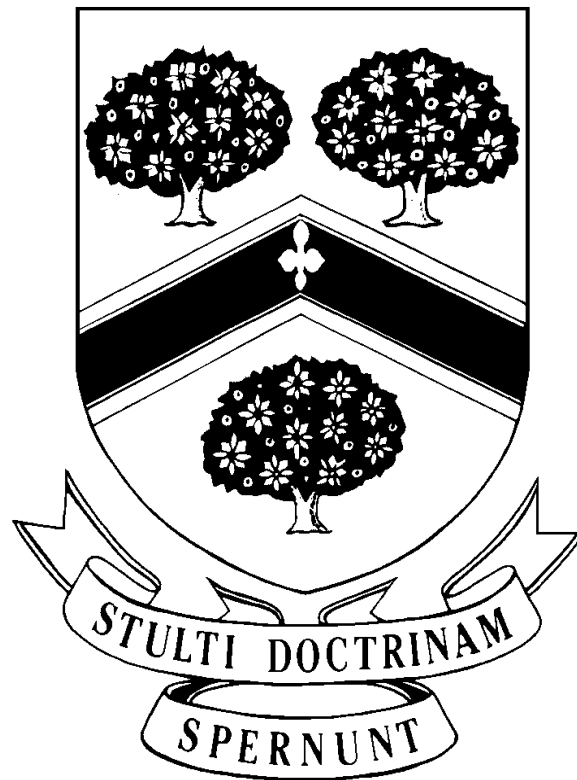


THORNTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

A SPECIALIST SPORTS, SCIENCE & APPLIED LEARNING
TRUST SCHOOL



FOUNDED 1673

POLICY FOR MARKING

REVIEWED: FEBRUARY 2011

Thornton Grammar School

Marking Policy (draft 2)

Aim

To establish a broad, consistent approach to the way learners' work is marked, so that pupils feel valued and have a clear understanding of how well they are doing and how to improve, and teachers have an formative record of learners' achievement and progress that informs their planning.

Principles

Marking and feedback at Thornton Grammar School will be consistent with the principles and practices of Assessment for Learning (AfL) and Assessing Pupils' progress (APP). Assessment for Learning 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 best to get there. Assessing Pupils' progress is a structures approach to periodically assessing students' work so teachers can track students' progress and use diagnostic information about students' strengths and weaknesses. Marking and feedback at Thornton Grammar School will therefore:

- Be focused on student learning
- Be based on shared learning objectives
- Take place regularly and selectively
- Be positive in tone and accessible by all students
- Be supportive of achievement in all its forms
- Help students in improving their work
- Promote learner confidence and self-esteem
- Include opportunities to develop peer and self assessment skills
- Inform future planning and thereby support individual target setting.

Strategies

Curricular Targets and Base Lining

To plan for good learning teachers need to be aware of areas of weakness in student learning, as well as what students already know and understand. The identification of **curricular targets and base lining** support this:

- **Curricular targets** – identified from a range of sources, curricular targets identify areas of weakness in students' learning and become a focus for improvement
- **Base lining** – at the start of a new unit of work teachers should ascertain what students specifically already know and understand

Together this knowledge will inform the identification of curricular targets for whole year groups, classes or individuals, and more specifically the planning of learning objectives and learning outcomes by teachers.

Learning Objectives, Learning Outcomes and Success Criteria

To support learning students 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** and **learning outcomes** and the sharing of **success criteria** support this:

- **Learning Objectives** – broad learning objectives will be shared with students. These will focus on the learning, e.g. on what students **“will know”** and **“be able to do”** by the end of the learning process. They will be expressed in such a way that they will be 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 students are doing, making or producing. This might be usefully summed up as **“What I am looking for...” (WILF)**.
- 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. These criteria may be generated in conjunction with students or by the teacher or department as appropriate.

Modelling

Before starting a task, students find it helpful to see what a finished piece of work or product might look like. This can generate discussion about what makes a good piece of work and how examples might be improved.

