



ARDEN

Academy Trust

Arden Academy (Arden) is an academy maintained by Arden Multi Academy Trust

Name of Policy	Teaching, Learning & Assessment Policy	
Lead	Linda Page, Deputy Headteacher	
Governor Committee	Teaching & Learning Committee	
Policy Status	Re drafted	May 2024
	Awaiting Governor Approval	N/A
	Governor Approved	Yes
This Version	4	
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Reviewed	Initially drafted 2017	
	7 th October 2019 – minor amendments to reflect new lead	
	3 rd December 2021 – some comments added regarding homework and CPD	
	Autumn Term 2023 review – larger scale changes needed to reflect whole school changes. This was completed in Spring 2024.	
	Changes approved Spring 2024	
	Autumn Term 2025 review – minor amendments to the last bullet point under ‘Behaviour for Learning’	

AIM OF POLICY

- **This policy describes to all stakeholders the principles and strategies for highly impactful teaching and learning at Arden.**
- **It is expected that a qualified teaching professional should be able to demonstrate all of the principles and strategies outlined in this policy, and that this should be observable in the classroom setting.**
- **If it is identified that a teacher does not achieve this they should seek and/or receive support and training.**

There are three sections to this policy

1. Principles of Quality First Teaching
2. Feedback and Marking
3. Data Generation and Reporting

Section 1: PRINCIPLES OF QUALITY FIRST TEACHING AT ARDEN

Context

- Arden affirms Teaching and Learning as its core purpose and sets it at the heart of everything it does.
- Arden aims for a Teaching and Learning culture of consistent “Quality First Teaching”.
- It includes all students in a culture of high expectations, ensuring progress for all.
- It seeks to constantly expand every teacher’s range of teaching strategies and techniques.
- Individual departments’ feedback policies sit under the whole school feedback to ensure departments can adapt their practices to best suit subject specific best practice.

Description of the Principles of Quality First Teaching

Progress for all	<p>Learning objectives are clear, students know what is expected of them and the use of objectives is integral to the lesson.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning objectives are flexible in format, e.g., enquiry question, learning continua, ‘so that’ but should be accessible to, and understood by students. • Students should be able to articulate the relevance of the lesson in the context of their learning journey.
	<p>Deep knowledge demonstrated by the teacher.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching over time demonstrates an understanding of developments in the subject and curriculum area. • Teachers share their expert knowledge and role model a passion for their subject.
	<p>Personalisation/differentiation is highly effective for the needs of all learners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of personalisation strategies are applied over time to ensure all students are challenged in their learning. • Teachers have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit students’ ability to learn, and how best to overcome these.
	<p>All students make expected progress with most making more than expected progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students’ progress is actively promoted; where students meet their learning targets, teachers set new ones. • Teachers know the individual target grades of the students they teach. • Students know their current areas of strengths, key areas for development, and how to take the next steps to further their learning.

Behaviour for Learning	<p>Planning is highly effective: maximises the use of time and resources to further learning, pace & structure engages/motivates all students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Planning takes into consideration the needs of all students. ● Planning takes into account prior and future learning, as part of a journey over time. ● Teachers plan lessons in which a variety of tasks are used to promote students' learning and personal growth. ● Pace is ensured in lessons via a range of strategies. ● Seating plans are planned with a deliberate rationale. Teachers use seating plans to maximise student progress.
	<p>All students are motivated and engaged, showing resilience, independence, and curiosity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lessons encourage a love of learning and enrich students' educational experience. ● Learning over time encompasses a variety of experiences. ● Students are taught to relish challenges in a supportive environment.
	<p>Behaviour for learning (BfL) is consistently applied.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Arden teachers consistently role model exemplary behaviour in their dealings with all students. They are positive, controlled and fair and promote this behaviour from students. ● Teachers adopt a positive approach with an emphasis on reinforcing positive behaviour for learning and using rewards and sanctions appropriately. ● Teachers use a set of defined 'Standard Operating Procedures' to ensure a calm and orderly environment which allows for effective BfL in lessons.

