# Quality Assurance
# Lesson Observation Policy

## Clarity Independent School

**Bridge Barn Farm**
**Woodhill Road**
**Sandon**
**CM2 7SG**

**Clarity Independent School is committed to safeguarding...**

*"Our school is committed to our whole-school approach to safeguarding, which ensures that keeping children safe is at the heart of everything we do, and underpins all systems, processes and policies...We promote an environment where children and young people feel empowered to raise concerns and report incidents and we work hard in partnership with pupils, parents and caregivers to keep children safe."*

Clarity Safeguarding Policy September 2026

**Written by Debbie Hanson**

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**Updated by Name:** Debbie Hanson


Bridge Farm Barn, Woodhill Road, Sandon, Chelmsford CM2 7SG Tel: 01245 408606 admin@clarity.essex.sch.uk DfE number: 881/6073

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## Availability

This policy, which applies to the whole school, is publicly available on the school website and upon request, a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from school office.

## Contents

Observations ..... 2
Quality of Questioning ..... 4
Quality of planning and target setting ..... 6
Teaching and learning of higher attaining (HA) pupils ..... 7
Impact of teaching ..... 6
Appendix 1: Lesson Observation Template ..... 7

## Observations

Observations have this primary purpose of developing the skills of all colleagues in enabling success in achieving our learning and teaching objectives. The pupils and our community are likely to benefit from review by line managers when the process is carefully prepared and carried out in a positive, sympathetic, supportive manner. It should help all staff to approach and reflect on their work and their support needs in the light of the school's aims and objectives, the school's Development Plan and the individual's Job Description. Every teacher is unique with a vocation to enrich the school community by their gifts, both personal and professional.

## The Purpose of observations:

- To affirm, foster and celebrate the talents of all colleagues and help them identify, through self-reflection, ways of improving their skills and performance.
- To encourage and assist colleagues in their professional development and career planning, and equip them for their individual roles of leadership, through evaluating their own successes and to define their own weaknesses with the offer of appropriate in-service or external training.
- To help all colleagues to contribute effectively to the school's aim to teach to the highest standards and to improve the quality of education for all students through assisting all staff, teaching and associate staff to realise their potential and to effectively carry out their duties.
- To foster better job satisfaction, including the opportunity to discuss colleagues' job descriptions and to receive clear goals and targets for the future.
- To help those responsible for taking decisions about the management of our school including the use of information for future planning.

Ultimately, this is a means towards enhancing the quality of children's education, as it enables teachers and associate staff to promote spiritual, moral, cultural and physical development of students at Clarity Independent School. The whole school community benefits, since the on-going development of staff is a key factor in the success of our aims.


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The review should be clearly set in the context of our objectives and our work. It is about a particular teacher or support colleague who has particular duties at our school. The nature, purpose and identity of our school provide the specific setting for the review. It will be undertaken on the basis of an established job description. This includes a statement of specific responsibilities and duties, indicating how the individual colleague contributes professional skills to our community, maintaining and developing its distinctive character in the service of our pupils.

The following prompts may be used by staff in ongoing self-reflection and preparation prior to lesson observation and appraisal.


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## Quality of Questioning

| Impact of questioning on pupils' learning, achievement attitudes and behavior | Quality of teachers' questioning |
|---|---|
| • Do pupils adhere to established routines for answering questions and taking turns?<br>• Do pupils recall well?<br>• Do pupils listen carefully to questions?<br>• Are pupils prepared to answer 'incorrectly' at times?<br>• Do all pupils try and answer questions?<br>• Do pupils ask each other questions?<br>• Do pupils listen to each other's answers?<br>• Do pupils build on other pupils' answers?<br>• Are pupils' questions relevant and useful?<br>• Do all pupils have the chance to be involved?<br>• Do pupils provide reasons and justifications for their answers?<br>• Do they politely agree and disagree with each other's answers?<br>• Do they venture answers even when they are uncertain?<br>• What abilities are pupils developing as a result of the questioning? | • Are questions focused on learning objectives and teaching points?<br>• Are clear routines in place as to how pupils should answer questions (e.g. hands up)?<br>• Does teacher monitor the application of routines and provide clear feedback?<br>• Does questioning help focus attention?<br>• Does questioning stimulate involvement?<br>• Does the teacher use effective strategies to ensure that all pupils try and answer?<br>• Are pupils sometimes given time to prepare answers (in groups) during question and answer sessions?<br>• Are volunteers selected to answer questions?<br>• Are conscripts selected to answer questions?<br>• Are questions targeted on all attainment groups?<br>• Are all pupils involved in answering?<br>• Does questioning provide a means to check prior learning and identify learning needs?<br>• Does questioning diagnose learning difficulties?<br>• Does questioning check and stimulate recall?<br>• Does questioning stimulate depth of thinking?<br>• Does questioning review and consolidate the main learning in the lesson?<br>• Does questioning stimulate pupils to express feelings or opinions?<br>• Does questioning encourage pupils to explore ideas?<br>• Does questioning encourage analysis?<br>• Does questioning encourage pupils' evaluation skills?<br>• Are closed questions used well to:<br>o Judge prior knowledge?<br>o Test precise recall?<br>o Aid memorisation?<br>• Are open questions used well to:<br>o Provide opportunity for pupils to show full extent of understanding?<br>o Identify lack of understanding?<br>o Stimulate higher order thinking? |


