

# **Plymstock School**



*Succeeding Together*

**Improvement and Correction Time  
(laCT)**

***2017-18***

## **What does the research say about marking and feedback in schools?**

The following key findings have come from the largest study of marking and feedback in schools to date. It was a joint project run by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and the University of Oxford. The findings are found in the report - ***'A marked improvement - A review of the evidence on written marking (April 2016)'***

### **Key findings:**

**The quality of existing evidence focused specifically on written marking is low.** This is surprising and concerning bearing in mind the importance of feedback to pupils' progress and the time in a teacher's day taken up by marking. Few large-scale, robust studies, such as randomised controlled trials, have looked at marking. Most studies that have been conducted are small in scale and/or based in the fields of higher education or English as a foreign language (EFL), meaning that it is often challenging to translate findings into a primary or secondary school context or to other subjects. Most studies consider impact over a short period, with very few identifying evidence on long-term outcomes.

### ***Some findings do, however, emerge and these include:***

- Careless mistakes should be marked differently to errors resulting from misunderstanding. The latter may be best addressed by providing hints or questions which lead pupils to underlying principles; the former by simply marking the mistake as incorrect, without giving the right answer.
- Awarding grades for every piece of work may reduce the impact of marking, particularly if pupils become preoccupied with grades at the expense of a consideration of teachers' formative comments.
- The use of targeted feedback to make marking as specific and actionable as possible is likely to increase pupil progress.
- Pupils are unlikely to benefit from marking unless some time is set aside to enable pupils to consider and respond to marking. Surveys in schools and higher education settings consistently suggest that pupils do not engage with or find it hard to act on the feedback they are given, and that pupils value the opportunity to respond to feedback. Given this, it appears that there is a strong case for providing dedicated time to consider and respond to marking in class. If pupils simply use class time to provide superficial responses, then this is unlikely to improve outcomes.
- Some forms of marking, including acknowledgement marking (flick and tick), are unlikely to enhance pupil progress. A mantra might be that schools should mark less in terms of the number of pieces of work marked, but mark better.
- There is a distinct lack of evidence to show that 'triple impact marking' has any positive effect on pupil progress – there is evidence though that it causes un-necessary workload for teachers.
- Decisions about the frequency and speed of marking have the greatest impact on time of any aspect of marking considered in this study. There is a significant evidence gap in this area, which means that it is not possible to identify clear time-savings, or provide definitive guidance on how often or how quickly to mark.

## **Expectations for all student work**

All written work in exercise books or on paper will have the following:

- Books should be well kept and free from graffiti.
- Written in black or blue pen.
- A clear title should be given for each piece of work.
- The date the work was produced.
- Both the title and date will be underlined in pen, using a ruler.
- Any student corrections, improvements and responses to feedback will be in green pen.
- All work should be neat and tidy – the work should show care and pride.

**It is recognised that there may be some variation on this in subjects such as Art, Craft and Design.**

## **Expectations for all teachers**

- Teachers should have high expectations for the work produced by every child whatever their sub-group. Feedback quality and frequency should be just as high quality in lower sets as it is in upper sets.
- The laCT policy will be followed consistently by all staff at all times.
- Teachers are free to mark in any colour they wish – other than black, blue and green (to enable it to be differentiated from student work/action).
- Time is built into lessons to enable students to respond to their laCT tasks following the marking of a key piece of work. If students do not have time to act on your feedback then the time spent marking will have little to no impact on student progress.
- Monitoring of the quality of student work and adherence to this policy will happen frequently through HODs and SLT.

## **Rationale for this policy**

At Plymstock School we believe that effective feedback is essential for maximising the progress of our students over time. We believe effective feedback also provides great motivational benefits for students and develops their skills as independent learners.

Our marking and feedback is centred around the laCT process. This has been developed following findings from EEF research, as well as through visits to some of the most successful schools in the country. It also takes into account the feedback from the DfE 'staff workload challenge'.

Staff are not undertaking marking and feedback for Appraisal purposes, their Heads of Department, the school's SLT or for Ofsted. We do this is for our students to help maximise their progress.

**The introduction of this policy will mean we will not be using:**

- Using WWW / IOTI.
- Using 'flick and tick'.
- Having two types of marking – general and extended.
- Indulging in 'triple impact marking'.
- Working harder than our students.
- Using terminology such as DIRT.
- Expecting or chasing parent comments or signatures on work.

This policy specifically relates to written teacher feedback and subsequent student response. Plymstock School recognises that there are many other forms of valuable feedback that can be used such as verbal and peer feedback. It is up to individual teachers and subject departments to decide how these types of feedback are used in their areas.

## What is laCT?

laCT refers to **Improvement and Correction Time**.

It is a new approach to marking which:

- Maximises the impact of feedback on student outcomes.
- Focuses on student independence (hence its double meaning – **l**act).
- A smart approach for teachers.
- Creates opportunities for thinking and meaningful improvement.

## How does it work?

- Focuses on students' response to feedback to effect immediate improvement in their work
- Builds time into lessons to allow students to think, respond and improve
- Contains minimal teacher comments, but gives very focused instructions or questions so that students can improve their work or extend their knowledge and understanding.

