

Medlock Primary School



Learning Walk and Observation Policy

Ratified: September 2021

For Review: 2024

School Ethos

Medlock prides itself on its collegiate and open ethos. School has an open door feel: all staff are free to enter teaching spaces and engage with the learning that is occurring at that time. Professional discussions are encouraged and every exchange between professionals is seen as an opportunity for skills development, better pedagogical understanding and growth of subject knowledge.

This policy should be viewed as an opportunity to put this ethos into practice.

Learning Walks

Learning walks are purposeful “walk-throughs” of the school which can take in any learning space, including classrooms, intervention spaces and corridors.

The school's Teaching Principles document will be the primary reference point for all learning walks but other documents may also be used to inform the focus of the learning walk including (but not exclusively) Medlock policy documents, the school's curriculum documents and local authority QA proforma.

Learning walks may take place in order to collect evidence about teaching and learning, evidence of progress to developmental areas and to identify areas for school development.

Learning Walks are developmental and constructive rather than judgemental and are a whole-school / whole phase / whole subject improvement activity. All report writing and feedback based on the learning walk will be reported as such. Teaching staff are welcome to ask for more specific and individual feedback which they are free to use to support performance management and appraisal goals if they so wish. It will then be agreed what format this will take to ensure no member of staff has any additional workload.

All Learning Walk reports will follow the Medlock template (see Appendix 1a for year 1 to 6 and Appendix 1b for EY) and then shared with all relevant staff. Learning Walk reports will be used to support quality assurance and school self evaluation judgements as well as informing information presented to governors and other agencies.

Learning walks will always be planned and the scheduled time and focus will be made available in advance by direct email and on the calendar. It will also be clear who will be performing the learning walk. The school's ambition is that no later than 2 weeks notice will be given of any learning walk, however, there may be times where this is not possible. In such an event the reason for 'short notice' will be communicated to staff.

Who goes on a learning walk?

- Staff
- Pupils / Pupil Leaders
- Governors
- Local Authority Representatives
- Commissioned school improvement professionals.

Although learning walks do not 'judge' the performance of a specific teacher / teaching assistant, where a significant breach of school policy or the professional standards is observed this will be informally flagged with the member of staff. It may be decided that more formal observations are then instigated.

Observations

Medlock Primary School 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
- evaluate objectively
- report accurately and fairly.

All observations will be planned and the scheduled time and focus will be agreed in advance between the observer and observee. When scheduling observations, due consideration will be made to all parties timetabled commitments. All observations should take place with no less than 5 days notice.

The school's Teaching Principles document will be the primary reference point for all observations but other documents may also be used including (but not exclusively) school policy documents, the school's curriculum documents and local authority QA documents.

The information gathered during the observation will be used for multiple purposes, including informing school self-evaluation and school improvement strategies. It can also be submitted by the observee as evidence of meeting appraisal goals / teaching standards for performance management and appraisal purposes.

For the majority of teaching staff, the total time they will be asked to perform sessions that will be observed will not exceed 3 hours across the academic year. However, teachers are encouraged (as part of their own professional development) to request informal and formal observations to support their own development and the quality of teaching and Learning in their classes.

Legacy NQT and ECF teachers will however be observed in line with the requirements of their programmes. In addition, teachers who are subject to a competency plan may be required to have / request additional observations in order to evidence progress to meeting any identified developmental areas in their competency plans.

Who may participate in an observation?

- Teachers
- Subject Leaders
- School Leaders
- Local Authority Representatives
- Commissioned school improvement professionals.

Oral Feedback of an observed session will be given within 24 hours at a time that is mutually agreed. Written feedback will be provided within 5 days of the observation. All feedback reports will be completed on the Medlock template (see Appendix 2).

Learning Walk

learning walk evidence			
Member(s) of staff observed			
Observer(s)			
Date and time			
Subject		Year/Class	

focus of walk/ key questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

questions with pupils	
Pupil(s) spoken to	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils are positive about this subject • Pupils are motivated to learn • Pupils know what they're learning about, not just what they're doing • Pupils are aware of their strengths/weaknesses in this subject • Pupils feel they get helpful feedback from the teacher <p>Additional comments:</p>	

learning environment

- The environment is uncluttered and there is nothing to impede learning
- The seating arrangement enables all children to see teacher
- Displays reflect current topics and support learning
- Displays reflect the work of all pupils
- Scaffolds and prompts for learning are clearly visible in the classroom
- Resources to support learning are readily available (e.g. dictionaries, number lines)

Additional comments:

Teaching and Learning Principles

- Challenge for all
- Dialogic teaching
- Scholarship
- Sequencing of Learning
- Metacognition.

Additional comments:

Marking and Feedback

- Praise and verbal feedback is used effectively and in line with the school's marking and assessment policy
- There is a range of assessment types, including peer-to-peer feedback, self-directed assessment, teacher-led assessment, quality questioning
- It is clear how learning objectives and success criteria are being applied to promote pupils' learning
- Active classroom assessment takes place and moves pupils' understanding forward.

Additional comments:

behaviour

- Pupils' behaviour is managed well
- There are clear rules that are consistently enforced

Additional comments:

book scrutiny

- Pupils are making progress and their work is improving
- Marking adheres to the school's policy

Additional comments:

summary of learning walk

What went well	Even better if

EYFS Learning walk evidence			
Member(s) of staff observed			
Observer(s)			
Date and time			
Prime/specific area of learning and development		EYFS class:	

Focus of the walk/key questions
•

Questions with children	
Children spoken to	<i>eg, 3 boys, 2 girls</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are positive about their experiences • Children are motivated to learn, play and explore • Children know what they're doing and begin to acknowledge that they're learning • Children are increasingly aware of their strengths and emerging preference • Children feel they get help from adults when needed <p>Additional comments:</p>	

Learning environment

- Indoor and outdoor activities complement each other
- Appropriate resources are available for the children to access independently
- Children have the physical space and tools they need to support effective learning
- The environment is secure and there are no safeguarding concerns (i.e., no obstructed views)

Additional comments:

Differentiation and challenge

Planning demonstrates materials/strategies to stretch more able pupils

Pupils with SEN and EAL are well supported

Key groups of pupils (i.e., disadvantaged pupils) are known to staff and appropriate provision is in place

Children experience a range of curriculum activities

Additional comments:

Adult interactions

- Adults use a variety of interaction strategies
- Prompts/scaffolding is used effectively
- All groups in the class are engaged
- The pace of activities ensures maximum engagement for all children
- There is an appropriate balance of child and adult-initiated activities

Additional comments:

Characteristics of effective learning and behaviour

- Behaviour is well managed
- There are clear rules and these are consistently enforced
- Children are displaying the characteristics of effective learning

Additional comments:

Communication and language

- The learning environments encourage language development
- Children are supported and encouraged to express themselves and build confidence
- Children have the opportunity to speak and listen in a range of situation
- Staff consider each child's communication and language needs

Additional comments:

Physical development

- Children have the opportunity to develop coordination, control and quality of movement
- Children are helped to understand the importance of physical activity and healthy eating
- Children are active and interactive

Additional comments:

Personal, social and emotional development

Children are helped to form positive relationships and develop respect for others

Children are helped to develop a positive sense of themselves

Children are helped to learn how to develop social skills and manage their feelings

Children are helped to develop confidence in their own abilities

Additional comments:

summary of learning walk

What went well

Even better if

lesson details

Teacher:

Observer:

Class:

Year:

Date:

Support staff or teaching assistants:

Focus:

Context:

Summary of main points:

Key strengths:

Areas for development:

Is any follow-up required? YES/NO

If 'YES', outline required action:

Action completion date: