



# **Sutton CE (VC) Primary School**

## **Classroom Observation Policy**

**February 2023**



## **Introduction**

1. This Governing Body recognises that there are a variety of means by which teacher performance may be assessed. We believe that observation of classroom practice and other responsibilities is important, both as a way of assessing individual performance and of gaining useful information that can inform school improvement more generally.
2. The Governing Body is committed to ensuring that all classroom observation is developmental and supportive and that those involved in the process will:
  - carry out the role with professionalism, integrity and courtesy;
  - seek to reach agreement in advance on classroom observation to be carried out;
  - evaluate objectively;
  - report accurately and fairly; and
  - respect the confidentiality of the information gained.
3. In accordance with these principles, the Headteacher will:
  - consult staff on the pattern of classroom observation which teachers can expect annually and seek agreement with the teachers and their recognised organisations on these arrangements;
  - ensure that there will be a reasonable amount of time between classroom observations in order to provide time for development to be achieved, irrespective of the purpose of those observations;
  - ensure that classroom observation is undertaken solely by persons with qualified teacher status and the appropriate training and professional skills. Neither pupils nor governors will undertake classroom observations for the purpose of assessing teacher performance (although governors may, by agreement with the teacher concerned, visit a lesson to familiarise themselves with their link area); and
  - ensure that as far as possible, the results of observations are used for multiple purposes, in order to avoid any unnecessary observations.
4. The Governing Body recognises that visits to classrooms by the Headteacher or senior staff in order to carry out a support plan (as defined in the appraisal policy) with a teacher or talk to pupils are separate from this classroom observation protocol.
5. The purpose of visits to classrooms by the Headteacher and senior managers will be made clear before they occur.
6. Headteachers or other leaders with responsibility for learning and teaching standards may “drop in” or undertake other observations to evaluate the standards of teaching and learning and to ensure that high standards of professional performance are established and maintained.
7. The length and frequency of “drop ins” or other observations and the notice to be given, will vary depending on specific circumstances but will be in accordance with the school’s classroom observation policy.

## **Maximum periods and occasions of observation**

8. Classroom observation for the purposes of performance management/appraisal will normally be limited to one observation per teacher per term in each performance management cycle.
9. Where there have been concerns regarding the performance of an individual teacher, additional classroom observation may form part of the teacher’s support plan. In such cases, the purpose and timing of classroom observations will be agreed as part of the support plan.

A teacher may choose to request additional classroom observations at any time.

10. Where more than one observation per term is to be conducted, the Governing Body agrees that the amount of observation will be kept to the shortest period on the fewest number of occasions necessary.

## **Preparations for observations**

11. In keeping with the Governing Body's commitment to supportive and developmental classroom observation, the date and time of observations conducted for the purposes of performance management/appraisal or for the evaluation of standards of teaching and learning (or for both purposes) will be fixed at least five working days in advance. Every effort will be made for observation to be conducted at an agreed time.
12. Before any performance management/appraisal observation is conducted, there will be an opportunity for the reviewer and reviewee to meet in order to discuss the context of the lesson to be observed. Where another teacher or a member of support staff will be present during a class which is to be observed, consideration will be given to any other arrangements that may need to be made.
13. The arrangements for classroom observation for appraisal purposes will be included in the planning and review statement and will:
  - include the number of observations to take place (normally not more than three per year);
  - specify the primary purpose(s) of the observation;
  - specify any particular aspects of the teacher's performance which will be assessed;
  - specify the duration of the observation;
  - specify when the observation will take place; and
  - specify who will conduct the observation.

## **Feedback and records**

14. The Governing Body recognises that in order to be useful to the teacher whose performance is under review, oral feedback from classroom observation must be given as early as possible. Oral feedback will therefore be given at a pre-arranged time for the purposes of performance management as soon as possible after the observation and normally no later than the end of the following working day.
15. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that sufficient time is allocated within the school day to enable participants in classroom observations to discuss and agree the arrangements for the observations. In addition, release time within the school day will be provided, as soon as possible, to enable the reviewer and reviewee to organise time for discussion on the outcomes of classroom observation. Time will be made available for preparation and feedback for classroom observation for performance management/appraisal purposes in addition to PPA time.
16. Written feedback will be provided (see Appendix 1 - Lesson Observation Proforma) within five working days of the observation taking place. The reviewer will be given sufficient time within the school day to prepare the conclusions agreed with the reviewee on the outcomes of the classroom observation.
17. The record of feedback will include the date on which the observation took place, the lesson observed and the length of the observation. The reviewee will be entitled to append written comments to the feedback document. No written notes will be kept in addition to the feedback document.
18. Teachers will have access to all written accounts of the observation after their lessons. The feedback will be treated as confidential for access by the teacher, the reviewer (appraiser) and the Headteacher.

