

Lesson Observation Policy

Lesson Observations

Lesson observations are seen as a crucial way of supporting all staff at Beatrice Tate School. They are completed on an annual cycle and are to be supportive. They are an integral part of professional development and all staff should see them as a way of supporting their development.

Consequently, staff may ask for areas of weakness or concern to be observed so that they can receive support in those parts of their work that they feel least secure about. Lesson observations should be a positive experience for all involved; it is recommended that each observation should be followed up with mainly positive comments and only one area for development.

Where the headteacher has concerns about a teacher's skills and ability lesson observations may be used to support that teacher with the development of their skills. In this instance the teacher will always be aware that the observations are being used to provide additional information in order to increase the support offered.

Aspects of this policy have been taken from / adapted from GTC documents.

Lesson Observation Protocol

- Prepare well

You need to agree in advance with the staff member a clear and manageable focus for what is to be observed.

You don't always need to observe a whole lesson. Focus instead on a particular process – for example, how the lesson begins, or questioning techniques. This will help both of you to explore the detail, and the assumptions, under the surface of the lesson.

- Set ground rules for the style of the observation

This is as important as agreeing the focus. Will the observer take part in the lesson, or be a silent 'fly on the wall'? Will they stay in one place, if so where, or observe from different parts of the classroom?

- Decide in advance how the observation will be recorded

Feedback is a crucial part of the process, so the observer needs to be able to make notes relevant to the staff member's particular concerns and the focus of the observation. Audio and visual technologies can play their part, but might be intrusive and of great intrigue to pupils.

Written methods need to be practical, and easy to interpret after the observation.

- Ensure an appropriate time and context for observation

Observation for staff development need not last long. Short observations can lessen cover needs. Some classes organise team teaching of classes and create the opportunity to observe each other in this way.

- Ensure an appropriate time and context for feedback

Feedback should be given as soon as possible after the session. This could be just a summary, with a longer discussion a couple of days later. Feedback should always be given in confidence. It should be explicit, focus on the areas agreed beforehand, and aim to give

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and provoke reflection. It is more like holding up a mirror to the person's teaching, and posing some questions, than making definitive pronouncements. The observed staff member may then want to move into a more evaluative mode, and identify what went well in the session and where there may be room for improvements.

- Resolve the issue of developmental versus judgemental feedback

Developmental observation should build upon points identified in previous observations and look at progress since the last observation. The emphasis on self-evaluation puts pressure on feedback to become judgemental. If feedback is judgemental it might be helpful to adopt the Ofsted scale.

If this is done the staff members involved should mutually agree the judgement so that the observed staff member feels involved in the reflection and the observer can point to clear evidence.

- Keep an open ended staff member-to-staff member dialogue going about what you have observed

Formal feedback can be followed by, or merge into, a broader mutual discussion to explore the many possible interpretations of, and concepts supporting, classroom interactions.

- Look to provide expertise or examples of excellence in what you have observed

Observation is least effective in a vacuum that is without appropriate professional, practical and theoretical follow-up. In particular, teachers developing their practice need clarity about what to aim for and knowledge about possible steppingstones in between.

- Work with someone in the school who keeps an overview of all observation

This need not be yet another co-ordinator – it could, for example, be part of the role of an existing CPD co-ordinator, or within the remit of an assistant or deputy head, depending on the size of the school. Whoever it is, they will keep track of the observations that are taking place, be aware of good practice, and offer support.

- Recognise that peer observation works best within a coaching model

Keep asking the Who, Where, What, When, Why questions. Extend them to: How could you have done that better? Why did it happen? What will you do next time? What have you learnt? What will you do better next time? What went well? What went not so well?

What Should we Look at in Lesson Observations?