Learning Milestones

All work should be marked regularly, but not all work can or should be marked in minute detail: marking will be ‘for purpose’. However, within each unit of work departments and teachers will identify a significant number of formative pieces of work for **in-depth quality marking**:

- These may culminate in the generation of the fine level/grade required for collation every half term, or be used to assess final performance in the unit, but their primary function will be to move students forward.
- These pieces of work will focus on the assessment of progress in relation to specific learning objectives or, if required, curricular target(s).
- A fine level or grade will be awarded
- Success criteria will be shared with students and at the end of the marking process it should be clear to the student
 - What they have done well,
 - Why they have been awarded a particular fine grade or level
 - What they need to do to improve – specifically, how they can reach the next level or grade
- Comments will be positive and subject-specific. Linking words such as BUT are best avoided. **“Even better if...to get to the next level”** may be a more helpful way of focusing teacher and student feedback.
- A comment should be made about the effort made by the student.

Lighter Touch 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 alongside whole-class and teacher-led marking of more closed tasks, class notes and exercises. Teachers will acknowledge such work through various means including ticks and simple marks according to the type of work set. Where appropriate, these will be accompanied by brief comments which praise the student for what has been done well and explain how improvement can be made, with reference to the effort made. This approach may be supplemented by oral feedback.

Formative and Summative Marking

Both the marking of milestone pieces and light touch marking are examples of **formative** marking. This inform the teacher and student of learning progress, identify the next steps and how they can best be taken. It informs teacher planning. This type of work and marking is distinct from end of unit assessments which are **summative**, judging student attainment and therefore progress made at a specific point in time.

Attainment

Grades and levels are not always necessary. They can, for example, be meaningless for certain tasks and distract from improvement comments. They can undermine self confidence in some students and result in complacency in others. However, it is still important for teachers, parents and students to know on a regular basis how well the learning is going and what still needs to be done. Students need to be clear about what they need to do to progress from one level or 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:

- Level and grade descriptors should be 'translated' into student speak and shared with students
- Key pieces of work or learning milestones will be awarded a fine level or fine grade indicating attainment
- Attainment across a Unit, for which a fine level or fine grade will be awarded, may be measured through the cumulative quality marking of learning milestones within the Unit, or through a formal end of unit assessment, as decided by the department.
- Fine levels or fine grades based on quality marking of learning milestones or of end of unit tests as appropriate will be forwarded to the assessment office at the times specified.

Colour of marking

Marking needs to be visible and legible. A pen or pencil colour that contrasts with that used by the student should be used.

Marking for Literacy

In order to promote consistency a common approach to the marking of secretarial errors will be used:

Sp	Spelling – either part of a word or whole word
/	New sentence n/s
//	New paragraph n/p
O / pn	Punctuation- add / correct where necessary
_____	Underline a word or phrase showing mistake
?	Meaning unclear – or no workings
Cp	Capital
^	Something missed out
ww	Wrong word
Exp	Weak expression
NAS	Not a sentence

Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers

- Mark work on a regular basis: typically once every fortnight or 3 times per unit of learning
- Mark work according to this policy, especially in relation to how students could improve their work
- Encourage students to actively read and act upon marking
- Ensure that students have their target level or grade clearly on display on the cover of their exercise books, files and/or student planner
- Share good marking practice at meetings.

Heads of Subject

- Write a departmental marking policy where requirements vary from this policy
- Monitor marking of books as part of QA process; typically 3 times a year through work sampling
- Ensure that issues of inadequate marking within the department are addressed
- Facilitate the sharing of good marking practice

Teaching Assistants

- Read comment made by teachers in order to guide students in class

Students

- Read comments written by teachers
- Respond positively to comments written by teachers
- When advised, self-assess work using criteria
- When advised, peer assess work fairly and responsibly

Parents

- Read through teachers' comments regularly; typically once a fortnight
- Help students respond effectively to marking
- Where necessary communicate with teachers about marking through the planner

Line Managers

- Monitor implementation of this policy as part of QA cycle

Senior Management Team

- Lead the evaluation and review of the policy

Governing Body

- Be aware of the marking policy
- Contribute to the monitoring, evaluation and review of the policy, as appropriate
- Contribute to the subsequent development of the policy, as appropriate