THE HERMITAGE SCHOOLS

Inspire, Learn, Achieve

Marking and Feedback Policy

Person responsible:	Leadership Team
Date adopted:	Autumn Term 2022
Date of last review:	Autumn Term 2026
Date of next review:	Autumn Term 2028

This document sets out the agreed marking and feedback expectations at The Hermitage Schools. It also includes the policy for marking and feedback in The Orchard Centre – see Appendix 3.

Policy statement

The nature of feedback given to children will have a direct bearing on learning attitudes and future achievements. All feedback should help children make progress, encourage them to strive for high achievement and build self-esteem. Children need to develop as independent learners and gain an awareness of their own strengths and areas for development. This policy forms part of a whole school ethos to teaching and learning.

At The Hermitage Schools, we recognise the importance of feedback as an integral part of the teaching and learning cycle, and aim to maximise the effectiveness of its use in practice. We are mindful also of the research surrounding effective feedback and the workload implications of written marking, as well as research from cognitive science regarding the fragility of new learning.

Our policy is underpinned by the evidence of best practice from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and other expert organisations. The EEF research shows that effective feedback should:

- Redirect or refocus either the teacher's or the learner's actions to achieve a goal.
- Be specific, accurate and clear.
- Encourage and support further effort.
- Be given sparingly so that it is meaningful.
- Put the onus on students to correct their own mistakes, rather than providing correct answers for them.
- Alert the teacher to misconceptions, so that these can be addressed in subsequent lessons.

Notably, the Department for Education's (DfE) research into teacher workload has highlighted written marking as a key contributing factor to workload. As such, we have investigated alternatives to written marking which can provide effective feedback in line with the EEF's recommendations, and those of the DfE's expert group which emphasises that marking should be: **Meaningful, manageable** and **motivating.** We have also taken note of the advice provided by the NCETM (National Centre for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics) that the most important activity for teachers is the teaching itself, supported by the design and preparation of lessons.

Key Principles
Our policy on feedback has at its core a number of principles:

- The sole focus of feedback should be to further children's learning.
- Evidence of feedback is incidental to the process; we do not provide additional evidence for external verification.
- Feedback should empower children to take responsibility for improving their own work; it should not take away from this responsibility by adults doing the hard thinking work for the pupil.
- Written comments should only be used as a last resort for the very few children who otherwise are unable to locate their own errors, even after guided modelling by the teacher.
- Children should receive feedback either within the lesson itself, or in the next appropriate lesson. The 'next step' is usually the next lesson.
- Feedback is a part of the schools' wider assessment processes which aim to provide an appropriate level of challenge to pupils in lessons, allowing them to make good progress.
- New learning is fragile and usually forgotten unless explicit steps are taken over time to revisit and refresh learning. Teachers should be wary of assuming that children have securely learnt material based on evidence drawn close to the point of teaching it. Therefore, teachers will need to get feedback at some distance from the original teaching input when assessing if learning is now secure.

Within these principles, our aim is to make use of the good practice approaches outlined by the EEF toolkit to ensure that children are provided with timely and purposeful feedback that furthers their learning, and that teachers are able to gather feedback and assessments that enable them to adjust their teaching both within and across a sequence of lessons.

Feedback and marking in practice
It is vital that teachers evaluate the work that children undertake in lessons, and use information obtained from this to allow them to adjust their teaching. Feedback occurs at one of four common stages in the learning process:

1. *Immediate feedback* – at the point of teaching.
2. *Summary feedback* – at the end of a lesson/task.
3. *Next lesson feedforward* – further teaching enabling the children to identify and improve for themselves areas for development identified by the teacher upon review of work after a previous lesson.
4. *Summative feedback* – tasks planned to give teachers definitive feedback about whether a child has securely mastered the material under study.