There are many things that could be focussed on during a lesson observation and the primary area must be that which has been agreed prior to the observation. Below is a list of some things that could be the focus of the observation:

- Lesson plans: are they clear and are they being followed?
- Managements of staff and resources
- Are the pupils engaged in learning?
- Pace of the lesson
- Communication strategies
- Behaviour issues

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Checklist for Observer Feedback

The following are areas that observers may want to consider when giving feedback to staff:

- Does the observer deliver the messages sensitively e.g. through body language, good eye contact, tone?
- Are they aware of the way the messages are being received?
- Are they focusing on behaviour (and not personality / identity)
- Do the messages come across clearly and in a helpful way?
- Is the observer adopting an elective or directive stance / or both (e.g. asking questions or making statements)? Is this effective?
- Are strengths as well as areas for improvement emphasised? Is the balance correct?
- Are difficult messages delivered sensitively but confidently and assuredly?
- Is the observer adapting tone / style to the way that the teacher is responding? Is this effective?
- Does the staff member respond appropriately to the questions being asked
- Does the feedback give the staff member a clear indication of strengths and a clear target for improvement?

Lesson Observation Timetable

Lesson observations will be carried out following the timetable below:

When		Focus	By whom	Outcomes	Reported to
Autumn	Teachers	Performance Management meetings	Head of Key Stage	Professional Development needs	Senior Management Team, with overview of process reported to Governors
	STA	Professional Development	STA		
Spring	Teachers	School self-evaluation	Head and Deputy	Confirmation of improvements from previous SIPs and issues for future SIPs	Whole school and Governors
	STA		Teachers		
Summer	Teachers	Subject reviews	Subject co-ordinators	Issues for next performance management cycle and SIP	Annual professional development interview with performance management reviewer
	STA	Performance Management	Teachers		

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Lesson Observation Form

Beatrice Tate School

CLASS / YEAR GROUP:

OBSERVED BY:

SUBJECT:

DATE:

<u>Teaching</u>	
a) Teachers and other adults have high expectations of all pupils and ensure that effective support is given to accelerate the progress of any pupil who is falling behind their peers	
b) The range of teaching styles and activities sustains pupils' concentration, motivation and application	
c) Subject knowledge is used to inspire pupils and build their understanding	
d) Time is used effectively	
e) Appropriate use of technology maximizes learning	
f) Resources, including other adults, contribute to the quality of learning	
g) Lesson planning is linked to a current assessment of pupils' prior learning and is differentiated, so that it consolidates, builds upon and extends learning for all pupils	
h) Teachers and adults ensure that pupils know how well they are doing and are provided with clear detailed steps for improvement	
i) Effective questioning is used to gauge pupils' understanding and re-shape explanation and tasks in the light of this.	
j) Teachers and adults assess pupils' progress accurately and are alert to pupils' errors and misconceptions during the lesson so that they can move swiftly to put them right.	
<u>Learning:</u>	
a) How well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learner	
b) How well pupils enjoy their learning as shown by their interest, enthusiasm and engagement	
c) How well pupils make progress relative to their starting points	
d) Will the pupils be able to use the knowledge and skills in the future	
e) Are the pupils productive and work at a good pace	
f) Show interest in their work, are able to sustain concentration and think for themselves	
g) Understand what they are doing and how well they are doing	

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h) Are able to communicate with adults and children.									
Grade (No for Peer Observation)									
Teaching	Outstanding		Good		Satisfactory		Inadequate		
Progress/learning	Outstanding		Good		Satisfactory		Inadequate		
Curriculum	Outstanding		Good		Satisfactory		Inadequate		
Every Child Matters references									
Enjoy and Achieve		Make a positive contribution		Achieve economic well-being		Staying safe		Being healthy	
School Issues a) Schemes of work, including PSE&C b) Staff code of conduct c) Health and Safety - lifting etc.									
Issues from the lesson					Agreed Action				

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Beatrice Tate School Information for Teachers: Ofsted Guidance and Grade Descriptors

How effective is the provision?	Grade
The quality of teaching	1-4
Taking into account: the use of assessment to support learning	1-4

Inspectors Should Evaluate:

- How well teaching promotes learning, progress and enjoyment for all pupils
- How well assessment is used to meet the needs of all pupils.

