

Viking Academy Trust



Classroom Observation Protocol



CLASSROOM OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

The Viking Academy Trust

Schools in the Viking Academy Trust (VAT)

We start 2016-17 academic year with three schools in the Viking Academy Trust.

These are:

Chilton Primary School
Ramsgate Free School
Upton Junior School

This 'Classroom Observation Protocol' is applied consistently across all schools for all staff working for the VAT.

Introduction

At the Viking Academy Trust we plan learning and teaching with a view to enabling every child to seek the highest level of personal achievement. To ensure that this happens, we regularly monitor the actions we have taken, so that we are in a position to make a judgement about how effective these actions have been. This gives us information on which we can base future decisions about the development of the schools within our Trust.

The Trust Board is committed to ensuring that classroom observation is both supportive and constructive with regard to professional development and that those involved in the process of observation will:

- agree in advance how classroom observations will be carried out
- carry out their role with integrity, courtesy and respect
- evaluate objectively
- report accurately and fairly
- respect the confidentiality of the information gained.



Observation may be whole class (teachers or education support staff), leading an intervention group or 1:1 support / precision teaching.

Purpose of observations

Classroom observations are used to monitor the quality of teaching and learning as an important part of the Trust's drive to ensure every child in a Viking school receives a good standard of teaching at the very least. It also forms part of the appraisal process. Observations should support a culture of continuous improvement by assisting individuals in developing their professional practice.

The arrangements for classroom observation will be included in the Monitoring & Evaluation documentation as well as the Appraisal & Capability Policy.

Principles for lesson observations

The principle for observation should be agreed, understood and recorded in the appraisal documentation at the start of the review cycle. The sum total of observation for performance management purposes will amount to no more than three hours. However, if concerns arise during the appraisal cycle there is scope to agree to revise the amount of observation as detailed in the appraisal policy.

Teaching staff will be involved in three formal observations across an academic year. Two during 'Year Group Audit' and the final observation as part of the 'Self-Audit'; encouraging peer support through the 'triangle lesson study' technique.

Education support staff will also be involved in the two formal 'Audit' weeks and the 'Self-Audit'. Observations should include whole class support and leading interventions as appropriate. The peer coaching support offered through 'Self Audit' is also used for support staff observations.

In addition to the above, informal observations take place regularly as part of the day to day school management. Learning Walks by Senior Staff and Ten minute Drop-Ins are both examples of informal observation used across Viking schools.

Observations:

- should be supportive and developmental
- should (where possible) be multi-purpose to minimise the potential burden of observations
- should be undertaken in full accordance with the appraisal policy
- should be preceded by reasonable notice (ideally 5 working days) being given
- should be facilitated by provision of sufficient timetable release time
- should all (as far as is possible) take place at a time agreed between the teacher and observer
- should not take place in PPA time (unless the member of staff wishes to do so)

- should be timetabled to ensure that there is a reasonable amount of time between each observation (irrespective of the findings of those observations)
- should only be undertaken by persons with qualified teacher status (QTS), who have had adequate preparation and training in the appropriate professional skills to undertake observation and to provide constructive and supportive feedback (both oral and written).

Feedback

Feedback following a lesson observation should include a clear judgement on lesson quality and should enable teachers to build on what they are doing well and to feel confident about introducing change where necessary.

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 delivered in confidence during directed time in a suitable, private environment. Adequate time will be made available for both preparation and feedback in respect of classroom observation.

As stated in Monitoring & Evaluation policy, self-evaluation is recognised as a crucial factor in improving performance and raising standards. Therefore, recording observations is encouraged and used for at least one formal observation. Time must be given for the member of staff to watch the recording prior to feedback given.

Written feedback will be provided within 5 working days of the observation taking place. If, during an observation, issues arise that were not part of the documented focus of the observation, these issues should be discussed during oral feedback and also documented within the written feedback.

The written record of feedback will include:

- the date on which the observation took place
- the identity of the observer
- the subject of the lesson observed
- the key targets given as focus for the observation (usually the specific action points from the previous observation)
- whether the observation was formal (eg part of Audit) or informal (Learning Walk)
- If formal - a grade will be given if appropriate

Staff have the right to respond to written feedback and these comments will be saved. All staff have access to all written accounts of their observations and copies will be provided on request.

At Viking, we use 'Key Survey' to record observations for Teachers and Support Staff. (See Appendices)

Appendices

Appendices can be accessed via VAT Share point: Key Survey

Appendix 1

Teacher Lesson Observation: Template

Appendix 2:

Support Staff (Education) Observation: Template