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Dear Parents and Carers

## Changes to assessment and feedback in English

As a faculty we are committed to finding new ways to improve our practice and give students the best educational experience possible. One of the persistent difficulties in the teaching of English is giving students meaningful feedback that develops them as confident communicators and critics. Historically, feedback has taken the form of written comments usually in the margins of students' work. We have increasingly found this to be unsatisfactory for a variety of reasons. Students are usually more focused on the mark or grade the piece of work would be awarded than the comments themselves, there is an overfocus on positive comments rather than constructive criticism, and students typically find written comments hard to decode and apply. We have therefore decided to re-imagine our approach to assessment and feedback.

Firstly, we have removed the requirement for written comments in students' books. Instead, teachers will ensure that all students have one-to-one, face-to-face conversations at least once per half-term. This will, we believe, have significantly more motivational impact than written comments in books. In addition, each half-term students will sit a formative assessment which will receive whole class feedback. All student work will be read by the teacher and a detailed feedback sheet given to all students. This sheet will outline the areas of success and common misconceptions notable across the class and prompt students to reflect on these by setting targets. Students will then complete a new piece of work based on that feedback. One benefit of this approach is that students will receive feedback far quicker (within one week) than would be the case if written comments were required. This will allow students to actively engage with feedback whilst it is still fresh in their memory. Students will also have summative assessments which will be individually marked by teachers and include a grade, mark or threshold depending on the year group. In general, we will now be putting far more emphasis on in-class, live feedback. A focus in English is the use of visualisers which allow teachers to display student work instantly on the interactive white boards, thereby giving a visual demonstration of how to be successful.

We believe these changes will lead to better student engagement with feedback and therefore have a positive impact on their progress. At the same time, we will of course evaluate the policy using both internal data on student achievement and feedback from the students and teachers themselves.

If you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of two parts. The first part is a cursive signature that appears to be 'Daniel Talbot'. The second part is a large, stylized signature that appears to be 'Michelle Hopkins'.

Daniel Talbot and Michelle Hopkins  
Directors of English

**Our approach to feedback at KS3 and 4:** We draw a distinction between formative assessment (using evidence about learning to adapt teaching and learning to meet student needs) and summative assessment (Determining to what extent the learning intentions have been met). Guiding our approach is the thought that feedback must be timely, meaningful and acted upon if it is to promote learning and progress. Ultimately all feedback serves the function of developing students' ability to make literary and linguistic judgements as communicators and critics.

**Formative Assessment:** is given during the teaching of a unit of work with the intention of diagnosing areas of strength and weakness. It will involve a mixture of personal and whole class approaches and will focus specifically on addressing misconceptions and identifying excellence. It won't result in a grade but rather success criteria moving forward. It is important to make clear that effective formative feedback is a product of the right classroom culture. It ultimately can't reduce to a series of bullet points and so the below is an *aide-memoir* rather than a definitive checklist.

**Summative Assessment:** is given at the end of a unit of work and determines to what extent learning intentions have been met. Depending on the nature of the assessment, students will be given a mark/grade accompanied by whole class feedback.

**How is this enacted?**

**Targeted questioning** - In general teachers call on students rather than rely on hands up. Questions aim to challenge, probe, and identify student understanding. Teachers adjust and intervene in a responsive and ongoing way.

**Live modelling** - use of visualisers and interactive white board to model both recurring mistakes and excellence

**A culture of peer critique** - teachers regularly circulate to identify exemplary work and share this with the class. Teachers ensure all students receive at least one individual conversation, within lessons, each half-term. This is recorded in green pen with the code 'VF' (if individual) or 'WCF' (if whole class). Students then continue their work in green pen. Students regularly read each other's work and are taught to give constructive, focused feedback

**Whole class feedback** - once per half-term students will complete a more formal formative assessment. Teachers will read all student work and devise a whole-class feedback lesson. Teachers will deliver the feedback lesson within a three-lesson cycle. Students reflect on this using a whole class feedback proforma and respond to in a new piece of work, putting into practice areas they need to develop

**How is this enacted?**

Teachers will mark individual pieces of work by highlighting where students have achieved success and giving a mark, grade or threshold depending on year group and assessment

Students will be aware of success criteria in advance  
Common misconceptions and errors will be shared with students at a whole class level after the assessment  
Examples of success will be shared with illustrations of how this success was achieved

All teachers refer to the threshold criteria exemplification booklet for KS3

**How do we monitor formative feedback and evaluate its impact on learning?**

An open-door teaching and learning culture in which staff collaboratively seek to share best practice  
Learning walks focused on formative feedback  
Feedback as a crucial part of our internal CPD training  
half-termly book meetings in which teachers of the relevant year group share student books and reflect on the successes and areas for development

**How do we monitor summative feedback and evaluate its impact on learning?**

There will be a process of standardising and moderating  
Measures are taken to mitigate bias and human error (this could be anonymising scripts, swapping/mixing teacher groups, seeding and sampling etc)  
Directors and deputies of English regularly analyse internal data to notice trends, identify underperformance and devise appropriate interventions