Outline Guidance

Inspectors should consider the school's monitoring information as well as their own observations. Inspectors should take into account the extent to which:

- Teachers and other adults have high expectations of all pupils and ensure that effective support is given to accelerate the progress of any pupil who is falling behind their peers
- The range of teaching styles and activities sustains pupils' concentration, motivation and application
- Subject knowledge is used to inspire pupils and build their understanding
- Time is used effectively
- Appropriate use of new technology maximises learning
- Resources, including other adults, contribute to the quality of learning
- Lesson planning is linked to a current assessment of pupils' prior learning and is differentiated, so that it consolidates, builds upon and extends learning for all pupils
- Teachers and adults ensure that pupils know how well they are doing and are provided with clear detailed steps for improvement
- Effective questioning is used to gauge pupils' understanding and reshape explanations and tasks where this is needed
- Teachers and adults assess pupils' progress accurately and are alert to pupils' lack of understanding during the lesson so that they can move swiftly to put it right.

The above guidance will be used as the basis for our 'Lesson Observation Form 2009-2010' see attached pro-forma.

The judgements about the quality of teaching and the use of assessment to support learning are made by using the same grade descriptors.

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Quality of Teaching and the use of Assessment to Support Learning – Grade Descriptors

Outstanding (1)	Teaching is at least good and much is outstanding, with the result that the pupils are making exceptional progress. It is highly effective in inspiring pupils and ensuring that they learn extremely well. Excellent subject knowledge is applied consistently to challenge and inspire pupils. Resources, including new technology, make a marked contribution to the quality of learning, as does the precisely targeted support provided by other adults. Teachers and other adults are acutely aware of their pupils' capabilities and of their prior learning and understanding, and plan very effectively to build on these. Marking and dialogue between teachers, other adults and pupils are consistently of a very high quality. Pupils understand in detail how to improve their work and are consistently supported in doing so. Teachers systematically and effectively check pupils' understanding throughout lessons, anticipating where they may need to intervene and doing so with striking impact on the quality of learning.
Good (2)	The teaching is consistently effective in ensuring that pupils are motivated and engaged. The great majority of teaching is securing good progress and learning. Teachers generally have strong subject knowledge which enthuses and challenges most pupils and contributes to their good progress. Good and imaginative use is made of resources, including new technology to enhance learning. Other adults' support is well focused and makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning. As a result of good assessment procedures, teachers and other adults plan well to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils are provided with detailed feedback, both orally and through marking. They know how well they have done and can discuss what they need to do to sustain good progress. Teachers listen to, observe and question groups of pupils during lessons in order to reshape tasks and explanations to improve learning.
Satisfactory (3)	Teaching may be good in some respects and there are no endemic inadequacies in particular subjects or across year groups. Pupils show interest in their work and are making progress that is broadly in line with their capabilities. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure. Adequate use is made of a range of resources, including new technology, to support learning. Support provided by other adults is effectively deployed. Teaching ensures that pupils are generally engaged by their work and little time is wasted. Regular and accurate assessment informs planning, which generally meets the needs of all groups of pupils. Pupils are informed about their progress and how to improve through marking and dialogue with adults. Teachers monitor pupils' work during lessons, pick up general misconceptions and adjust their plans accordingly to support learning.
Inadequate (4)	Expectations are inappropriate. Too many lessons are barely satisfactory or are inadequate and teaching fails to promote the pupils' learning, progress or enjoyment. or Assessment takes too little account of the pupils' prior learning or their understanding of tasks and is not used effectively to help them improve.

Note: We need to define our understanding of the language used in *Outstanding*, i.e. 'challenge and inspire' and 'striking impact', as no objective criteria are provided.

The descriptors for *Good* make more sense in the context of our school. Lessons may be judged to be *Outstanding* if 'pupils are making exceptional progress' - this judgement and supporting descriptors needs to be evidenced through our system of assessment for learning (AfL) and assessing pupil progress (APP).