Assessment and feedback	<p>Assessment for learning (AfL) is highly effective: prior learning is used astutely to plan for rapid and sustained progress. Directed and timely support is offered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers check understanding at key points during the lesson using different strategies. ● This informs teaching dynamically to meet the needs of students and make learning suitably challenging.
	<p>Feedback is of a high quality. Students understand how to improve.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Feedback is regular (in accordance with department policy), consistent, and in line with the school's feedback and marking policy. ● Students have regular opportunities to peer and self-assess their work. ● Students are expected to understand and implement the feedback given. ● Students are required to Green Pen their own work before it is submitted.
	<p>Questioning is used astutely with differentiated/personalised questions targeted at specific students or groups of students. Incorrect answers may be used to shape learning and teaching.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Questioning is such that it assesses learning and promotes learning enquiry. ● Teachers use skilful and differentiated/personalised questioning.
	<p>Homework is carefully planned to support progress and matches the needs of the students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Homework is set, in accordance with each department's homework policy, which enhances and supports classroom learning. ● All homework is recorded on Edulink.

Relationships & wider responsibilities	<p>Relationships are excellent resulting in a highly effective learning environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers create a climate where students feel safe and learning can flourish. ● Teachers foster a culture of mutual respect between themselves and the students and they expect all students to strive for their potential. ● The classroom space is a pleasant and orderly environment which fosters a sense of purposeful working.
	<p>Lessons support the literacy, numeracy and oracy agenda of the whole school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers in every subject are committed to improving literacy, numeracy, and oracy and support students in developing their skills, in accordance with the department’s feedback and marking policy and schemes of work.
	<p>Independent learning is embedded with habits that support excellent progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers plan activities that develop the skills of independent enquiry, research and investigation and encourage students to become masters of their own learning. ● Teachers plan opportunities for students to develop resilience. ● Students should be encouraged to synthesise their own questions about the world and their subjects.
	<p>Support (Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) etc.) is deployed in a way that maximises learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● LSAs and other classroom parties are aware of the lesson/topic outcomes in advance. ● Effective dialogue ensures LSAs are sure of their responsibilities and these promote excellent progress from students. ● Wherever possible LSAs are enabled and encouraged to support the development of all students in the class.

Continuing Professional Development	<p>Teachers at Arden are lifelong learners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teachers are committed to regularly auditing and further developing their subject knowledge. ● Where any gaps in subject knowledge are identified, teachers are committed to improving and filling those gaps. ● Subject teams are committed to building capacity in terms of subject knowledge and expertise to safeguard against unforeseen changes to the team. ● Teachers are aware of the curriculum and examination structure in their subject area. ● They take responsibility to identify and implement any adaptations which may needed in response to any curriculum and/or examination changes that occur. ● All teachers are committed to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) through their involvement in whole school training. ● Whole school training is tailored to meet the needs of our learners and informed by a continuous programme of quality assurance and feedback. ● Additional CPD is encouraged and, where possible and appropriate, funded by the school. ● Teachers are willing to share their expertise and good practice in school and across the Trust. This includes 1-2-1 and group training sessions.
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Section 2: ASSESSING STUDENT PROGRESS AT ARDEN

Intentions

Feedback and marking should have one purpose; to facilitate excellent student progress and outcomes.

How this policy enhances learning

Feedback and marking should be **meaningful, manageable and motivational**. Marking should underpin various sections of the Department for Education (DfE) “Teachers’ Standards” (TS) to “give students regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage students to respond to feedback” along with:

TS2 – Promote good progress and outcomes by students

TS5 – Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all students

TS6 – Make accurate and productive use of assessment

(DfE Teachers’ Standards)

Effective feedback is an interactive process between student and the teacher which should result in a “learning dialogue that positively impacts on progress by involving the student in an individualised process of questioning, self-criticism and reflection about their work”. This dialogue may be written or verbal; there will be record of purposeful verbal feedback in student work.

Effective marking will keep teachers and students informed on a student’s current standard of work and assist in accurate tracking of progress over time, planning future learning journeys, and allow accurate reporting to parents.

Effective feedback is a school wide consistent approach to deliver to students a clear understanding of how well they are performing currently and how to make progress.