These stages would be seen in the following practices:

Stage	What it looks like	Monitoring evidence
Immediate	• Includes teacher gathering feedback from teaching within the course of the lesson, including mini-whiteboards, bookwork, etc. • Takes place in lessons with individuals or small groups • Often given verbally to pupils for immediate action • May involve use of teaching assistant to provide support or further challenge • May re-direct the focus of teaching or the task	• Lesson observations • Learning walks

Summary	• Takes place at the end of a lesson or activity • Often involves whole groups or classes • Provides an opportunity for evaluation of learning in the lesson • May take the form of self or peer-assessment against an agreed set of criteria • May take the form of a quiz, test or score on a game • In some cases, may guide a teacher's further use of review feedback, focusing on areas of need	• Lesson observations • Learning walks • Some evidence of self and peer-assessment • Quiz and test results may be recorded in books or logged separately by the teacher
Feedforward: the next step is the next lesson	• For writing in particular, often a large part of the next lesson will be spent giving feedback to the class about strengths and areas for development, and giving time for development areas to be worked on and improved through proof reading and editing their work • For other subjects, teachers review common misconceptions and areas for improvement and give children the opportunity to practise these skills and improve their work.	• Lesson observations • Learning walks • Evidence in writing books of children editing, improving and redrafting their work • Evidence across the curriculum of children using the feedforward stage to practice skills and improve work.
Summative	• 'Check it' activities • End of unit or term tests or quizzes	• 'Check it' activities in books • Quiz and test results

Lesson Evaluation Sheet

At relevant points of children's learning, teachers will use a Lesson Evaluation Sheet (Appendix 1) to inform their assessment of the whole class's understanding of specific learning objectives. Teachers will use this tool when they feel it would be beneficial for the children's learning. Teachers will adapt the lesson evaluation sheet for their class's needs and for different subject areas. These will be kept by the teacher to inform future planning and assessment and to help complete end of year reports.

Guidance for teachers

Proof reading and editing in writing lessons

Most writing lessons will be followed up with an editing lesson, where children receive whole class feedback about strengths and areas for development and direct teaching to help them identify and address their own weaknesses and misconceptions.

Using a lesson evaluation sheet (see Appendix 1 and 2 for examples), teachers will look at pupils' work soon after the lesson to identify strengths and weaknesses, analyse technical accuracy such as spelling errors, punctuation omissions and grammar, as well as evaluate the content and sophistication of the writing. Where individual children have done particularly well or badly at something, the teacher will make a note and use these in the next lesson as a teaching point.

The editing lesson could be divided into two sections:

- *Proofreading* – changing punctuation, spelling, handwriting and grammatical mistakes.
- *Editing* – children working to improve the composition of their writing.

The proofreading section will usually be short, whereas the editing element may take the rest of the lesson.

The teacher will share extracts from pupils' work, using the visualiser or typing/writing out a couple of lines for use with the interactive whiteboard or flipchart, to highlight good examples of work. For example, within the proof reading section, the teacher might showcase someone whose letter heights have the ascenders and descenders just right, then asking all pupils to look at their work and rewrite one sentence from it, really making sure they are paying attention to letter heights. Then, the teacher might share a section of text with poor punctuation (anonymously) and reteach the class the relevant punctuation rules which had been noted on the lesson evaluation sheet. Common spelling errors could then be pointed out along with strategies to help to remember how to spell the words. Children will then have a short period of time to proof read their work, checking for similar errors and putting them right. Children may sit in mixed ability pairs and support each other in the identification and correction of mistakes.

Within the editing section of the lesson, for example, the teacher might show a different couple of pieces of work where children have described character very well, pointing out what it is that has made the description so vivid. A weaker example may then be shared (from an anonymous or fictional piece) and the children would suggest together how this might be improved. Then, individually, in pairs or in groups children read each other's work and suggest improvements, alterations and refinements which the author of the piece then adds, or rewrites the section. At the Junior School, this is completed in purple pen to help the teacher see what changes the child has made.