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The Quality of Teaching and the use of Assessment to Support Learning

Introduction

1. Judgements about the quality of teaching, including the effective use of assessment, cannot be made in isolation. *The evaluation schedule for schools* has been devised to ensure that inspectors and schools understand the importance of, and make links between, different judgements. The key factor in judging teaching and the use of assessment is their **impact** on pupils' learning. While these are best observed first-hand in lessons, judgements on teaching and the use of assessment are not made solely through lesson observations.
2. In order to secure these two judgements it is essential that inspectors use the range of evidence available. The evidence gathered to help inspectors reach these judgements may also help inspectors when judging other aspects of the schools work such as the range of pupils' outcomes, other elements of provision and areas relating to the school's leadership and management.

Guidance

3. The new evaluation schedule focuses strongly on the achievement of different groups of pupils as well as individuals. Therefore, it is vitally important that inspectors look carefully at the impact of teaching and use of assessment for different individuals/groups within the class, as guided by the pre-inspection briefing.
4. When observing lessons, a connection should be made to the impact that teaching and the use of assessment have on learners' behaviour, progress, and the quality of learning, making specific reference to different groups of learners. Where possible, inspectors should also seek to confirm judgements about attainment. Additionally, as the learning and progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities forms a separate judgement, inspectors should always try to include a comment on the learning of these pupils when observing lessons, where relevant.
5. Inspectors should use their professional judgement when applying the outline guidance and grade descriptors in *the evaluation schedule for schools* to guide their observations and to support their judgements on the quality of what they see in lessons.
6. When observing lessons, inspectors may find the following prompts helpful. It is important that inspectors consider the impact of teaching and the use of assessment in relation to different groups of pupils and individuals as well as the class as a whole.

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Lesson Observation Prompts for Inspectors

When observing lessons, inspectors may find the following prompts helpful. It is important that inspectors consider the impact of teaching and the use of assessment in relation to different groups of pupils and individuals as well as the class as a whole...

Quality of Learning

- What are different groups and individual pupils **actually** learning as opposed to **doing**?
- Are pupils consolidating previous skills/knowledge or learning something new?
- Can all pupils make the links between previous/new learning?
- Can pupils talk about what they are learning, as opposed to simply describing what they are doing?
- Do they consistently produce work of a good standard?
- Are pupils working independently? Are they self-reliant - do they make the most of the choices they are given or do they find it difficult to make choices? To what extent do pupils take responsibility for their own learning?
- How well do pupils collaborate with others? Do they ask questions, of each other, of the teacher or other adults, about what they are learning?
- Are pupils creative, do they show initiative?
- How well do pupils follow routines/expectations?

Enjoyment of Learning and Attitudes

- Are pupils engaged, working hard, making a good effort, applying themselves, concentrating and productive?
- Are pupils developing habits of good learning?
- Are pupils happy with their work? Are they proud of it?
- Are pupils interested in their work and in what they are learning? Or are they easily distracted?
- How smooth is the transition from teacher input to group work? Do pupils settle to work easily?

Assessment to Support Learning

- Are there any significant differences in the learning of different groups of pupils, or of any individuals?
- Are pupils involved in assessing their own learning and progress?
- Do pupils know what they are learning and why?
- Do pupils have targets and do they understand what they mean/what to do to achieve them?

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Further questions to consider when looking at the range of evidence provided by the school...

Pupils' Progress

- Are different groups making the same/different progress?
- What new skills and knowledge are pupils gaining?
- How well are pupils developing ideas and increasing their understanding?
- Are pupils making gains at a good rate in lessons and over time as shown in their work and the school's records?
- How are weak/good literacy, numeracy and ICT skills affecting pupils' progress?