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| | |
|---|---|
| | o Encourage speaking skills?<br>o Encourage the expression of feelings and emotions?<br>o Are pupils required to question each other?<br>o Are pupils' questions valued?<br>o Are incorrect answers handled sensitively?<br>o Are what, how, why and if questions asked?<br>o Are pupils asked to extend, justify or provide reasons for their answers? |
| ***Does the teacher's questioning promote learning by all pupils?*** | |


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## Quality of planning and target setting

| Impact of planning on pupils' learning, achievement attitudes and behaviour | Quality of teachers' planning |
|---|---|
| • Are all pupils clear about the learning objective for the lesson?<br>• Are pupils clear about where to focus their efforts during the lesson?<br>• Are pupils clear what the teacher is likely to be looking for when he/she looks at work?<br>• Do the pupils have a clear view of what a good piece of work will look like?<br>• From the outset, do the pupils know what the teacher is likely to focus on in the plenary?<br>• Do they know how to improve specific aspects of their work?<br>• Are they able to analyse the strengths and weaknesses in their own work?<br>• Have they all got clear targets to focus efforts?<br>• Do they understand not only what to do, but also why they are doing it and how the work is helping them improve and progress?<br>• Do they recognise the importance and relevance of the task?<br>• Do pupils make good progress in relation to the learning objectives?<br>• Do pupils see links with learning in other lessons? | • What are the specific learning objectives and how are they made explicit and visible:<br>• Are concise learning objectives evident?<br>• Are there too many learning objectives?<br>• Are the learning objectives appropriately differentiated to meet all pupils' learning needs?<br>• Are the learning objectives achievable and the gains in learning measurable during the lesson?<br>• Does the teacher communicate a clear plan and objectives for the lesson at the start of the lesson during the lesson and at the end of the lesson?<br>• Does the teacher communicate the key teaching points for the lesson at the outset, during the lesson and at the end?<br>• Are clear targets for improvement set, reinforced and reviewed with pupils?<br>• Does the teacher review with pupils what they have learned during and at the end of the lesson?<br>• Do teacher interventions relate closely to learning objectives?<br>• Are the teaching points clear: Has the teacher a clear view of what good work will look like? Has the teacher a clear view of what questions will be asked? Does the teacher have a clear view of what vocabulary will be learned?<br>• Common misconceptions clarified and discussed?<br>• Does the teacher provoke deeper understanding & determined and unexpected contributions from some pupils? |
| ***Do pupils know where to focus their efforts to improve?*** | |