## **'Learning Walks' and Drop-Ins**

19. This Governing Body agrees that 'learning walks' or other short visits to classes such as drop-ins will only be carried out in accordance with this protocol. Drop ins are not intended to take the place of lesson observation.
20. 'Learning walks' may take place in order to collect evidence about teaching and learning, evidence of progress and areas for school development. They are intended to be developmental and constructive rather than judgmental and are a whole-school improvement activity. The results of information gained during learning walks and drop ins are not intended to form part of either the appraisal or the capability procedures but may feed into further CPD carried out by the whole school.

21. A programme of 'learning walks' should be agreed with teachers so that they know the date, time and focus of the learning walk and who will be conducting it, so that they can organise their classes accordingly. The Headteacher will avoid undertaking a learning walk or drop in at times when the whole staff is under additional pressure, for example during parent consultation week.
22. The purpose or focus of a 'learning walk' should be explained to all relevant staff prior to its commencement. That purpose or focus will not relate to the performance of an individual teacher.
23. 'Learning walks' will be conducted with minimum disruption to teachers and pupils and will be undertaken in a supportive, courteous and professional manner. A maximum of two colleagues (one of who may be a governor) will be involved in such visits in any classroom at any time.
24. Pupils will not be asked for their views of an individual teacher during 'learning walks'.
25. Those teachers whose classes are visited will be given the opportunity to see any written records which have been made during the 'learning walk'.
27. Reviews of the practice of undertaking 'learning walks' will be held with all staff during staff meetings. Any concerns about the implementation of this protocol should be raised with the Headteacher either by the individual teacher concerned or with the support of the school trade union representative.



Name:		Class/Subject:		Date:		Observer:	
<b>Inadequate</b>		<b>Requires Improvement</b>		<b>Good</b>		<b>Outstanding</b>	
<b>Quality of teaching and the use of assessment to support learning</b>							
No clear learning objective and aims.	L.O. visible, but not explained to children or put into context.	L.O. visible throughout lesson explained and contextualised to the class.	L.O. is contextualised and reference is made to previous and future learning.				
Activities fail to match the L.O.	Activities show some reference to the L.O.	Activities match the L.O and fully engage children.	Activities match objective and are stimulating.				
Little use made of open or differentiated questioning.	Differentiated questioning, some open ended.	Teacher encourages full responses, getting children to justify their thoughts.	Range of differentiated questions, understanding checked in a range of ways.				
Lack of pace	Pace is limited	Good pace	Teaching is sharp and pacy.				
Bland teaching with no use of interactive strategies. Little pupil contribution. No variation in voice, tone or audibility.	Some use of interactive teaching strategies & children generally attentive & participating in lessons. Some limited use of voice tone and audibility.	Teaching is stimulating & children are engaged & enthusiastic. A range of interactive strategies are used. Voice used effectively.	Teaching is exciting & children are fully involved, responding enthusiastically to the teaching. A wide range of interactive & imaginative teaching and learning strategies are used. Voice used effectively.				
Attainment is low and shows little sign of improvement. Subject knowledge is patchy and challenge is insufficient.	Attainment is average. Teaching is accurate and is based on secure subject and pedagogical knowledge and is challenging.	Attainment is above average. Challenge is realistic and pupils secure good progress. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge which is secure and which entuses and challenges most pupils.	Attainment is high. Teaching is consistently challenging & interesting, stemming from excellent subject knowledge.				
Teacher is unaware if children have met targets or the L.O. Targets are too easy or too general.	Teacher makes rough assessment of learning but does not address e.g. in plenary. Teachers let children know how well they are doing and use this information to agree next targets that children understand and to plan which generally meets the needs of all groups of pupils.	Teacher makes accurate assessments and addresses issues e.g. during the plenary. Children assess their own work throughout the lesson and information is used to plan the next steps of learning for all groups of learners.	Teacher has enabled children to assess their own learning as well as tracking each groups' attainment during the lesson. Pupils helped to judge success of lesson and set targets for improvement. Teachers intervene where appropriate and make a striking impact on the quality of learning. Planning takes full account of the needs of all groups of learners.				
No use of appropriate resources.	Adequate use is made of a range of resources including new technology to support learning.	Good and imaginative use is made of resources including new technology to enhance learning	Resources, including the use of new technology, make a marked contribution to the quality of learning and it entuses, engages and enriches the lesson.				
No use of independent materials or resources used to support children's learning.	Some use of independent materials & resources are used to support children's learning.	All groups have scaffolding materials and resources to support their independent learning.	A variety of differentiated scaffolding & supporting materials & resources are used to meet the needs of all pupils.				
Assessment takes too little account of the prior learning or the understanding of tasks and is not used effectively to help them improve.	Pupils are informed about their progress and how to improve through marking and dialogue with adults.	As a result of good assessment procedures and marking, teachers and other adults plan well to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils are provided with detailed feedback both orally and through marking.	Marking and dialogue is focused, involving all adults and pupils. It is diagnostic and aids improvement to learning. And is consistently of a very high quality. Pupils understand in detail how to improve their work and are consistently supported in doing so.				
Teacher has no teaching focus during independent tasks.	Teacher has a teaching focus.	Teacher extends groups' learning through focused & stimulating teaching during the independent time	The same high level of teaching continues within independent group activities & the teacher is also able to make quick, accurate assessments of class progress.				
Additional adults are not used effectively.	Support provided by other adults is effectively deployed and there is planned involvement of additional adults but this lacks direction.	Other adults support is well focussed and makes a significant contribution to the quality of learning. They are actively involved in the lesson with clearly defined tasks.	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. Precisely targeted support is provided by other adults during each stage of the lesson.				
Lesson ends abruptly with no plenary or plenary is used solely for feedback or tidying up.	Minimal plenary. It is used as a distinct teaching section with no reference to future learning, addressing misconceptions or opportunity for children to reflect.	Full plenary is used to recap and extend objectives or address misconceptions. Teacher makes links to future learning.	Plenary is used effectively for children to assess their own learning. Teacher sums up by making explicit links to next steps in learning.				
Little or no differentiation evident or alternatively poorly pitched differentiation.	Adequate expectations and some differentiation evident.	High expectations for most children and appropriate differentiation.	High expectation and appropriate differentiation for all children.				
<b>Inadequate</b>		<b>Requires Improvement</b>		<b>Good</b>		<b>Outstanding</b>	
<b>Quality of pupils' learning and their progress (including SEN)</b>							
No new knowledge, skills or understanding are attained by pupils.	The extent to which pupils acquire knowledge, develop understanding and learn and practice skills is at least satisfactory	Pupils acquire knowledge, develop understanding and learn and practice skills well	Pupils acquire knowledge, develop understanding and learn and practise skills exceptionally well				
Too many pupils fail to work effectively unless closely directed by an adult and give up easily.	Most pupils work effectively when provided with appropriate tasks and guidance but lack confidence in improving the quality of their work.	Pupils are keen to do well, apply themselves diligently in lessons and work at a good pace.	Pupils demonstrate excellent concentration, are rarely off-task, even without direction from an adult.				

