



Beechwood Primary School

Lesson Observation Policy

Aims

Through lesson observations we aim to:

- Create a school where there are the highest standards of teaching and learning.
- Monitor the quality of teaching and learning within the school.
- Provide quality feedback to all staff about the delivery of their lesson.
- Contribute to CPD by providing an opportunity for teachers to reflect on their own practice and effectiveness and to develop their own skills
- Promote a culture of sharing professional expertise.
- Disseminate good practice throughout the school.
- Identify areas for development.
- Provide evidence for appraisal and internal reviewing procedures and systems

We will achieve our aims by:

- Ensuring appropriate lesson observation training is provided for those observing lessons.
- Securing whole school agreement on standards of teaching and learning.
- Ensuring that all staff are seen teaching at least twice each year.
- Ensuring consistency of observation by using an agreed lesson observation sheet (see Appendix A)
- Focusing on positive elements of teaching whilst providing advice on improvement.
- Recognising that lesson observation is an integral part of the Teaching & Learning policy and is a professional dialogue between one professional to another.
- Ensuring that good quality teaching is to be recognised and praised and good practice shared throughout the school.

Rationale

Observers will strive to:

- Carry out the role with professionalism, integrity and courtesy
- Evaluate objectively
- Report accurately and fairly
- Respect the confidentiality of the information gained

Lesson observations of teachers should only be carried out by persons with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). Teaching assistants may observe other teaching assistants in the context of a professional dialogue between colleagues.

Lesson Observation Purpose

The three main purposes for observations – Coaching, Assessing and Learning – will be used in a cyclical manner to ensure maximum benefit to the observed and observer.

Lesson observation can be used for the purposes of:

- Appraisal
- Focusing on particular areas of teaching and learning under review, e.g. AfL
- Focusing on consistency in teaching across the school – implementation of school teaching and learning policy
- Tracking the curriculum
- Tracking progress of individuals and/or groups
- Looking for evidence of progression
- Evaluating consistency in implementation of school policies
- Quality and use of resource

The purpose of observation can be multifunctional using one or more of the above. Each of these must be well planned with the purpose and focus of the observation understood by all.

Lesson Observation Format

Lesson observations can take a variety of forms:

- Full lesson – Appraisal, NQTs, Coaching on new approach, Subject leader review
- Part lesson – 20 or 30 minutes, start of lesson, plenary
- Informal ‘Learning Walks’ by the Headteacher, Deputy Headteachers, Teacher Coach or Team Leaders
- Targeted times/classes/groups of children

1. Formal Observations (Full or part lesson)

- Teachers must have agreed a focus for the observation.
- Teachers should be given a minimum of three working days’ notice of a formal observation.
- The teacher should provide a lesson plan using the agreed lesson planning sheet. The only exception is in the case of trainees from other establishments.
- The agreed lesson observation record sheet should be used to record all formal observations, except in the case of trainee teachers.
- The teacher will have the following documents available: assessment file, schemes of work, weekly plans
- A copy of the lesson observation record sheet may be kept by the observer and a copy given to the Headteacher and to the teacher.
- Judgments and gradings made during a formal observation must be directly related to the Ofsted guidance
- The teacher being observed should have the opportunity to record a written response to the observation feedback on the record sheet.

2. Informal Observations

- There will be a specified focus for learning walks and other ‘drop in’ observations.
- Such observations may take place on a daily basis, with individual teachers observed maximum once per week.

3. Conduct of the Observer

- All who observe lessons should be discreet and, as far as is possible, should ensure that their presence does not significantly change the normal teaching and learning context.
- The competency of the observer should be appropriate; e.g. a trained member of the leadership team, a qualified Ofsted inspector or a School Improvement Officer.
- Staff may observe each other on an agreed basis for mutual benefit and support. This will be for personal development and will not be used to inform appraisal. Any written feedback produced is subject to the same code of confidentiality as other observations.
- There may be occasions when a member of staff is observed by two or three observers at the same time. Multiple observation must be carried out in as discreet a manner as possible, and the purpose of this observation must be reasonable and explained to the member of staff beforehand.

4. Feedback

For joint observations it is useful to leave time for observers to discuss / agree their findings before giving the oral feedback. They will need to agree on the strengths and points for development and identify any questions required for issues that need clarification.

Verbal Feedback:

- Verbal feedback should be given by the end of the next working day.
- When giving the feedback the observer should keep the discussion as positive as possible and ensure that strengths of the lesson are given.
- The teacher must be given clear feedback about the aspects for his / her development and an outline of what he or she needs to do to improve (i.e. strategies).
- The teacher may correct any factual errors on the part of the observer and this should be taken into account when the written feedback is given.

Written Feedback:

- When writing the feedback the observer should write up the key points of the lesson observation as 'strengths' and 'areas for development', with appropriate evidence, using the agreed feedback document. A summative judgement will also be included if this has been agreed.
- Verbal and written feedback should not vary, apart from adjusting the factual errors from verbal feedback.
- There should be space on the form for the teacher to make a written comment on the feedback received, if he/she wishes, and space for teacher and observer signatures if appropriate.
- If a teacher and an observee differ on the quality of the lesson outcome, this should be recorded, see paragraph below.

5. Disputes regarding observations

In the event of a difference of opinion relating to the organization or conduct of an observation, or to the judgment grading of the lesson observed, the Headteacher should be consulted. If the situation cannot be resolved, the Headteacher will conduct a second observation and all records pertaining to the original observation, will be destroyed.

6. 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. See separate Capability Policy.

Reviewed: September 2014

To be reviewed: September 2016

Signed by Chair of Curriculum & Resources _____

Signed by Head Teacher _____