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Clarity Independent School

## Teaching and learning of higher attaining (HA) pupils

| Impact of teaching on higher attaining pupils' learning, achievement and attitudes | Quality of provision for higher attaining pupils |
|---|---|
| • Are HA pupils learning as much and as quickly as would be expected?<br>• Are HA pupils clear about what they are intended to learn and why?<br>• Are HA pupils clear about where to focus their efforts during the lesson?<br>• Are HA pupils clear what the teacher is likely to be looking for from them when work is marked?<br>• Do HA pupils know how to improve specific aspects of their work?<br>• Are HA pupils able to analyse the strengths and weaknesses in their own work?<br>• Are HA pupils having less practice at routine tasks?<br>• Do HA pupils find the task interesting and challenging?<br>• Motivated? Productive? Persevere?<br>• Independent? Respond well to challenge?<br>• Do HA pupils apply sufficient intellectual, physical or creative effort in their work?<br>• Are they motivated to do their best and achieve well?<br>• Do they want to know more/ find out more?<br>• Do they show a pride and interest in their classroom and their own and others' work<br>• Do they sustain concentration + motivation?<br>• Are they keen to ask and answer questions?<br>• Do they respond well to a challenge?<br>• Are they keen to work? Keen to answer questions? Keen to get on with the task?<br>• Are they alert and confident?<br>• Do they form constructive relationships with one another and other adults? | *Does teacher show an awareness of learning needs of gifted and talented and HA pupils and make appropriate provision?*<br>• Have higher and highest attaining pupils been recognised?<br>• Does planning take account of learning needs of higher and highest attaining pupils?<br>• Do HA pupils have well matched targets for improvement?<br>• Do HA pupils receive a fair share of teacher time?<br>• Do questions and other interventions extend HA pupils?<br>• Are open-ended challenging tasks and investigations set?<br>• Is the work hard enough?<br>• Does the teacher encourage HA pupils to achieve sufficiently high standards of effort, accuracy and presentation?<br>• Does the teacher inspire in HA pupils imaginative speculation, curiosity and ambition?<br>• Does the teacher provoke deeper understanding & determined and unexpected contributions from HA pupils?<br>• Are HA pupils challenged to make intellectual & imaginative effort & inspired to take new directions?<br>• How clearly has teacher communicated the standards expected?<br>• Are the pupils consistently expected to do their personal best?<br>• Are HA pupils expected to work faster on occasions?<br>• Are HA pupils typically given less routine practice?<br>• Are HA pupils given space to experiment? Are HA pupils required to take risks in learning? |
| ***Are higher attaining and gifted and talented pupils progressing sufficiently and achieving their best?*** | |


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| **Impact: Aspects of teaching and assessment that can influence pupils' learning, achievement, attitudes and behaviour** | |
|---|---|
| **Subject knowledge?**<br>• Subject knowledge secure and confident & used to ensure appropriate challenge & expectations, effective planning, and accurate assessment?<br>• Demonstrations and explanations clear?<br>• Questioning perceptive and based on secure subject knowledge?<br>• Clear understanding of how pupils learn the subject shown?<br>• New ideas well explained?<br>• Accurate use of subject vocabulary?<br>• Questions answered well?<br>• Interesting examples, contexts and first-hand experiences used to support teaching and learning?<br>N.B. Be alert to situations where pupils are misinformed or where knowledge and understanding are not built up systematically.<br>• Planning is based on clear learning objectives and teaching points.<br>• Planning shows evidence of clear understanding of how learning is built up?<br>• Planning supports effective teaching and learning during the lesson?<br>• Planning takes account of learning needs of all groups of pupils?<br>• Learning objectives are clear, specific, concise, achievable and appropriate to pupils' learning needs?<br>• Effective strategies for ensuring that pupils are aware of where to focus their efforts to learn and improve?<br>• Too many learning objectives?<br>**How well do teachers interest, encourage and engage pupils?**<br>• How enthusiastic is the teacher and how is enthusiasm promoted? | **Is maximum learning of core skills promoted?**<br>• Application & development of English, maths and ICT across the curriculum?<br>• Use of quality materials, especially books and literature? Love of books and reading engendered?<br>• Learning over or under-directed?<br>• Beginnings, middles and ends of lessons focus on learning objectives and teaching points?<br>• Teaching focuses on learning more than behaviour?<br>**Use of assessment**<br>• Pupils' work assessed thoroughly and constructively?<br>• Assessment used to inform planning and target setting? Targets regularly reviewed and refined?<br>• Assessment of pupils with SEN thorough and used?<br>• Pupils informed of what they are learning and how they can improve? On-going feedback provided on errors, good work and underachievement?<br>• Targets specific, well matched and referred to often?<br>• Marking and feedback well focused and diagnostic?<br>• Pupils helped to judge the success of their work?<br>**Management of time and behaviour?**<br>• Focus on learning more than behaviour?<br>• Pace good and no learning time wasted?<br>• Clear, high expectations of behaviour are effectively communicated and monitored?<br>• Positive & clear feedback on behaviour and relationships provided?<br>• Clear, efficient organisation of activities and groups? |