Pupils do not enjoy the activities provided which is reflected in poor completion of tasks.	Children generally work steadily and occasionally show high levels of enthusiasm and interest.	Children seek to produce their best work and are usually interested and enthusiastic about their learning.	Children have developed resilience when tackling challenging activities. Children are keen to extend and improve their learning.
Pupils or particular groups of pupils make too little progress.	Pupils make progress expected given their starting points and some although not the majority may make good progress. Progress is inadequate in no major respect and may be good in some respects.	A very large majority of groups of pupils make at least good progress and some may make outstanding progress with nothing that is inadequate.	Progress is at least good and is sometimes exemplary.
Children unaware of what they have to do or what they are learning.	Children understand the task and are generally focussed.	Children fully understand the task and are enthusiastic to complete it.	Children work on tasks enthusiastically and understand the link with the L.O. and understand how it fits within a sequence of lessons.
<b>Behaviour</b>			
Pupils poor behaviour and rudeness occur more frequently than on very isolated occasions and inhibit progress or well-being.	Pupils behave so that learning proceeds appropriately and time is not wasted.	Pupils' behaviour makes a strong contribution to good learning in lessons.	Pupils' consistent thoughtful behaviour is an outstanding factor in their successful learning.
Time is wasted through persistent low level disruption, excessive off task chatter and a lack of attention.	Pupils understand what is expected when asked to work on their own or in small groups and only gentle prompting is needed to maintain discipline.	Pupils routinely show responsibility in responding to the expectations of staff, set consistent standards for themselves and respond quickly and well to any additional guidance from staff about how to conduct themselves.	Pupils are highly considerate and supportive of each other in the lesson.
Some pupils show a lack of respect for or challenge to adults or other children.	Pupils are polite and generally respond appropriately to sanctions.	Pupils behave considerately towards each other.	Pupils encourage others to conduct themselves well.
Children are not focussed on task and teacher displays poor and inconsistent behaviour management.	Behaviour management strategies evident and used to create a calm working environment but key children are not focussed in all of the lesson.	Consistent, effective use of praise, constructive criticism and behaviour management strategies.	Excellent use of praise, constructive criticism and behaviour management strategies. High quality, stimulating teaching engages all pupils.
A chaotic or unsafe working environment	A calm working environment but some children not wholly focussed.	A calm working environment.	Calm, purposeful learning environment.