



Introduction

This Trust is committed to ensuring that classroom observation is developmental and supportive and that those involved in the process will:

- carry out the role with professionalism, integrity and courtesy;
- ensure focus on the learning needs of pupils being met remains the priority;
- evaluate objectively;
- report accurately and fairly; and
- respect the confidentiality of the information gained.

Planning and preparing for observation

In keeping with the Trust's commitment to supportive and developmental classroom observation the head teacher will:

- advise teachers on the pattern of classroom observation which they can expect annually;
- ensure that those being observed for all purposes will be notified at least five working days in advance;
- arrange, as far as possible, for all observations to take place at a time agreed between the teacher and the observer;
- ensure that there is a reasonable amount of time between classroom observations, irrespective of the purpose of those observations;
- ensure that classroom observation will be undertaken solely by persons with qualified teacher status (QTS) and the appropriate training and professional skills to undertake observation and to provide constructive oral and written feedback and support, in the context of professional dialogue between colleagues.

Planning for observation will take place at the start of the appraisal cycle and will include details of:

- the likely amount of observation;
- the likely focus of the observation;
- the duration of the observation;
- when during the appraisal cycle observations may take place; and
- who will conduct the observation.

In order that classroom observation is kept to a minimum where possible, and to support efforts to deliver the Trust's commitment to streamlining data collection and minimising bureaucracy and workload burdens on teachers, the information gathered will be used for multiple purposes, including informing annual appraisal, school self-evaluation and school improvement strategies. This will enable the head teacher to discharge her/his duty to evaluate the standards of teaching and learning and to ensure that proper standards of professional performance are established and maintained.

Before any classroom observation is conducted, there will be an opportunity for the reviewer and teacher to meet within directed time in order that the context of the lesson to be observed can be discussed.

Conducting observation

The intent is for a total of three observations for all purposes per year, although short highly focussed observations may additionally be arranged if required. The total time occupied by actual classroom/learning observations should be approximately three hours per year.

Neither pupils nor local governors will undertake observations (although local governors may, by specific agreement with the teacher concerned, visit a lesson to familiarise themselves with their link area).

Feedback and records

Oral feedback will be given as soon as possible after the observation and no later than the end of the following working day. It will be given during directed time in a suitable, private environment.

Written feedback - if required - will be provided within five working days of the observation taking place. If issues emerged from an observation that were not part of the focus of the observation these should also be covered in the written feedback and the appropriate action discussed with the teacher.

The written record of feedback will include the date on which the observation took place, the lesson observed and the length of the observation. The teacher has the right to append written comments on the feedback document. No written notes in addition to the written feedback and teacher's comments will be kept. The reviewer will be given sufficient time within the school day to put in written form the conclusions agreed with the reviewee on the outcomes of the classroom observation.

Teachers will have access to all written accounts of the observation after their lessons - copies will be provided.

Classroom observation and formal capability procedures

For teachers on a formal capability procedure an important part of the support offered to the teacher will be a clearly defined amount of classroom observation with structured oral and written feedback. The amount of classroom observation will be discussed with the teacher and their union representative who is supporting and advising them in the formal process.

Linked document

Trust Non-Negotiables for Teachers and Teaching Assistants
Trust Performance Management and Capability Policy – Dec 19 (Clauses 1.12 - 1.16)