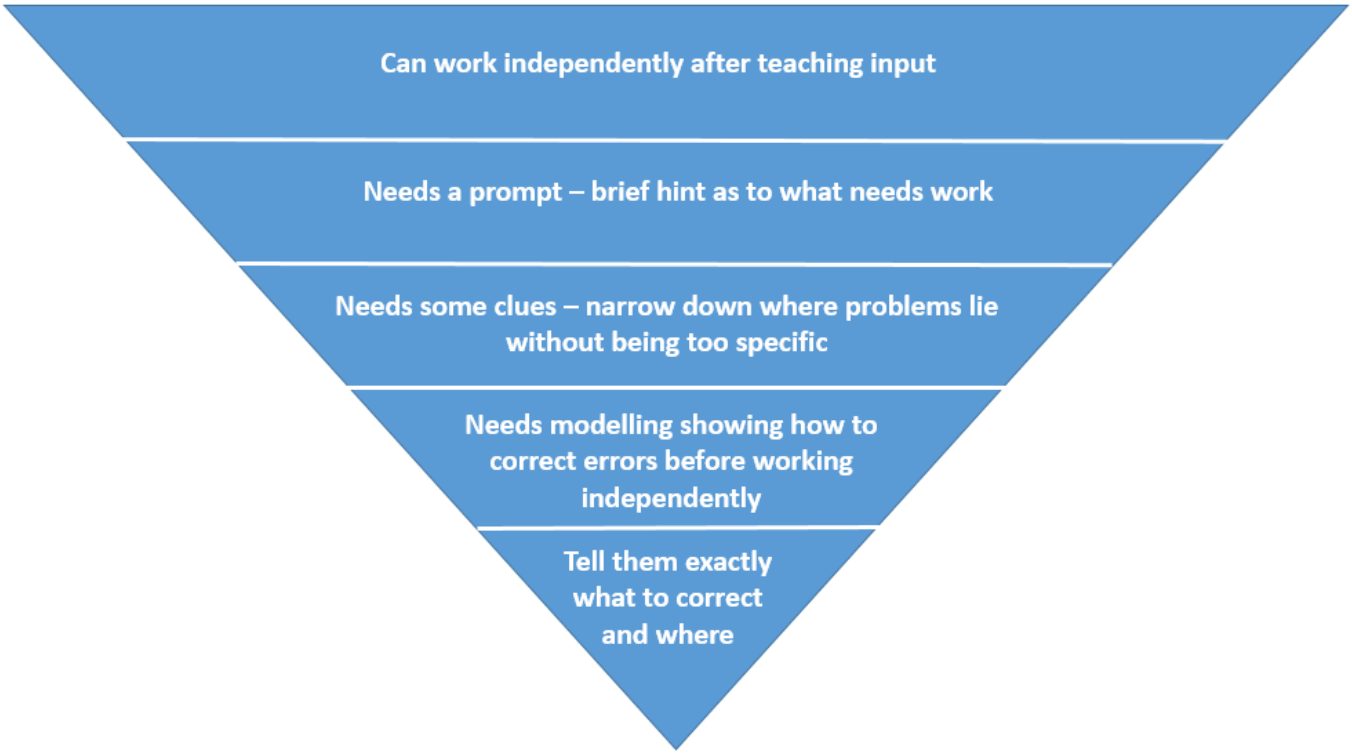
Intervening when children find editing hard

A few children will need more support than this in order to be successful at improving their own work. As with all intervention, teachers should always seek to use the minimal level possible, only escalating to the next level if the child still needs further support. Some children may need a gentle prompt to narrow down their focus when looking for mistakes, for example, alerting them that there are some missing full stops, without telling them how many or where. Or a simple pointer – 'description' perhaps or 'ambiguous pronouns' or 'figurative language'. This would be in the addition to, and not instead of, the teacher modelling editing for these before the independent section of the lesson.

Others might need even more support and need to be provided with clues to help them. For example, the teacher might need to draw a yellow box around a section of text to narrow down the search area for the pupil, alongside the comment, or symbol (Infant School), that there are speech marks missing, or tenses jumped, or the same sentence structure over-used.

Where mistakes are deeply entrenched, or the children are very young and lack confidence, the teacher may need to do some direct work modelling how to overcome these: for example, to clear up the confusion with apostrophe use. The teacher might set a group of children an editing challenge based not on their own work, but on a fictional piece of work with only one, recurrent error. An adult might then support the group in identifying where apostrophes do and do not belong. Pupils might do this instead of editing their own work or as a prelude to it, depending upon their learning needs. But, what the teacher is not doing is using a marking code that does all the error identification for the pupil as this takes away any responsibility from the pupil at thinking hard about how to improve.

Minimal marking triangle



Teaching staff should start out with the assumption that all children can work independently given prior input and only increase the amount of intervention if the pupil really can't get on without it. Give children take up time; let them struggle for a bit, but above all, make sure they are the ones doing the hard work; not you.

Sometimes it is children who find writing easy who do not challenge themselves to improve their writing through editing, settling too readily for their first attempt. These children may initially need specific clues about what an even better piece of writing might look like, for example:

- Set group or individual challenges, 'before you've finished editing, you need to have …
- Use their work in modelling and then expect them to do the same.

