying next steps for the following lesson

Evidence: pupil voice, class review notes.

5.3 Review Feedback

Away from the point of teaching, used selectively when guidance cannot be given during the lesson. May include:

- Brief written comments
- Planning adaptations
- Identifying misconceptions for future teaching

Evidence: book looks, planning notes, pupil responses.

6. Learning Intentions (WALT)

To ensure clarity of learning:

- EYFS: A simplified WALT slip is stuck in for each lesson.
- KS1: Weekly WALT slips for English and maths; block overview for foundation subjects.
- KS2: Pupils write the WALT at the start of each lesson.

Highlighting the WALT

The WALT is highlighted at the end of the lesson as part of formative assessment. This supports teachers and pupils to evaluate learning against the intention.

Highlighting the WALT:

- Shows whether the learning intention has been met
- Supports the RAG rating
- Helps teachers identify next steps
- Encourages pupil reflection

7. RAG Rating of Learning Intentions

All Learning Intentions (WALT) are RAG-rated to support formative assessment:

- Red - *Not met*
- Amber - *Met with some support or misunderstanding*
- Green - *Met*

RAG ratings inform:

- Next-lesson planning
- Grouping
- Intervention
- Pupil understanding of progress

8. Independence Codes

To show the level of support clearly, teachers use:

- I - Independent
- G - Guided group with an adult
- 1:1 - One-to-one support

9. Core Marking Codes

Cotton End Forest School uses a simple, consistent set of marking codes:

- Green highlighter - Example of expected work
- Blue highlighter - Misconception or error
- Orange highlighter - Spelling (selective use)

These are the only colour codes used across the school.

10. Simplified Written Codes

Used only when necessary:

- VF — Verbal feedback
- // — New paragraph needed

- ^ — Missing word

11. Spelling Approach

- Orange highlighter used selectively
- Focus on key patterns pupils should know or are learning
- KS1: Correct spelling written by an adult
- KS2: Pupils correct using a dictionary or support

This ensures spelling feedback is purposeful and manageable.

12. Pupil Response Expectations

Pupils are taught how to respond to feedback effectively. Across the school:

- Response time is built into lessons
- Pupils edit or improve work using purple pen
- Responses may include corrections, additions, re-drafting or applying a next step
- In subjects beyond writing, responses may be verbal, practical or recorded briefly

This ensures feedback leads to action and progress.

13. SEND and Vulnerable Pupils

Feedback for pupils with SEND or additional vulnerabilities is:

- Adapted to individual needs
- Delivered primarily through live interaction
- Supported by independence codes to track the level of support
- Designed to reduce cognitive load and build confidence

Teachers work closely with the SENCo to ensure feedback supports each pupil's learning pathway.

14. Deep Marking of Independent Writing

Deep marking is used twice per term in KS1 (where appropriate) and KS2.

Teachers provide:

- Acknowledgement of strengths
- A clear, specific next step

Pupils respond in purple pen during dedicated response time.

Deep marking is used only for independent writing.

15. Remote or Online Learning

In the event of remote learning, the principles of this policy continue to apply. Feedback will be delivered primarily through:

- Live interaction
- Short, actionable comments
- Simple, manageable tasks

The focus remains on clarity, impact and workload protection.

16. What We Will Not Do

To protect teacher workload and maintain clarity, we do not:

- Over-mark every piece of work
- Write excessive written comments
- Record everything
- Use unnecessary codes

Feedback must remain purposeful, manageable and impactful.

17. Monitoring

Consistency and impact are monitored through:

- Learning walks
- Book looks
- Pupil voice
- Staff discussion and moderation

Monitoring focuses on effectiveness and workload, not quantity of marking.

All policy documents and templates are stored in the Subject Leader file on the shared drive.

18. Quick-Reference Glossary for Staff

- RAG: Red = not met; Amber = partly met; Green = met
- Independence codes: I, G, 1:1
- Highlighters: Green = good example; Blue = misconception; Orange = spelling
- Written codes: VF, //, ^
- Deep marking: Twice per term (writing only)
- Purple pen: Pupil response

19. Summary

Feedback at Cotton End Forest School is:

- Timely
- Specific
- Actionable
- Workload-conscious

It prioritises live interaction, modelling and pupil response to drive learning. Written marking - including deep marking twice per term - and selective colour coding provide clear, manageable guidance for pupils and teachers.