



Feedback at EPCS

Whole School Feedback Principles

A differentiated approach:

We recognise that due to the diverse nature of subjects in our curriculum, a 'one size fits all' feedback policy is not appropriate. Instead, departments are responsible for selecting the feedback styles they consider most appropriate to their curriculum aims. This document details our philosophy on feedback that all department policies are expected to adhere to.

Our whole school feedback principles:

At Easthampstead Park Community School, we believe all feedback should follow the 3 'M's, and be:

1. Meaningful
2. Manageable
3. Motivating.

The purpose of all feedback at EPCS is to advance learning and support students' journey through the curriculum. It must be time efficient for teachers and effectively move student learning forwards. Where mistakes or misconceptions are taking place, we expect teachers intervene swiftly, however this does not have to be in a written form.

We strive to ensure that feedback is a recurring loop: targeted teaching takes place, feedback is given, which then leads to improvements in students knowledge/understanding/application. We stress the importance of the final stage of this cycle (DIRT time) taking place for feedback to be effective.

Either verbally or in writing, students in all subjects are regularly set targets for improvement. Students should be able to clearly explain the target(s) they are currently working on when asked. Targets should be short term (Conte and Hinze, 2000), specific (Blanchard, 2002), and limited in number (Shute, 2007).

Marking must inform teacher planning, so common misconceptions and mistakes addressed in subsequent lessons, and students provided with structured opportunities to act upon their targets.

If providing written targets, teachers are reminded to take special care with their handwriting to ensure they are clearly legible and easy for the student to understand. Research (Woolley, Carless and Nuthall) suggests that when students do not engage with feedback, it is often because they don't understand or can't read the target(s) they've been set.

Teachers are reminded that research suggests the shorter the gap between the students' completing a task and receiving feedback, the greater the impact the feedback has (Lee, 2013; Bitchener and Koch, 2009). The Wows Project (2018) demonstrated the significant impact verbal feedback at the time of writing could have on student progress.

How are department feedback policies determined?

In determining their department feedback policies, departments are required to consider:

1. What is the aim of our curriculum? What are we trying to support students with achieving?
2. What is the focus of the series of lessons we are delivering? Which skills need to be explicitly taught? How will these skills be segmented?
3. How will these skills best be assessed? What type(s) of feedback will most effectively support students with moving their learning forwards?

Teachers must be clear about the purpose of all feedback. Why is it being given at this particular time? What is it specifically aiming to achieve?

What feedback strategies do teachers use?

Departments employ a range of feedback strategies to achieve their curriculum aims, as detailed in their Department feedback policies. Some of the strategies used by teachers may include:

- Front end feedback - Teachers raising common mistakes/misconceptions at the point of first teaching. Teachers preempt mistakes rather than waiting for students to make them.
- Register feedback - Each student is asked to make a verbal contribution to demonstrate their level of understanding when the register is called.
- Strategic sampling - A small sample of books (for example 3-5 students) is looked at in detail by the teacher, and then extracts studied by the whole class using a visualiser to identify common misconceptions/weaknesses.
- Selective marking - The teacher marks in detail one paragraph of a longer response, or student response to two questions from a set of ten.
- Student conferencing - Teacher verbally discusses student work - WWW/EBI with either an individual student or a group of students. Students then reattempt the task/make improvement/attempt a new task with a similar focus off the back of the discussion. (Van der Schaaf et al, 2013)
- Use of visualisers - for modelling, shared writing etc.

- Whole class feedback sheets - Use of a one sided A4 proforma to provide whole class feedback on specific aspects of work students have completed.
- Coded marking - Use of marking codes to identify specific areas of strength and development in student work without repeatedly writing out lengthy targets.
- Use of checklists.
- 'Low stakes' knowledge recall assessments such as quizzes or multiple choice questions as starters or plenaries in lessons.
- Self or peer assessment against quantitative success criteria.
- Self or peer assessment, comparing one's own/partner's work to a model response to identify targets.

How is student progress tracked?

Teachers at EPCS are required to enter a summative progress mark for students at 3 points in each academic year. These marks must be based on evidence from student work over time, which has been carefully moderated and quality assured. Teachers will be given time to comparatively judge students' work in their department teams, to ensure their judgements are consistent.

However, in the classroom, teachers are asked to treat the sharing of summative marks with caution. This is because research (Klapp, 2015; Butler 1988) suggests that students who receive summative marks make less progress in their learning than students who receive comments alone.

In addition, all teachers are expected to maintain a mark book (either electronic or in physical form), and when they look at student work, keep a track of their targets to improve, effort and engagement with homework.

How do we evaluate the effectiveness of feedback at EPCS?

The effectiveness of feedback at EPCS is judged on its impact on student learning, ie: a student becoming more effective at applying a particular skill, a student exhibiting a broader or more detailed knowledge, a student no longer making the same mistake or misconception. This is assessed through triangulating data from looking at the students' work over time, progress data over time, observing lessons and talking to the students (Can they explain what their current target(s) is? Can they explain what skills they are learning/practicing? Can they show find evidence in their book of them getting better/more confident with a specific skill?) These activities occur as part of the school's MRE (Monitoring, Reviewing, Evaluating) process.

Feedback@EPCS: Top 10 Golden Rules

1. Staff must be clear about the purpose of all feedback. Why is it being given at this particular time? This rationale should be based on improving student learning and outcomes, not to provide evidence to SLT/other interested third parties that assessment and marking has taken place.
2. Students should be spending far longer acting on their targets than the teacher is marking their work. Feedback needs to lead to a student making steps forwards in their learning, doing more of something or doing or thinking about something differently. Make sure the loop is complete!
3. If it isn't positively impacting on student learning and outcomes, you shouldn't be doing it!
4. Quantity of feedback should not be confused with quality.
5. Make targets clear, focused and short term.
6. If giving written feedback, make sure your handwriting is clear and written expression easy to understand.
7. Feedback at time of task completion, or very soon afterwards has the highest impact. Do not underestimate the impact of immediate verbal feedback to students whilst they are working.
8. Make the students work harder. Embed meaningful self and peer assessment in your lessons by regularly giving students time to evaluate each other's work and target set using checklists, success criteria and model answers.
9. Feedback **MUST** inform teacher planning. Teach to what students don't know/can't do. Add value to students by correcting common misconceptions and misunderstandings, and giving them time to practice their targets.
10. Be careful about giving students summative grades - research shows that this reduces their engagement with next-step targets.

Appendix 1: Whole School Standard Marking Codes

SP = Spelling error

P = Punctuation mistake

C= Capital letter used wrongly

II = New paragraph

△ = Clumsy expression/doesn't make sense!

Appendix 2: The Presentation of Work

There should be a high expectation of the standard of presentation of student work at all times. The following are generic standards to which all curriculum areas are to adhere.

- Students are to begin each lesson's work by writing a date and title.
- Students are to write in black or blue ink.
- Diagrams and drawings are to be in pencil
- Mistakes are to be crossed out using one line only
- Care should be taken over handwriting
- There should be no graffiti/doodling