Feedback in Maths

In terms of day to day maths learning, teachers should have the answers to problems available, and after doing 1 or 2 calculations (Infant School), or 4 or 5 calculations (Junior School), children should check their answers themselves. That way, if they have misunderstood something, they can alert the teacher immediately. Another benefit is that less confident children might want to start at the easiest level of work provided, but with instant feedback available, after getting their first few calculations correct, they feel confident to move to the next level. Another strategy teachers can use is to get children to compare answers in a group and where answers do not agree, challenge each other and try and find where the other person has gone wrong.

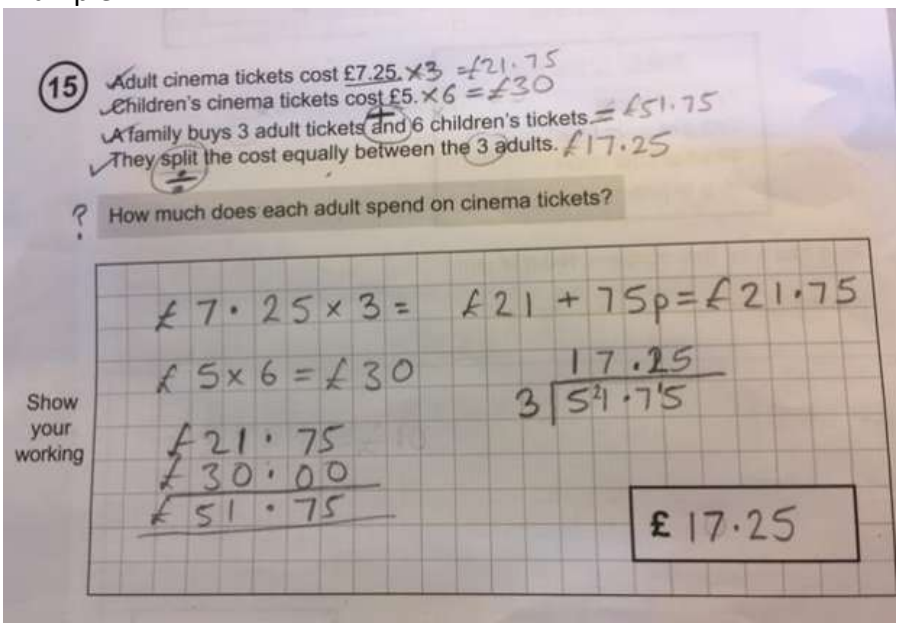
Where children are more confident, and finish their work slightly earlier than others, they can consolidate their learning by 'marking' other children's books. When they do this, the crucial step is that they should not take their own book with them and just read off the correct answer. They should do the calculations again – faster and possibly mentally – so in effect doing the work twice thus getting the sort of over-learning that leads to solid long-term retention.

The onus is always on the learner checking their work and, if they have an answer wrong, trying to identify their own errors. Children need to be taught how to do this purposely, otherwise they think it just means

scanning quickly through their work, reading but not really thinking. Checking involves thinking deeply about the work you have just learnt. When you think deeply about something, it is much more likely to get stored in your long term memory, available to be recalled at will. So, as an alternative to providing the answers, teachers should sometimes use the visualiser to model ways of checking and then expect children to do the same, in effect 'proof reading' maths. So for example at the Junior School, children might repeat a calculation in a different coloured pen and check they have the same answer. For addition calculations involving more than two numbers, adding the numbers in a different order is an even better way of checking. Teachers should model how children can use the inverse operation to check they get back to where they started.

With 2 or 3 part word problems, a classic error is to give the answer as the first part of the problem and forget about following through to the second (or third) part of the question. Often, word problems are written with each instruction on a different line, a bit like success criteria. Again, using a visualiser, teachers should show children how to check work as we go, returning to the question and ticking off each line – writing each answer alongside, being really clear we are answering the final question, having done all of the previous steps.

Example:



Where children have made mistakes, and are finding it hard to identify where they have gone wrong, a prompt sheet, shared with the class at the start of the lesson, can help. In effect, this is just a process success criteria, but recasting it as a checklist to be used to identify errors means children use it thoughtfully and only when needed.