### *The process...*

1. The **teacher marks a key piece of work identified at a departmental level** and in line with the agreed departmental frequency. There may be times where a grade or mark is given as well.
2. The teacher **identifies explicitly what students have done well** e.g. 'Excellent explanation - well done'. This can be written in the margin as you go or appear at the end of a piece of work. It should be brief.
3. The teacher then **identifies a clear laCT task(s)**.
4. The teacher **uses the laCT symbol** at the end of the piece of work to focus students' attention on the laCT task. **This will be ONE question that moves learning forward**. This could be an extension question (particularly for upper band students) or it could be a question to revisit a misunderstanding or knowledge/skill gap identified in the piece of work.
5. **SPaG errors** are also identified in the same key piece of work, **using the SPaG symbol** next to the error(s) in the body of text. **The number of errors should be capped at five**. Students will be expected to correct that error – either by using a dictionary or asking the teacher.
6. **Students must respond to their laCT and SPaG tasks thoroughly** – you must give your students time in class to do this – you will need to guide them as to what a good quality response looks like. **The laCT response should take place next to the piece of work it refers to.**
7. **Teachers will not be expected to 'mark' the students' laCT response** (there is no evidence base to support triple impact marking) – instead, **circulate the room whilst students are completing the task** to check responses / additionally a Kagan structure could be used to get students to share their written laCT responses with each other.

laCT symbol:           ⊕

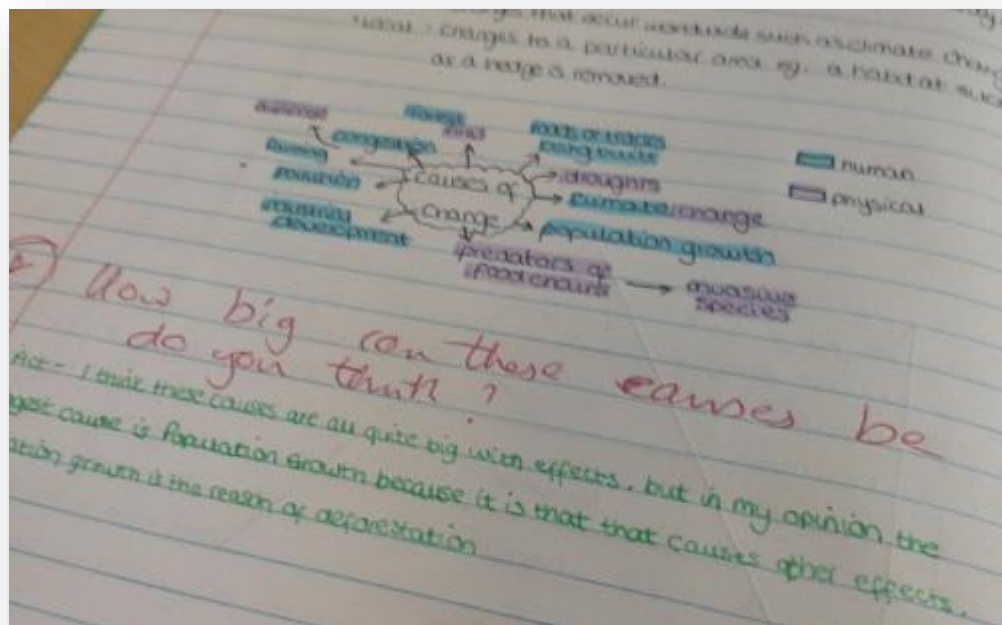
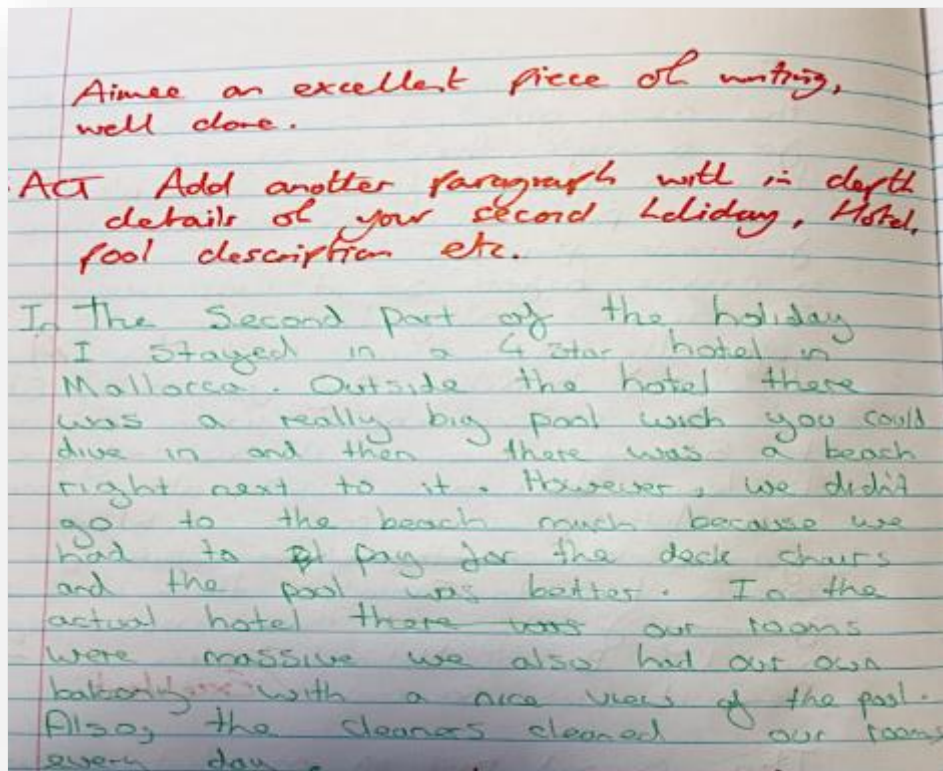
SPaG symbol:           ©

