



HARTSDOWN  
ACADEMY

16 January 2018

Dear Parents/Carers

**Re: Marking Modifications**

Recent educational research shows that pupils learn best when they are an active part of the learning process, not just passive participants. In other words, they should know just as much as their teachers do about how they are learning and what they need to do next.

To this end, we have refined the methods we use to give our pupils feedback on their work. A summary of what you might notice when you look through your child's work is provided on the next page. Taken together, these modifications mean that your child should always know the answers to these two questions in all of their subjects.

What am I doing well in this subject?

What do I need to do to improve my work in this subject?

For example:

'What are you doing well in English?'

'What do you need to do to improve your work in maths?'

Pupils will be asked these questions repeatedly in school so it would be very beneficial for your child if you were to ask them these questions at home as well. This will reinforce their understanding and help them to progress more quickly.

Of course, we live in the real world: we know that it can sometimes be quite difficult to get detailed answers out of children. If you are used to asking 'what did you do at school today?' and getting a one-word response, it is hoped that these more specific questions will provide you with the information you really want. However, if you are concerned that your child genuinely does not know how they are doing in any of their subjects, please contact Ms Gipson ([gipsonj@hartsdown.org](mailto:gipsonj@hartsdown.org))

Thank you for your support

Yours sincerely

**Matthew Tate**  
**Headteacher**

EDUCATION FOR AN AMAZING LIFE

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## The way your child's work is marked this year

What you might notice in your child's work	Why this is better for your child
<p>"The marking looks different in different subjects (e.g. English looks different to maths). It even looks different in my child's book and someone else's in the same class."</p>	<p>All of the current research into marking shows that it needs to be customized to different subjects, classes and even individual needs. Your child should therefore be receiving feedback which they find useful. If you feel that this is not the case, please contact Mrs Gipson</p>
<p>"There appear to be pieces of work which have not been marked: they are not even ticked."</p>	<p>So called 'tick and flick' marking can be misleading for pupils and having too many targets from lots of small pieces of work can be confusing.</p> <p>All of our teachers in all subjects provide detailed written feedback on <u>key pieces of work</u> a minimum of twice a half term. These will usually be bigger pieces which assess a wide range of skills or knowledge. Smaller pieces of work which have not been formally marked by the teacher will still have been read by them. The strengths and weaknesses of these pieces will feed into the targets set on the bigger pieces.</p>
<p>"There is more green pen than there was before. My child seems to be writing as much as the teacher and sometimes even more."</p>	<p>It is important for pupils to have a working knowledge of the success criteria for tasks – just like their teachers. Pupils are encouraged to work out for themselves what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve before having it checked by the teacher.</p>
<p>"My child has made some mistakes which have not been picked up. For example, they have missed some capital letters off the beginnings of sentences but the teacher has not underlined them in red."</p>	<p>Teachers mark mostly for misconceptions (where pupils have consistently misunderstood things). Where pupils make simple mistakes (like missing off capital letters even though they understand how to use capital letters) they need to put these right themselves before handing work in. If pupils continue to make simple mistakes, they will be prompted by their teacher to correct them for themselves.</p>