Policy Points

- It is expected that curriculum teams have an explicit policy on the regularity and process of marking in their curriculum areas. They should agree at what points in Schemes of Work (SoW) marking and assessment will take place and that these are timed to feed in to accurate reporting to parents. Practical based subjects need to have regular marking even if projects extend over periods of time.
- Not all classwork will be marked by the teacher.
- Self and peer assessment is acceptable provided the teacher checks the validity of the assessment afterwards. This should be completed by the student in green pen.
- Some departments will use e-marking to provide feedback, this includes voice memos, short comments etc... Its use must be noted in the departmental policy and Head of Department (HoD) are responsible for ensuring this evidence is available during any quality assurance process such as work scrutinies etc.

- Teachers must take steps to facilitate that the work produced by students is of an excellent standard, if it is not students should be given the opportunity to repeat the work at the teacher's discretion. Department policies should include how standards are monitored and how the quality of work generally is communicated with students.
- Marking must be legible, age/ability appropriate and in a colour that stands out.
- Feedback from marking should be given promptly with a turnaround of a maximum of two weeks; this includes formal assessments (some departments may, in agreement with their line manager, review this deadline for whole cohort assessment/mocks).
- Marking should check the quality and presentation of classwork but does not need to comment on this extensively; evidence may be shown in comments or students improving their work over time.
- For subjects where curriculum time is at or more than four lessons per fortnight, at least two pieces of work will be "deep marked" per half term (regularity of marking will be as per department policies for subjects below this threshold). Some departments' frequency of marking and feedback will be higher. "Deep marking" refers to a process of written feedback that encourages a dialogic exchange with a view to improve future performance of students. It does not mean the process of "triple marking" – mark & feedback, improve, and mark again.
- Time should be given in class for students to reflect and act on feedback as appropriate.
- Feedback should:
 - Be mostly encouraging and constructive.
 - Link directly to lesson objectives and learning outcomes.
 - Challenge the students to think for themselves.
 - Create opportunities for student dialogue, correction, or improvement.
- Verbal feedback is valid, in addition to written feedback.
- Where used effectively verbal feedback supports a reduction in teacher workload.
- Verbal feedback is most useful when the feedback is immediately actionable.
- When pertinent and appropriate students should write a note of the verbal feedback where it supports future development and learning.
- Departments are expected to support the literacy, numeracy, and oracy aims of the wider school in a manner that is reflective of the demands of the course in these areas. Department policies should outline to what extent each strand is supported and how this is to be achieved and fed back upon to students.
- Spelling errors in subjects other than English and Modern Foreign Languages should be restricted to subject specific vocabulary and persistent errors. Persistent errors do not need to all be marked but improvement comments should highlight mistakes to students.
- Teachers must keep records, as per department policy, of marking and progress. These are then used to inform next steps in learning.
- Students should complete all self-marking, corrections, completions, and formal improvement pieces in green pen.

What is not expected – myth busting

Myth	Reality
All work must be marked or acknowledged.	Specific pieces must be marked at frequencies dictated by this and departmental policies
All work to be commented on/feedback to all work.	Only specific pieces should be feedback to but this must be quality feedback.
All errors must be corrected	Mark the error but do not correct it, instead focus on where students show an underlying misunderstanding. Only key or persistent errors need be marked.
Student must respond to every comment	Students acting on feedback could be evidenced by response, corrections or improvements in future work.
Different colour pens must be used for different aspects of feedback.	Just use a colour that stands out.
Marking must be done on a two-week rota.	Two pieces of work per half term deep marked – quality not quantity. (See above for lower curriculum time subjects.)
Effective feedback is extensive written feedback.	Written feedback should be age and ability appropriate. Two or three really useful comments are better than ten that don't help the student progress.
All departments will follow exactly the same marking frequency, type and criteria.	Departments must agree internally what is best for them and their students but that does not contradict the whole school policy.
Formal assessments do not count as marking.	If used formatively rather than a summative grade and evidenced appropriately in accordance with departmental policies, assessment data can be powerful feedback.
Triple marking is the gold standard of feedback (mark, feedback and remark).	There is little evidence to support this notion and it is very time consuming. Evidence of how students have used feedback may be in a future piece of work. Of course, departments may choose to do this in their own policies.