*It is imperative that the symbols are used consistently by all staff.*

## Frequency

Teachers are not expected to mark every piece of work – instead, marking should focus on selected pieces of work according to those agreed within departments. Frequency will be determined at a departmental level.

## Examples of IaCT



Shable, a wonderful start to the year  
well done.

(\*) iACT : use the class dictionaries to  
find the correct spellings for the  
words underlined + write them  
below.

Mountains mountains mountains

Buildings buildings buildings

Maybe maybe maybe maybe



## laCT (Improvement and Correction Time)

### Information Sheet for Staff

#### What is laCT?

laCT refers to **Improvement and Correction Time**.

It is a new approach to marking which:

- Maximises the impact of feedback on student outcomes
- Focuses on student independence (hence the play on words – **laCT**)
- A smart approach for teachers
- Creates opportunities for thinking and meaningful improvement

#### How does it work?

- Focuses on students' response to feedback to effect immediate improvement in their work.
- Builds time into lessons to allow students to think, respond and improve.
- Contains minimal comments, but give very focused instructions or questions so that students can improve their work or extend their knowledge and understanding.

#### *The process...*

1. The **teacher marks a key piece of work identified at a departmental level** and in line with the agreed departmental frequency. There may be times where a grade or mark is given as well.
2. The teacher **identifies explicitly what students have done well** e.g. *'Excellent explanation - well done'*. This can be written in the margin as the teacher goes or appear at the end of a piece of work. It should be brief.
3. The teacher then **identifies a clear laCT task(s)**.
4. The teacher **uses the laCT symbol** at the end of the piece of work to focus students' attention on the laCT task. **This will be ONE question that moves learning forward**. This could be an extension question (particularly for upper band students) or it could be a question to revisit a misunderstanding or knowledge/skill gap identified in the piece of work.
5. **SPaG errors** are also identified in the same key piece of work, **using the SPaG symbol** next to the error(s) in the body of text. **The number of errors should be capped at five**. Students will be expected to correct that error – either by using a dictionary or asking the teacher.
6. **Students must respond to their laCT and SPaG tasks thoroughly** – teachers must give students time in class to do this – teachers will need to guide students as to what a good quality response looks like. **The laCT response should take place next to the piece of work it refers to**.
7. **Teachers will not be expected to 'mark' the students' laCT response** (there is no evidence base to support triple impact marking) – **instead, teachers can circulate the room whilst students are completing the task** to check responses / additionally a Kagan structure could be used to get students to share their written laCT responses with each other.

laCT symbol: ⊕

SPaG symbol: ©

*It is imperative that the symbols are used consistently by all staff*



## **laCT (Improvement and Correction Time)**

### **Information Sheet for Parents**

#### **What is laCT?**

laCT refers to **Improvement and Correction Time**.

It is a new approach to marking and feedback at Plymstock School which:

- Improves the quality of students' work by allowing them to respond to teacher feedback.
- Makes students more independent.
- Creates opportunities for thinking.

#### **How does it work?**

- Time is built into lessons to allow students to think, respond and improve their work.
- Teachers make minimal comments on key pieces of work but give very focused instructions or questions so that students can improve their work, or extend their knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers will only mark key pieces of work. Marking every piece of work produced (traditionally known as 'flick and tick') will no longer take place – educational research shows that this has no impact on student progress and takes up significant amounts of teacher time that can be better spent planning engaging lessons.
- On key pieces of work – spelling, punctuation and grammar errors (SPaG) will be identified (maximum of five in one key piece) using the SPaG symbol.
- Some key pieces of work might additionally include a mark or score, such as with a test or practice examination paper.

#### **What can you expect to see in your child's books?**

- The laCT symbol will be at the end of a key piece of work – it indicates a task which the student needs to respond to. Responses should be thorough.
- The SPaG symbol will be used to identify up to five spelling, punctuation and grammar errors in identified key pieces of work. The student will be expected to make the necessary corrections using a dictionary or through guidance from the teacher.
- Students will complete their laCT and SPaG tasks in green pen.

laCT symbol:           ⊕

SPaG symbol:           ©