Example:

Find my mistake (column addition)

- Did I put each numeral in the right place value column? Check each one.
- Did I forget to regroup?
- Did I forget to add the regrouped ten (or hundred)?
- Did I make a silly error with my adding?
- If you can't find your mistake, ask your partner to go through this checklist with you and see if they can help.
- If you are still stuck, is there another child who looks like they are confident with this you could ask?
- If none of this works, ask an adult for help.

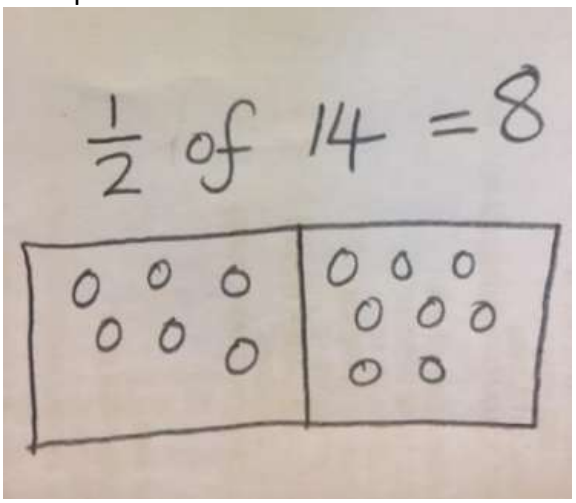
Example:

Find my mistake (identifying fractions of shapes)

- Did I check all the parts were equal?
- Did I count how many parts the shape had been divided into?
- Did I write that number underneath the vinculum (remember denominator>Down)
- Did I count how many parts were shaded in?
- Did I write that number on top of the vinculum (remember numerator>oN top)
- If you can't find your mistake, ask your partner to go through this checklist with you and see if they can help.
- If you are still stuck, is there another child who looks like they are confident with this you could ask?
- If none of this works, ask an adult for help.

It is important that the children move towards internalising what they are doing (over the course of several lessons) so that they no longer need a written checklist because they have their own mental checklist stored in their long term memory, which they are able to retrieve at will. Giving children work to 'mark' from fictitious other children, which includes all the common misconceptions, is a really good way of helping them develop this.

Example:



Research upon which the policy is based

1. Education Endowment Foundation Research https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/feedback/
2. Department of Education's 'Eliminating unnecessary workload around marking' report (March 2016) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/511256/Eliminating-unnecessary-workload-around-marking.pdf
3. Clare Sealy's, Headteacher, St Matthias School blog, 'Why my school banned marking' https://thirdspacelearning.com/blog/why-my-school-banned-marking-confessions-of-a-primary-headteacher/
4. Joe Kirby educational blog https://pragmaticreform.wordpress.com/2015/10/31/marking-is-a-hornet//

Appendix 1 Lesson Evaluation Sheet – Example 1

Date:	Lesson:
Work to Praise and Share	**Further Support Needed**
Presentation Notes	**Basic Skill Errors**
Common Misconceptions and Next Lesson Notes	
Support	**Challenge**

Appendix 2 Lesson Evaluation Sheet – Example 2

<table>
<tr><th>Class</th><th>Identified focus of editing session</th><th>Work to praise and share</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="5">List of pupils</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Common misconceptions</td><td>Basic skills errors</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Presentation notes</td><td>Spelling errors to teach</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

Appendix 3

Orchard Centre Marking and Feedback Policy

Aim of marking

The aim of marking in The Orchard Centre is to enable children to understand how well they have completed a piece of work and to give the children any reminders of key targets to improve on. The overall message will be positive and include a reward of house points where appropriate. Due to the nature of the children's academic difficulties, any acknowledgements for the children will be visual/symbolic rather than written. Marking should also enable adults to monitor what support the child was given, what their key targets are and to provide a log of the progress of the child, for example if they achieved a target set previously or showed a particularly good understanding of a particular concept.

Objectives of marking

- Children will understand when they have achieved a learning objective.
- Children will gain confidence in their abilities and the work they produce and learn to self-assess.
- Children will know on a basic level, what they need to improve on.
- Adults will be able to be reminded of targets that the children need to work on and complete formative assessment where needed.
- Adults will be able to monitor the amount of supported/independent work that is produced and monitor future planning to ensure a suitable balance is made.

What work will be marked?

- Maths book
- English/Topic based learning book
- Learning Journal for specific children.
- Phonics- will be marked but to a basic level.