The Quality of Provision

- Are staff using assessment for learning strategies to enable them to differentiate effectively?
- Are activities pitched at the right level to challenge pupils of different abilities?
- How well does marking identify strengths and diagnose next steps to improvement?
- How good is the dialogue and oral feedback? Are teachers alert to pupils' lack of understanding during lessons?
- How effectively do staff use questioning to gauge pupils' understanding? Are expectations of behaviour sufficiently high?
- Are teachers alert to the social, emotional, and learning, needs of individuals?
- What impact are any support staff having?
- Are resources sufficient? Are they well matched to needs to support learning?

Special schools: A briefing paper for section 5 inspectors

Judging the Quality of Pupils' Learning and their Progress

Inspectors should:

- Not make judgements by category of need
- Use pupils' ages and starting points (baseline) alongside the time pupils have been receiving specialist support/been at the school to analyse progress
- Maintain high expectations of learning for all pupils in lesson observations
- Not assume pupils always need adult help. In the evaluation schedule the criteria 'Too many pupils fail to work effectively unless closely directed by an adult and give up easily' can be as relevant in special schools as in any other school.
- Find out about moderation procedures for assessing against P-scales (at minimum this should be across the school, best practice is across local authority/region/or group of schools)
- Not use success against individual education plan (IEP) targets as substantial evidence contributing to making the achievement judgement. It is often unhelpful to explore IEPs in depth on inspection as it is difficult to evaluate how challenging the targets are and therefore conclusions cannot be drawn.
- Be aware of [National Strategies' progression guidance 2009-10](#) and the associated data sets.

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Lesson Observation Checklist

The content of this checklist is taken from Ofsted guidance to inspectors (September 2009) on judging the quality of teaching and the use of assessment to support learning.

Observations and judgements should be recorded separately, using examples wherever possible.

Quality of learning	✓
- What are different groups and individual pupils <i>actually</i> learning as opposed to <i>doing</i> ?	
- Are pupils consolidating previous skills/knowledge or learning something new?	
- Can all pupils make the links between previous/new learning?	
- Can pupils talk about what they are learning, as opposed to simply describing what they are doing?	
- Do they consistently produce work of a good standard?	
- Are pupils working independently? Are they self-reliant - do they make the most of the choices they are given or do they find it difficult to make choices? To what extent do pupils take responsibility for their own learning?	
- How well do pupils collaborate with others? Do they ask questions, of each other, of the teacher or other adults, about what they are learning?	
- Are pupils creative, do they show initiative?	
- How well do pupils follow routines/expectations?	

Enjoyment of learning and attitudes	✓
- Are pupils engaged, working hard, making a good effort, applying themselves, concentrating and productive?	
- Are pupils developing habits of good learning?	
- Are pupils happy with their work? Are they proud of it?	
- Are pupils interested in their work and in what they are learning? Or are they easily distracted?	
- How smooth is the transition from teacher input to group work? Do pupils settle to work easily?	

Assessment to support learning	✓
- Are there any significant differences in the learning of different groups of pupils, or of any individuals?	
- Are pupils involved in assessing their own learning and progress?	
- Do pupils know what they are learning and why?	
- Do pupils have targets and do they understand what they mean/what to do to achieve them?	

Pupils' progress	✓
- Are different groups making the same/different progress?	
- What new skills and knowledge are pupils gaining?	
- How well are pupils developing ideas and increasing their understanding?	
- Are pupils making gains at a good rate in lessons and over time as shown in their work and the school's records?	
- How are weak/good literacy, numeracy and ICT skills affecting pupils' progress?	

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The quality of provision	✓
- Are staff using assessment for learning strategies to enable them to differentiate effectively?	
- Are activities pitched at the right level to challenge pupils of different abilities?	
- How well does marking identify strengths and diagnose next steps to improvement?	
- How good is the dialogue and oral feedback? Are teachers alert to pupils' lack of understanding during lessons?	
- How effectively do staff use questioning to gauge pupils' understanding? Are expectations of behaviour sufficiently high?	
- Are teachers alert to the social, emotional, and learning, needs of individuals?	
- What impact are any support staff having?	
- Are resources sufficient? Are they well matched to needs to support learning?	