



APPENDIX A CLASSROOM OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

Introduction

Classroom observation is a necessary part of school improvement and professional development and can take several forms, for example: formal, informal, focused, paired or peer. The observation could be initiated by the classroom teacher themselves or could be part of their Appraisal process.

Purposes of Lesson Observations

- To raise standards of learning and teaching
- To identify and disseminate good practice
- To identify staff development needs
- To contribute to Continuous Professional Development (CPD) by providing an opportunity for teachers to reflect on their own practice and effectiveness and to develop their own skills
- To provide evidence for performance management, threshold and internal reviewing procedures and systems

General Principles

There should be a consistent approach to lesson observations.

Criteria and guidelines, against which judgements are made in a formal observation, are available to all staff.

A teacher being observed should expect to receive fair and just feedback that is objective and evidenced against these criteria and guidelines.

Teachers holding posts of responsibility are also expected to participate in formal lesson observations as observers.

Observers should ensure they are well prepared with the skills and knowledge necessary to make an informed and objective, evidence-based, judgment about the work of a colleague.

Observation should not place undue stress on teachers and should facilitate a supportive dialogue between teachers to raise standards of teaching and learning therefore;

- All types of lesson observations are usually arranged at least five working days in advance, unless otherwise agreed (e.g. following a staff / key stage meeting)
- The focus of the observation is usually agreed with the teacher who is to be observed and the professional dialogue that follows centres on the agreed focus

- The teacher receives verbal feedback within 24 hours of the observed lesson, and written feedback within five working days, if applicable (ie if the observation forms part of a teacher's annual Appraisal procedure).
- The total number of observations (excluding peer observations, but including the formal Appraisal Observation) should not exceed 4 a year, unless the Capability Procedure has been invoked.
- **Disputes regarding observations**
In the event of a difference of opinion relating to the organisation or conduct of an observation, or to the judgement grading of the lesson observed, the Head teacher should be consulted. If the situation cannot be resolved, the Head teacher will conduct a second observation and all records pertaining to the original observation, will be destroyed.

Capability procedures

There may be a very small number of teachers who are subject to formal capability procedures. These teachers will undergo more frequent lesson observations.

Categories of Observation

There are three types of observation at Wyton on the Hill Primary School:

1. Formal observations i.e. those for

- Appraisal
- Threshold Assessment
- NQT and trainee / GTP assessment
- And capability procedures or similar

They are concerned with judgements that will influence career and pay progression. Observations for management purposes should be limited to two observations within an appraisal period, unless the Capability Procedure has been invoked.

2. Informal observations, 'drop-in' observations and 'learning walks'

These are concerned with non-judgmental support of the teachers' ongoing professional development.

They also form of the internal school self-evaluation system.

3. Peer observations are also considered to be informal.

To support their own CPD, teachers are encouraged to arrange mutually agreed observation of colleagues' classrooms and take part in mentoring and co-coaching.

Formal Observations

- Members of the Senior Leadership Team will carry these out, except in the case of trainees and NQTs.
- There must be a clear focus for the observation.
- The teacher should provide a lesson plan using the agreed lesson planning sheet.
- The agreed lesson observation record sheet should be used to record all formal observations, except in the case of trainees from other establishments and NQTs.
- The observer must arrive at the lesson on time, and before the start of the lesson.
- The observation should generally last for a whole lesson – approximately one hour
- The teacher will have the following documents available: assessment file, weekly or unit plan, a lesson plan.

- A copy of the lesson observation record sheet may be kept by the observer and a copy given to the head teacher and to the teacher.
- Judgements and gradings made during a formal observation must be directly related to the Ofsted definitions which translate into 'What is good teaching?' (WIGT) 'What is good learning?' (WIGL)
- Teachers who have a responsibility for making formal observations, take part in a lesson observation moderation exercise with a colleague on an annual basis.

Informal Observations, 'drop in' observations and 'learning walks'

- Informal observations, 'drop ins' and 'learning walks' are agreed between the observer and the teacher, sometimes via the Head teacher or Senior Leadership Team.
- No grading of the teacher's competency should be made following an informal observation, unless the teacher agrees this.
- Any evaluative judgements will be recorded anonymously in a general feedback report at the next possible staff meeting (before being reported to the Governing Body), so that good practice can be shared and celebrated and individual teachers can have the opportunity for personal reflection in private. Recommendations for future CPD / INSET may be based on the outcomes of these observations and will be shared with staff before being reported to the Governing Body.
- Governors involved in school 'drop ins' and 'learning walks' for school self-evaluation and awareness purposes have agreed a protocol which clearly outlines their role and remit (see Governor Visits Policy).
- It is helpful if the teacher provides a lesson plan where appropriate.
- Evidence obtained through an informal observation will not form part of the Appraisal process and will only influence performance management where what is observed gives significant cause for concern.

Peer Observations

- The school promotes blocks of peer observation and cocoaching at least once annually in order to support the embedding of new practice.

Timetables of observations across the year

a) For qualified teachers / classteachers

When?	Purpose	Type?	By whom?	Focus?
Autumn – first half term	Co-coaching CPD	Peer observation	Co-coaching partner	School development priority
Autumn term – 2 nd half	School self- evaluation	Drop in / learning walk	Head, Deputy and Governing Body	Consistent practice Routines Application of policy Knowing the children Emotional climate – refer to Teaching & Learning Policy
Spring – first half term	Co-coaching CPD	Follow-up Peer observation	Co-coaching partner	School development priority
Spring term – straight after half term	Appraisal Process	Formal	Head Teacher	School development / individual priority as agreed
Summer – first half term	Appraisal Process	Informal - Drop in / learning walk as agreed	Head Teacher	Area for development as agreed at Spring Term feedback
Summer term	School self- evaluation & school development planning	Drop in / learning walk	SLT / Head, Deputy and Governing Body	School development priority

b) For Newly Qualified teachers

In line with statutory requirements, NQTs have at least one lesson observation each half term.

c) For Teaching Assistants

Where they have responsibility for delivering sessions to individuals or groups of children, for example phonics or mathematics, Teaching Assistants should be observed formally once a year as part of the Appraisal Process.

d) For GTPs and other trainees

Trainees will be observed in line with guidelines issued by the training institution.