Marking and Target Symbols

Children will have a learning slip in English and a learning journey objective in Maths. The learning slip summarises the objective and success criteria. There will then be the following marking and target symbols, which have been created with an adult and a child focus. Written comments may be added for more able children or for adult recording if they are needed. Not all symbols will be used on every piece of work, only where appropriate.

The Orchard Marking Symbols

Teacher marking		Self-assessment
	You worked hard!	I have enjoyed the lesson!
	You need more practice or need to put more effort in.	I found this lesson tricky. I didn't enjoy this as much.
	You have repeatedly not tried hard.	
	Completed Independently	
	Completed with support	

Appendix 4

The Hermitage Infant School Minimal Marking Guidelines

Verbal Feedback

The majority of marking is given through verbal feedback in order to evaluate work together when it is most appropriate and effective for the child.

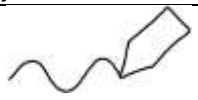
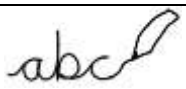
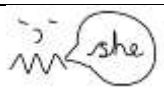
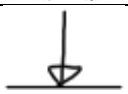
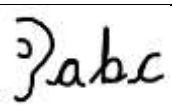
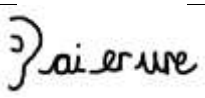
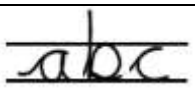
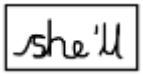
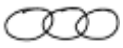
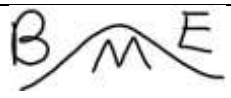
Key Stage 1

- A clear learning objective (Learning Challenge - written) and their expected outcomes (Success Criteria – can be written or verbal) should be outlined at the beginning of each lesson. Learning Challenges and Success Criteria should be child friendly and fully understood by all learners.
- Writing symbols (below) should be used in English books as a visual aid to support the Success Criteria.
- Minimal marking should be recorded against the Learning Challenge and this formative assessment should be recorded on Lesson Evaluation Sheets, as well as recording individual feedback and praise for children if appropriate.
- All children's work should show minimal marking, e.g. underline incorrect spellings and practising of correct spelling, correcting letter formation and number reversal at the bottom of the page.
- Formative assessment is then used to plan or adapt for the next day's learning, if required. This includes addressing any common misconceptions.
- Children are given the opportunity to respond to feedback at a specific time during the day. This is at the discretion of the teacher and when they feel is the best time for each child to receive and respond to the feedback. This could be at the end of the lesson, beginning of the day or beginning of the next lesson.
- Sometimes, photographic evidence may be used to assess children's achievements and provide a talking point for 'next steps'.
- Support staff may carry out 'light touch' marking, however the class teacher has overall responsibility for ensure marking in line with this policy is carried out.

Symbol	Meaning
	Next step
———	Spelling error.
●	Maths error. Further time should be given to the child in order for them to address this feedback. A dot should then convert to a tick when this is addressed.
✓	Correct

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Teachers will give verbal feedback to children and when written feedback is appropriate it will be carried out within the presence of the child. Letter formation and number reversal should always be highlighted and children asked to practise in the moment. Parent Passport within Tiny Tracker is used to record children's achievements and provide opportunities to record children's next steps. Teachers plan learning through enhanced provision to address each child's next steps. Next steps are shared verbally with the children.

Symbol	Description	Symbol	Description
	**Mark making**		**Paragraphs**
	Pencil Grip		**Checks work to see if it makes sense**
	Hears and writes initial sounds		**Sentence starters**
	Writes name		**Topic words**
	Writes lower case writing		**Commas in lists**
	Letters round the right way		**Speak marks around speak or quotes.**
	**Joins up writing**		**Say sentence before writing it**
	Capital letters		**Can spell tricky words**
	No capital in the middle of words		**Verbs**
	**Writing on the line**		**Hears and writes single sounds**
	Finger spacing		**Hears and writes digraphs and trigraphs**
	Full stops		**Can add prefixes**
	Writing starts from the margin and goes to the right		**Can add suffixes**
	Adjectives		**forming lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another**
	Lots of writing		**present and past tense mostly used correctly and consistently**
	Question and Exclamation marks		**spelling some words with contracted forms**
	**Conjunctions**		**Expanded noun phrases**
	**Has a beginning, middle and an end.**		