

The effect of live feedback compared to out of class marking

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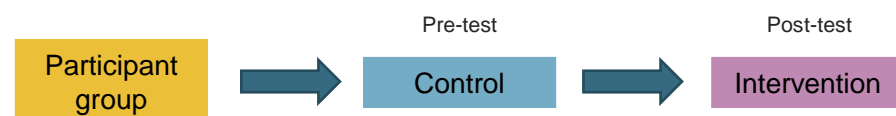
PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

Our aim is to improve staff satisfaction through reducing teacher workload. 63% of Seymour Primary School teachers felt that over a week they were doing too much marking outside of lessons. There was evidence that the school marking policy was having a limited impact on improving teaching and learning and a negative impact on the well-being of staff. Evidence for having a limited impact on improving teaching and learning came from standardised test data in Maths, scrutiny of Maths books; evidence for the negative impact on the well-being of staff came from a bi-annual staff satisfaction survey. The survey was created using materials from the DfE Workload reduction toolkit 2019. Marking was examined with a focus group using an impact graph. Educational research has showed that written marking had a value of +1 (EEF, A Marked Improvement, 2016) and that live feedback had a value of +8 (EEF Toolkit, September 2018). An uncontrolled cohort study was conducted. A workload reduction strategy was implemented and within-participant data was collected for control (December 2018) and the intervention (December 2019). The effects of a workload reduction strategy were compared to the score for the same pupils using data collected from last year. Teachers were taught how to assess without having to deep mark through a series of staff meeting and CPD opportunities.

THE RESEARCH DESIGN

An uncontrolled (within-participant) cohort study was used. The independent variable was phase of workload reduction for the same pupils:

- Phase 1 (IV Level 1 - Control) – pre-workload reduction period of one term during which staff marked using existing policy.
- Phase 2 (IV Level 2 - Intervention) – workload reduction period of one term during which staff implemented the new marking policy.



The following measures were used:

- DV1 (categorical attainment) PUMA categorical data pre- and post-test
- DV2 (teacher time) time spent marking Maths books pre- and post-test
- DV3 (teacher perception) staff well-being survey

The design allowed for the testing of the following hypothesis:

- Pupil attainment will not be negatively affected by reducing time spent marking

LIMITATIONS

The research was conducted over a short period of time – would the effect size stay the same over the course of a year? There was a short space of time to implement strategy and change staff perception as change takes place over time. We have only measured the impact of the strategy in one subject.

METHODS

Participants and sample size

The trial was conducted across 10 classes: two year 3 classes, three year 4 classes, two year 5 classes and three year 6 classes. More effective ways of providing meaningful, motivational and manageable feedback were researched and a method was chosen.

Procedures

All staff were trained during a whole school INSET day. The policy was given out along with the equipment needed. A range of examples were given to the staff, allowing them to try out the marking policy on pieces of work before implementation in the class.

Staff feedback on the marking policy was collected monthly via "Jamboard" and issues and positive practice were addressed at follow up, monthly staff meetings. During weekly pedagogical discussions staff were given opportunities to reflect and consider ways that assessment for learning could impact positively on the learning outcomes of children within the lesson.

Materials (and apparatus)

PUMA tests, published by Rising Stars – UK, were used. They give a range of measures including a standardised score, an age-related score, and gives a score for children considered to be working at age-related expectations or not.

A new policy was written to reflect the new method for giving feedback. Classroom posters outlining expectations and codes were published and child friendly versions of these were shared with pupils. Secretarial equipment including stamps and colour coordinated pens were purchased as described in policy.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Overall, reducing teacher workload had no significant effect on attainment in Maths. Indeed all effect sizes are positive ranging from very small to small. Future research will analyse whether the effect is the same on different pupil groups (e.g. gender, EAL, pupil premium and non pupil premium). Another possible study could be focused on what staff did in the additional time that might have had an impact. Next time we will make sure that we have pupil perception data.

Next year we will provide more training on giving feedback on:

- the most effective aspects in the lesson such as complex and challenging tasks and goals.
- having an emphasis on pupils becoming self regulated learners.
- enabling pupils to be both a peer tutor and tutee.
- professional development of support staff.



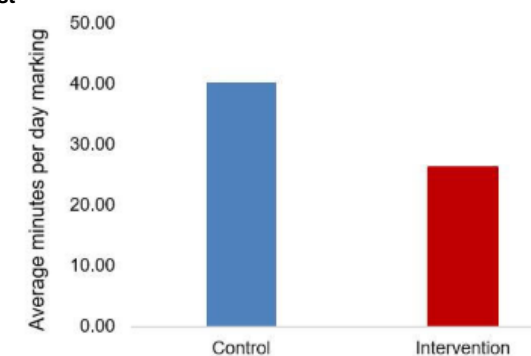
(example of staff feedback January 2020)

RESULTS

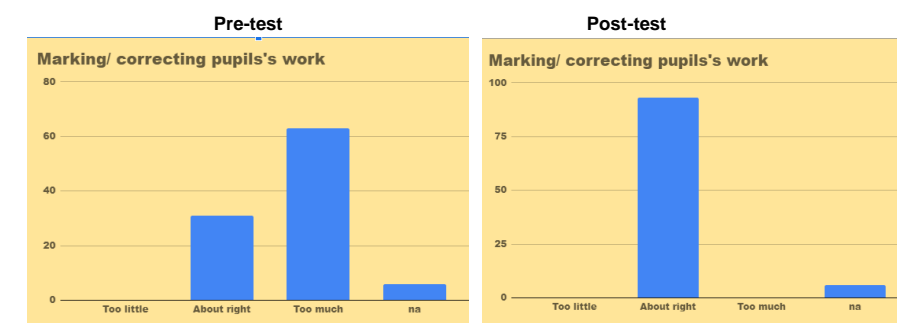
2x2 Chi-squared tests of independence were conducted on the number of pupils who were at age related expectations or not, across the control and intervention periods (see table below).

	Effect size d	CI (95%)	p-value	[w]	N
All	0.057	-0.11 – 0.22	0.500	0.029	553
Year 3	0.027	-0.31 – 0.37	0.886	0.013	113
Year 4	0.065	-0.24 – 0.37	0.689	0.032	154
Year 5	0.125	-0.22 – 0.47	0.487	0.063	123
Year 6	0.047	-0.24 – 0.34	0.765	0.023	163

A graph showing the average amount of time in minutes teachers spent daily marking maths books pre- and post-test



A graph showing staff perception of how much time they spent marking



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