



# Teaching and Learning Policy

With appendices:

**Minerva Primary Academy Written feedback Procedure**

**Top tips for improving boy's Writing**

**Quality additional teaching form**

**Presentation Procedures**

**Changes in purple July 2019**

## Minerva Primary Academy

### Teaching and Learning Policy

This Policy is based on our belief that:

**1. Children can only make progress if we know where they are now i.e we must know starting points before we can move them to the next step.**

So teachers will always plan lessons by linking to prior teaching/learning. This means that they will not always stick rigidly to the "lesson Plan" as it might be appropriate to deviate to meet the needs of individual children. Teachers will complete the Age Related Expectation (ARE) grids for their children on a weekly basis to ensure that any gaps are identified and so that these can be closed the following week.

**2. Feedback and questioning, both written and verbal is crucial in moving children forward.**

So questioning will:

- A. Probe and encourage children to explain their first answers.
- B. Model what good thinking is i.e celebrate when a child has made a good link between what they already know to explain something new.
- C. Marking will focus on next steps and require children to respond.

Teachers will ensure that they adhere to the [Minerva Written Feedback Procedure](#).

**3. Praise should focus on good learning behaviour, e.g:**

- A. perseverance
- B. good listening
- C. correcting / improving work
- D. Planning ahead.
- E. being adaptable.
- F. curiosity, creativity, connecting ideas and learner relationship

rather than on celebrating getting things correct/being the best i.e avoiding things that we know involve ego and are likely to lead children to be less likely to take risks in the future.

**4. Hinge questions should be used in the early parts of each lesson to establish:**

- A. which children are secure and need to start applying/adapting/exploring going further.
- B. those who are about there and need some more practice.
- C. those who will need more support to get the basics.

Teachers will have planned 3 types of activity to ensure children at each of the above stages are challenged at the appropriate level.

(We believe that, in maths, completion of lots tasks set at a similar or exactly the same level of difficulty is not good for progress and teachers will use intelligent practice to ensure that children are challenged at all stages. ie teachers will make questions progressively more difficult by, for example, changing the context or introducing questions that are multi stage and require children to use more than one mathematical skill).

**5. Children talking is the key to them understanding and becoming better writers, mathematicians etc.**

This is why teachers will keep their talking to a minimum and always encourage children to talk to them or to each other about their work. This will be achieved by never accepting the first answer that a child gives and by always asking them to explain why, how, or to convince.

**6. Manipulatives in maths should always be available for children who 'get stuck' and need reminding of the concrete.**

**7. Dictionaries, word maps, SPAG rules, Key words and other relevant prompts will be made available to children when doing writing. Teachers will have high expectations for spelling and always ask children to correct misspelt words.**

**8. Children learn better when they are interested and engaged and see the relevance so teachers will always try to make lessons link to real life applications and will allow them to incorporate their own interests whenever possible. Teachers will also achieve this by delivering as much maths and literacy as they can through the enquiry curriculum.**

**9. Boys brains often make them learn/behave differently from girls, so teachers will use the **Top tips for improving boy's writing.****

**10. No child should be left behind when it comes to mastering the Age Related Expectations and teachers will ensure that if a child struggles with a concept they will attempt to address the issue on the same day by using the **QAT system.**** This may involve the use of an LSA and or partner teacher to facilitate a keep up session to focus on any misunderstandings or to plug any gaps identified in the previous session. It may also involve collapsing classes to bring children together with similar needs to focus on particular misconceptions. Teachers will set clear goals (using the QAT form) and ensure that they check that each child has achieved the goals set.

**11. That pride in work and presentation is key to improving standards and teachers will make sure that they adhere to the **Minerva Presentation and Handwriting guidelines.****

Appendices

1. **Minerva written feedback procedure.**
2. **Top tips for improving boys writing**
3. **QAT Form**
4. **Minerva Presentation Procedures**



## Written feedback Procedure

### Introduction

At Minerva we believe that feedback to children on their work and how to improve it is key to them making good progress. Feedback can be verbal or written and we know that it is more effective when it is given immediately or soon after the work has been completed. We want children to take risks and not be afraid of making mistakes from which they can learn so we believe that children should be praised for their approaches to learning and not for achieving a certain level or position in the class.

### When we provide written and verbal feedback we will:

1. Value all written work that children produce and ensure that we provide them with feedback.
2. Best practice is to provide feedback in the moment to address misconceptions ensuring the child can act on advice immediately. Other feedback is to be provided no later than a day after the work is completed.
3. Always identify the next steps that the child has to take and ask them to do a task or answer a question that ensures that they have understood and can make that next step.
4. Provide time and classroom routines that make sure that the child always responds to our feedback.
5. Always acknowledge responses with praise (eg tick, star, smiley face) or if incorrect give encouraging comments to try again possibly after some further clarification or explanation.
6. Always provide success criteria for literacy (that is stuck into books) for work that is to be assessed. In key stage two, ensure there is a column for the child to tick when they have achieved before the teacher provides further feedback.
7. In Maths provide success criteria linked to maths skills.
8. In literacy ensure the main focus for next step marking is based on sentence construction.
9. Ensure that it informs planning for lessons that follow.
10. Ensure that green pen is used for praise and pink pen for improvement / next steps task.