Departmental Policies

Each department is expected to provide a brief marking and feedback policy to supplement the whole school policy. This should:

- Follow the practices outlined in the whole school marking policy.
- Detail the frequency of marking and monitoring of work by identifying key pieces of work to be marked in detail by all members of the department.
- Detail frequency of homework.
- Link to SoW and assessment calendars so department marking reflects future learning and the information provided to parents through progress check reports and the like.
- Be formed in consultation with all members of the department and agreed by department Senior Leadership Team (SLT) line managers.
- Include quality assurance systems, including pupil voice, to ensure feedback is understood.

Responsibilities/ Monitoring

Teachers:

- Mark and feedback in line with policy.
- Make students aware of the feedback policy.
- Encourage students to act upon feedback.
- Ensure students take pride in their work and challenge untidy or incomplete work.
- Ensure excellent effort through use of the department/school rewards system.
- Plan appropriate opportunities for marking and feedback in line with the whole school and department policy.
- Plan opportunities of literacy, numeracy and oracy as applicable.
- Plan opportunities for peer and self-assessment.
- To share good practice in department meetings.
- Ensure students understand their feedback and know the next steps in their learning.

Heads of Departments:

- Facilitate writing and review of appropriate departmental policy.
- Monitor the application of the departmental policy and the quality of marking/feedback through learning walks, lesson observations and work scrutinies in line with the whole school calendar.
- Provide feedback to SLT via line managers.
- Ensure less than effective feedback and marking is identified and necessary support put in place to ensure improvement.
- Ensure that teachers are ensuring students understand their feedback and know the next steps in their learning.

SLT:

- Ensure departmental policies are in place and match the overarching whole school policy.
- Ensure monitoring of marking/feedback takes place.
- Monitor the quality of marking/feedback through line management meetings, Quality Assurance (QA) and work scrutinies.
- Make staff and students aware of the marking policy.
- Continually review the workload impact of this policy.
- Continually review the impact of this policy and within practices on attainment and progress.
- Ensure that teachers are ensuring students understand their feedback and know the next steps in their learning.

Parents:

- Read comments by teachers.
- Engage in dialogue with the school via planners where appropriate.
- Support the school in checking that students strive for excellence in all they do.
- Provide equipment pertinent to learning, including green pens.

Students:

- Read comments by teachers and listen to any verbal feedback.
- Respond to feedback by improving their work.
- Complete improvements, self-marking/corrections/completions, self-feedback and peer feedback using a green pen.
- Write down verbal feedback if asked to do so.
- Ask their teacher for help and guidance if they do not understand the feedback.

Section 3: DATA GENERATION AND REPORTING AT ARDEN

Aim of this section of the Policy is to outline the expectations for target setting and reporting across all three key stages, for all relevant stakeholders.

1: Target Generation

Aspirational targets are set at each Key Stage using nationally generated prior attainment data.

If national data is not available at either cohort or individual level, it is the responsibility of SLT to aim to use an equally valid target setting system using statistically valid techniques.

2: Data Generation

Wherever possible, data that measures the progress or attainment of students should be based on recent relevant assessment information. It should not be a prediction or include teacher judgement.

Attainment data should be an evaluation of the current attainment levels for the student, it should not be a prediction.

Wherever possible, nationally recognised attainment descriptors should be used to benchmark attainment data. Where this does not exist (Key Stage 3), clear and detailed descriptors should be used.

The validity of the data produced for each subject should be verified by SLT.

3: Reporting Data to Stakeholders

For the purposes of measuring progress, attainment data should be collated on each year group at least three times a year.

This data is used by teachers, middle leaders, SLT, ELT and governors to evaluate progress for individuals, cohorts, vulnerable groups. Also see Section 2 Feedback and Marking.

Parents/Guardians should receive a report at least three times a year*. The information contained within the report will be appropriate to each year group. Over the course of the year, it should include the following:

- Current Attainment data
- Targets
- Attitude to Learning evaluations
- Tutor Comment

*The exception to this is year 11 where, in response to parent feedback, the written report is replaced with a second parents consultation meeting.

Each time a report is sent home at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. parents should acknowledge receipt of the report and be given opportunity to provide feedback or raise concerns.

All attainment data should undergo a quality assurance process prior to publication.