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# Lanesend Primary School

## Learning Observation Policy 2020 School Curriculum Policy

Signed: ..... Date:  
(Headteacher)

Signed: ..... Date:  
(Chair of Trustees)

**Review Date:** July 2023 (Every 3 Years)

**Reviewed By:** Headteacher and Teaching and Learning Group

## Lanesend Primary Learning Observation Policy

At Lanesend Primary School we are constantly evaluating the quality of teaching and learning so that we ensure that children make the best progress they possibly can. Teaching is evaluated through classroom observations, IRIS, data and progress, learning in files and the environment. Evidence is triangulated and used to judge teaching over time. As part of this process we regularly monitor the quality of classroom practice to ensure that it is consistent with whole school policies. At Lanesend we expect all teaching to be Good or Outstanding and use the outcomes of classroom observations to evaluate the quality of practice and plan for personalised and whole school Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

The following policy outlines the procedures in place to ensure that classroom monitoring is a manageable and supportive process, conducive to the learning needs of staff and quality outcomes for all children. Please see our Coaching Policy, which supports the development of teaching and learning through observation.

School leaders are always monitoring every aspect of school life, talking with teachers, support staff, families and children; evaluating the quality of provision across the school for all children.

At Lanesend Primary School, we aim to keep observations undertaken to the minimum required to implement Performance Management and School Improvement. Observations will be undertaken as part of the Performance Management procedure, NQT induction, whole school self-evaluation, the monitoring of the curriculum in the whole school context. The burden of additional paperwork will be carefully considered and kept to a minimum.

Observations will be a combination of both planned and unplanned visits. When the agreement is for a planned visit, there will be an agreed focus and timetable before the observation takes place and feedback after. For unplanned visits that support the performance management cycle, feedback will always be given. Alongside observations, the Headteacher will complete learning walks, drop ins and daily check ins to ensure that the school learning environment maintains at a high standard.

The total period for classroom observation arranged for any teacher as part of performance management will not exceed three hours per cycle having regard to the individual circumstances of the teacher. There is no requirement to use all of the three hours. The amount of observation for each teacher should reflect and be proportionate to the needs of the individual.

### **Why observe?**

- To know strengths and weakness in subject areas, standards and coverage, teaching, learning and progress;
- To gain views on children's attitudes;

- To know strengths and weaknesses of teaching; ensure consistency through the school;
- To support and advise colleagues based on first-hand experience;
- To have the chance to reflect on own practice and opportunity to develop our teaching skills.
- To share good practice and ensure consistency.
- To meet CPD requirements and Teaching Standards
- To inform INSET needs.

### **What could be observed?**

- Aspects of teaching or learning to ensure lessons are good or outstanding
- Use of questions, modelling, use of time and or resources;
- Objectives understood; Focus on particular group of children, are children being challenged?
- Current needs and focus of school, e.g. problem solving sentence construction;
- Area of improvement identified by staff – such as classroom as a learning environment, organisation.
- Children's responses.
- Relationships in the classroom, groupings, use of support staff, behaviour management

### **Who could observe?**

- Headteacher / Assistant Headteacher
- Progression Team
- Trustees
- Curriculum Leads
- Coaching Partners
- Teachers within peer observation programme;
- Other Headteachers
- Learning Consultants and external trainers

### **How should it be observed?**

- In class
- Recorded lessons via IRIS
- IRIS in ear coaching
- Learning Walks
- Peer Observation
- Coaching Programme

### **How should feedback be given?**

- Feed-back should be as soon as possible, but aiming to be within 24 hours
- Progression Team and/or Curriculum Leads;
- Verbal or written;

- Fair and supported by evidence and OfSTED evaluation schedule and Teaching Standards
- Identify the strengths, improvements, how they could be achieved;
- Relaxed professional atmosphere; Focus on issues not the person; should be a dialogue;
- Feed-back recorded on Blue Sky

In the pursuit of good or outstanding teaching, the basis of the school's classroom monitoring policy is that:

Any lesson observed that is found to be either in need of improvement or inadequate will automatically trigger a follow-up observation within 2 weeks. A programme of coaching support will be planned alongside agreed targets for improvement, ensuring teachers feel confident in addressing the development points identified by the observer. If practice does not improve, a more detailed plan of support will be implemented and closer monitoring supporting the teacher in making the improvements needed. If an individual teacher is unable to deliver teaching that is good or better, they will then be managed under the school's procedures for capability.

Observations will also happen for other reasons. Curriculum Leads will need to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their own subjects to ensure that standards are in line with expectations. These observations will be planned in consultation with staff. Trustees can observe teaching and learning alongside a member of staff at planned times throughout the year. These will be part of their 'critical friend' role and not an evaluation of individual teacher's performance.

We also ensure colleagues have an opportunity to observe each other's practice outside of the monitoring cycle. These are called 'peer observations'. Individuals are able to choose the person they wish to observe and this is usually because the selected person has an area of strength which is of interest to the observer as they wish to develop this aspect of their practice. It is the teacher's responsibility to arrange peer observations when they feel it is appropriate. We aim to ensure that the school promotes a culture where observation of practice is intrinsic to the life of the school, non-threatening, and completely synonymous with our pursuit of excellence. Any individual who is unhappy with the outcome of a monitoring procedure is able to raise this with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher to resolve the difficulties. If the situation remains unresolved then the usual grievance and capability procedure becomes the process to be followed.

## **Iris**

Iris is a recording tool used throughout the school in agreement with all members of staff. It can be used for personal observations, shared observations or formal observations. There is an agreed protocol for when using Iris that must be adhered to at all times.

## **Learning Support Assistants**

During the year, the Headteacher and members of the Progression Team may complete an observation of our Learning Support Assistants, as part of the School Improvement Plan and ensuring value for money. These will also support their performance management review. These will always be planned with the Learning Support Assistant and feedback given.