### Recommendations/tips:

1. Ensure children continue to meet the prerequisites from the previous year i.e. handwriting, punctuation and spelling expectations.
2. Encourage children to be independent with age appropriate spellings and subject specific vocabulary (word mats)
3. Focus on one or two areas to improve and do these really well.
4. Success criteria can be made by children, guided by you as a learning activity.
5. Use highlighters to draw attention to spellings and punctuation.
6. Use symbols, eg. \*, ^, CL, FS/P, SP, O that children understand to cut down time in marking
7. Maths and spellings questions can be marked quickly in lesson provided the teacher identifies problems for individual children and responds accordingly.
8. Have pit stops during writing so that children can self and peer assess.



### **Top tips for improving boy's Writing.**

Note: These approaches have been found to also benefit girls writing also.

#### **Use Graphics**

The male brain is wired for visual-spatials. Encourage boys to draw pictures about what they want to write BEFORE writing the story. Expose boys to a variety of graphic organizers. Use comic strips and other interesting pictures as a prompt for their writing. During brainstorming for descriptive writing, turn on music and have students paint or draw pictures. This primes the pump for writing that is rich in sensorial and emotive detail.

#### **Use Technology**

Students can use a wealth of technology to get their ideas down AND to share their writing with a wider audience. Have students create a Podcast, either before or after writing. Create a classroom blog where students can respond to their fellow students' writing. Have students create a mock Facebook page for a book character before writing a traditional character analysis.

#### **Incorporate Boys' Interests**

Find out what your boys are passionate about outside of school. Then let them write about it. Make a PowerPoint slide show with pictures depicting what your boys love and let them watch it to get writing ideas. Be sure to let boys do lots of technical "real life" writing, such as video game reviews or how-to pieces about a favourite hobby or sport. If you are providing written prompts, be sure to include prompts that are boy-friendly with more of a focus on action over description and relational themes.

#### **Don't Censor Too Much**

Boys' writing is frequently aggressive, edgy, gross or slapstick. Be careful not to censor it too much, or you are taking away the one thing that keeps some boys motivated to write. Have boys consider their audience. What may not be appropriate to include in the school's literary magazine may be appropriate (and a real hit!) with other boys in the class.

#### **Let Their Bodies Move**

Even while writing, boys should have some freedom to move and fidget. Consider standing work stations, one-legged focus stools or therapy balls, gel cushions, koosh balls to squeeze, etc.

### **Let Boys Write For Boys**

One of the most important things to know about boys and writing is: Boys Write For Boys. Pair male students up to share their writing and serve as peer editors for one another. Allow younger boys the opportunity to read their stories to older boys.

### **Men As Literacy Role-Models**

Boys face many contradictions about being masculine and being a good student. Help them see that “real men read and write” by bringing men into your classroom who write for a living – reporters, screenwriters, authors, etc. Have students’ fathers come in to do a book share with students. Invite older male students to share a piece of their own writing with your students. Encourage boy-to-boy book recommendations. Explore [www.guysread.com](http://www.guysread.com) with your students.

### **Start a “Boys Writing Club”**

Create a boys writing club that meets during lunch a few times per month. In the writing club, you can really take the constraints off of what and how they write. Focus more on ideas and less on editing.

### **Provide Options for Book Reports**

Book reports don’t always need to be in standard written form. Boys especially like more active styles of demonstrating their understanding such as dramatizations and role-playing. They might also like to write a song or build a model.

### **Don’t Forget Read-Alouds**

Reading aloud to students – even at the upper grades – can spark a love of literature in students. It exposes students to a wider variety of literature without it being labor-intensive and encourages more visualization. To improve comprehension during the Read Aloud, encourage students to “doodle” while they listen, including doodling pictures that connect with the storyline.

**Remember: Getting it right for boys will benefit girls too.**



## Presentation Procedures

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a consistently high standard of presentation across the whole school which all children and staff recognise, understand and follow.

### General rules

- All books to have a printed label on with the child's name and class.
- All drawings and diagrams should be in pencil.
- Writing should be in blue or black pen for literacy from year 2.
- Pencils are to be used in numeracy.
- Children to be taught one square one digit in numeracy
- Pencil crayons should be used in exercise books.
- One single line is used to cross out mistakes.
- No writing on covers or on the inside covers of books.
- No doodling on pages in books or on covers.
- All lines are to be drawn with a ruler
- Written feedback is to model the handwriting expectations

### Starting new work

Children should be taught where to begin a new piece of work. As a general rule children will start a new page when there are only a few lines left, otherwise they rule off and use the same page.

- All work is to be dated. This can be
- written by an adult or on a printed label with the learning intention
- In maths the short date is used, e.g. 24.03.16
- In literacy children will write the full date by term 4 in year 2 or earlier if possible, e.g. *Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September* (This is to reinforce the correct spelling of the day and month)
- Children will work towards writing their own learning intention. Ideally by term 4 of year 2, earlier if possible.
- All titles to be underlined using a ruler.

## Golden Presentation Rules

- Take care of all your books, no drawing or writing on the cover
- Write the date and learning intention correctly
  - Underline all titles using a ruler
  - Draw in pencil
- Cross mistakes out with one line

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