



Lesson Observation Policy

Vision

Samuel Whitbread Academy's vision is to ensure all students and staff will become the **BEST** that they can be.

Aim

We aim for lesson observations and learning walks to be developmental and supportive: 'To improve, not prove'. Observations and subsequent feedback will enable **all** teachers to create a classroom environment in which **all** students are given opportunities to achieve and excel.

Definitions:

Learning / Tutor walk definition: These will be calendared and conducted by an allocated member of staff and will focus on the Academy's classroom expectations. They will be used to monitor how our CPDL has been put into practice. There will be no data collected on individuals and they will last no longer than 10 minutes. The holistic outcomes will support to identify whole school trends and patterns, allowing for future, effective CPDL to be planned.

Lesson observation definition: These will be conducted by a qualified teacher and will focus on the implementation of the SWA Teaching & Learning Ladder and how this and our SWA T&L Principles are being effectively used to improve student outcomes. Teachers will receive individual, written feedback and the information gathered will support them to improve their practice, as this is their professional entitlement.

Lesson Observations

Our shared goal is to ensure 'Quality First Teaching' through observations, learning walks and the subsequent feedback which inhabits our mantra of 'to improve, not prove.' Lesson observations and learning walks, therefore, will be carried out with professionalism, integrity and courtesy. Before any lesson observation is conducted, there will be an optional opportunity for the observer and teacher to meet during calendared time so that the context / focus of the lesson to be observed can be discussed.

Planning and preparing for observation:

In keeping with SWA's commitment to a supportive and developmental lesson observation,

- the pattern of classroom observation will be published as calendared windows each academic year
- there will be a limit of three lesson observations and the total time for lesson observations will not exceed three hours per academic year
- each of the three lesson observations will not exceed 60 minutes, but will be a minimum of 25 minutes.
- for classroom observations, the observer will provide professional verbal and written feedback and support to improve pedagogy and practice

Feedback and records

Feedback will be given within the calendared observation window in a suitable environment. Best practice is for staff to receive verbal feedback during the next working day and written feedback within five working days. Written feedback will be provided via the SWA lesson observation feedback form. If issues emerged 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.

SWA lesson observation feedback form:

To promote a coaching culture the form has been designed to enable collaborative conversations,

- the observer completes the lesson observation form during the observation
- both teacher and observer complete through a collaborative approach the area of future focus.
- the teacher has the right to append written comments on the feedback document.
- teachers will have access to all written accounts of the observation and a subsequent copy will be held by the staffing team.

Following an observation, if needed, CPDL support will be underpinned by the Teaching Standards and may include mentoring, team teaching, Iris coaching, informal / formal support plans, all designed to improve practice. A single lesson observation will not lead to the BEST capability policy being actioned.

Learning / Tutor walks:

In keeping with SWA's commitment to a supportive and developmental learning / tutor walk,

- learning walks will record department / year group holistic trends and patterns and not individual data
- they will focus on habitual routines and high expectations as outlined in the Teaching & Learning Policy
- they will identify best practice that can be shared
- the summary findings will be shared with senior and middle leaders and any CPDL agreed

Professional workload

To deliver SWA's commitment to minimising professional workload, the information gathered will be used for multiple purposes, including informing school self-evaluation and school improvement strategies. This will enable the evaluation of the standards of teaching and learning; inform future CPDL, and ensure that proper standards of professional performance are established and maintained.

Author and Date

Vice Principal – Ian Butler - Sept 2025

Vice Principal - Charlotte Linehan - July 2024

Assistant Principal (ESF) – October 2025

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Next review date – October 2026

Links to Policies

Teaching and Learning policy

CPDL Policy

Assessment Policy

Marking and Feedback Policy

Professional Development Policy

Teaching Standards

NEU/NASUWT Model policy Classroom Observation