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| | |
|---|---|
| • Content and learning real, relevant, imaginative and interesting?<br>• Reluctant learners coached and coaxed?<br>• Pupils encouraged to work independently and carry out new tasks?<br>• Some pupils easily distracted or do most pupils sustain interest and commitment to work?<br>**How well does the teacher challenge pupils, expecting the most of them?**<br>• Teacher committed to getting the best out of pupils?<br>• Questioning, problem setting, choice of materials & resources sufficiently challenging?<br>• Work of all groups of pupils hard enough? Too hard? Too easy?<br>• Praise used effectively to provide feedback and further challenge?<br>**Do methods and resources support effective learning?**<br>• Methods & quality, first-hand resources motivate pupils to develop ideas?<br>• Teaching strategies take account of pupils' differing learning styles?<br>• Grouping based on assessment & conducive to teaching & learning? | • Fair, clear exercise of authority, mutual respect and good work habits/routines?<br>• Behaviour management consistent?<br>N.B. Though classroom management is important, it should not overshadow analysis of learning and achievement. Occasionally, despite effective strategies, the behaviour of one pupil or so defies all reasonable management strategies.<br>**Use of homework (where appropriate)?**<br>• Does work done at home complement work done in class?<br>• Do pupils find homework helpful? Is it well managed? Home reading?<br>• Good feedback on homework provided?<br>**How well do teachers promote equality of opportunity?**<br>• All pupils treated with respect, contributions encouraged and valued?<br>• Methods and resources free from bias and stereotyping and well matched to needs of all pupils. Sensitivity show to individual circumstances, beliefs and cultures?<br>• Teaching has regard for Codes of Practice for SEN and promoting race equality?<br>• Teacher works to overcome barriers to underachievement, e.g. pupils' poor literacy and numeracy skills; low expectations by teacher, parents, other teachers or the pupils themselves; lack of parental involvement in their pupils' education, anti-academic culture and peer pressure; poor attendance?<br>• Planning and teaching take account of learning needs of pupils from ethnic minority groups. |

## Monitoring and review:

This policy will be updated annually in accordance with relevant guidance and regulations.

Overall responsibility for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in **Clarity Independent School** rests with the Head Teacher, Debbie Hanson.


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# Appendix 1: Clarity Lesson Plan Observation Template

### Lesson Observation

NB Print in colour

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Teacher and position** | | **Key** | (Blue = Qualified Teacher (or UQT) level in addition to black) Black - HLTAs |
| **Observer** | | **C** | Competent *or* n/a *or* not observed (n/o) |
| **Age and initials of Learner(s)** | | **FA / PFA** | Focus Areas (or priority focus area) |
| **Lesson Type (e.g. Maths, Literacy, Topic – which subject strength) & length** | | **EBI** | Even better if |
| **Date of Lesson** | | **Observed date (in person or on camera?)** | |

| **Observer comments** |
|---|
| .<br>.<br>.<br>.<br>.<br>. |

**Key:**
Black = Targets desirable in all lessons inc. HLTA.
Blue = Teacher lessons
FA = Focus areas. These are areas to develop your practice further. We'd really like to see you doing these.
PFA = Priority focus areas - these are areas to focus on immediately, as they are required in your role. Try to achieve these as soon as possible. You may be re-observed so that we can see these as soon as possible.
EBI (Even Better If) = Areas to make your practice even better! These are ideas, not compulsory, but doing them will upskill you and give you more tools to use. We would expect teachers / HLTAs to be utilising these and putting them into practice on or following their third lesson observation.


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## Lesson Observation

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| Planning for teaching | C / FA | Feedback (or notes) where appropriate<br>*NB Observer to highlight EBIs to make SMART target writing easier for the teacher!* |
|---|---|---|
| Individual and class timetables are updated and correct on google drive and classroom wall | | |
| Classroom is tidy and well organised, nothing stored on the floor, drawers are labelled, wall displays are up to date and represent each core subject, there is no confidential SEN paperwork around (PEEPs, De-esc plans, OP etc are GDPR safe if displayed and are not printed and stored in paper files (should be locked away)), pupils know where to find their books and resources, there's a 'place for everything.' | | |
| Display boards in classroom (and teacher is responsible for around school) are tidy, well organised to display work and inspire learning. | | |
| Sharps are stored according to sharps audit (ask office for this if unsure) in locked cupboard, correct type and number of each. | | |
| Lesson plans are completed by deadline each week (Thurs am TCH / Fri HLTAs, ready for SLT monitoring by 4pm Tues after) | | |
| Lesson plans are stored neatly organised in google planning folder. | | |
| Previous lesson plan and learner work quality checked. | | |
| Lesson plan uses ***all*** areas of template. | | |
| Intervention targets are clear, on board / in book and an appropriate interpretation | | |


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|---|---|---|
| of assessment (where applicable) | | |
| Date and LO written on board (modelling cursive as school handwriting font) | | |
| Learning objectives are made explicit to pupils and are recorded on lesson plans and in the pupils' books. | | |
| Teacher has identified on planning where relevant individual One Plan targets can be addressed in relation to the learning for each lesson. | | |
| Evidence of addressing One Plan targets is seen in the lesson and made explicit to pupils so that they understand how and when they are meeting a target. | | |
| Clear progression demonstrating cumulative teaching and success criteria for the lesson | | |
| Appropriate annotation of plan to inform future lessons, including how have met success criteria; subject retention and comments on recall at beginning of next lesson | | |
| **Evidence of appropriate teaching and learning** | | |
| Each learner is motivated and inspired, taking ownership of their learning, efforts are made by teacher to specifically engage ***each*** learner if not. | | |
| Appropriate range of activities showing clear differentiation for each learner, including use of ICT | | |
| Teaching of subject specific skills and information, how to avoid common | | |

## Lesson Observation

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| misconceptions is taught | | |
| Wider aspects of literacy/maths included e.g. sentence, text level reading and/or writing, discussion S+L, etc. | | |
| Appropriate activities suitable in terms of needs and age of learner, **which challenge each learner at their own level**. | | |
| Multi-sensory delivery (Visual, Auditory and Kinaesthetic) | | |
| Individual Needs addressed as per pupil profile(s) | | |
| Opportunities for over-learning and automaticity | | |
| Appropriate lesson pace | | |
| Independent learning encouraged and learner responses elicited | | |
| Effective questioning used | | |
| Teacher demonstrates flexibility in lesson | | |
| Well-organised | | |
| Good management of duo/small group and efficient use of time | | |

## Lesson Observation

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|---|---|---|
| Opportunities and evidence that learner is developing independent skills | | |
| Next steps are noted on the lesson plan for each child and in their marked work. Children know the next steps they are to complete. | | |
| Plenary delivered to review the lesson, reinforce learning and link to next lesson | | |
| **Interpersonal skills** | | |
| Professional, relaxed, supportive manner | | |
| Teacher is models good learning skills | | |
| Appropriate body language | | |
| Appropriate feedback and encouragement given | | |
| Teacher listens and responds to learner/s | | |
| Teacher balances nurture with behaviour management well | | |
| Teacher accounts for pupils' special needs according to pupil profile | | |
| Teacher elicits learning through skilful questioning techniques.<br>Directed discovery teaching. | | |
| Pupils encouraged to think critically and learn about learning skills | | |
| Teacher uses support staff efficiently, effectively and with good rapport. | | |
| **Materials** | | |

## Lesson Observation

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|---|---|---|
| Materials appropriate for activities and objectives. | | |
| Materials appropriate for age and abilities of learner. Materials taking into account specific requirements according to assessment, intervention and pupil profile | | |
| Materials well produced and motivating | | |
| **Evaluation and marking (submitted lesson plan)** | | |
| Children have subject specific targets, are involved in their own target setting, are aware of where their attainment sits now in the progressive curriculum, as well as what they need to do next to progress to a more secure level e.g. from Emerging -> Developing -> Secure. | | |
| Teacher self-evaluation demonstrates critical analysis and reflection of lesson | | |
| Lesson plans show 'next steps' which then appear on future planning | | |
| Marking is according to school marking policy and uses the class stampers (shows achievement, progress and what to do further). Some part of lesson used to review comments / marking from previous lesson. | | |
| Evidence of a range of marking used; peer, teacher, oral feedback | | |

| **Teacher comments following observation** |
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## Lesson Observation

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| Decision (tick as appropriate) | | Support Requirements (complete with DH and / or SA input) |
|---|---|---|
| Competent | | **Priority FAs:** |
| No. of Priority Focus Areas | | **FAs:** |
| Re-observe at next appraisal | | |
| Re-observe priority focus areas | | **EBIs:** |