

Learning and Teaching Policy

Quality Assurance Procedure

Elm House School believes that the main engine of school improvement is providing outstanding learning. This is a key strategic priority and Elm House School expects all teachers to aspire to the highest standards of classroom performance at all times. We are committed to raising performance through continuous professional development, coaching and disseminating best practice.

When monitoring learning and teaching we will ensure that principles are promoted which provide pupils with a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England and that partisan political views are not promoted in the teaching of any subject in the school.

In order to quality assure teaching and learning in Elm House School, the following processes will occur.

Lesson Observations

Elm House School is a learning environment and we encourage all staff to develop joint practice and frequently arrange informal opportunities to peer observe, peer plan and peer assess. We believe in an open-door policy where staff welcome other colleagues into their classrooms to share pedagogy. Whether the Elm House School observation proformas are used in informal observation is a discussion between the two professionals.

To quality assure the experience that our pupils receive, it is necessary for formal observations of teaching and learning to take place regularly. These observations would normally involve some period of notice but Elm House School reserves the right to observe without warning if there are concerns at the quality of teaching and learning taking place.

Quality of Teaching and Learning	<u>Minimum</u> number of Lesson Observations per term	<u>Minimum</u> Expectations of Planning
OUTSTANDING	Once per term, if first two observations are outstanding no term 3 observation	Daily Planning pro-forma completed for all classes. Full Elm House School lesson pro-forma completed for formal lesson observations.
GOOD	Once per term	Daily Planning pro-forma completed for all classes.

		Full Elm House School lesson pro-forma completed for formal lesson observations.
REQUIRED TO IMPROVE	Three per term If three lesson observations are judged to be 'required to improve' within any two-term cycle then it is likely that the teacher will be moved to capability (see below).	Daily Planning pro-forma completed for all classes. Full Elm House School lesson pro-forma completed for all lessons with class identified as either not making sufficient progress or challenging and during formal lesson observations. Records checked for Appraisal purposes.
CAPABILITY	Four per term	Daily planning pro-forma completed for all classes. Full Elm House School lesson pro-forma completed for ALL lessons with all classes.

It is the Elm House School policy that during Ofsted inspections and visits from the DfE all lessons should be planned to use the Elm House School lesson planning sheets and should be made available to any visiting inspector.

The Elm House School Teacher Appraisal Policy specifies that all teachers must include a target for the improvement of teaching and learning during the Teacher Appraisal cycle (October to October). For example, if a teacher is securely 'Required to Improve' (3A) at the beginning of the Teacher Appraisal cycle then by the end of the cycle that teacher should be securely good. For outstanding practitioners the target will be to maintain a high level of performance in all lessons (2A) and be able to regularly demonstrate 'Outstanding' features. A formal lesson observation record must be kept as part of this process.

In order to select the appropriate number of observations for a cycle, a teacher's previous observations will be analysed. For example if a teacher deemed 'Outstanding' delivers two 'Good' lessons and one 'Outstanding' lessons during the current cycle for the next cycle he/she would be judged as 'Good' and would need to meet the expectations of 'Good' as outlined above.

Other processes, such as school Health Checks, visits by OFSTED/DfE may mean that teachers are seen more frequently and we will look to ensure that such additional observations are not unreasonable in their scale. The judgement on this will be made by the Headteacher in conversation with the individual concerned. All formal observations must lead to a quality feedback session within 48 hours of the observation. This learning conversation is **vital** to performance improvement and should take place in a quiet location so that professional dialogue can occur. Copies of the observation checklist and observation notes should be made available to the member of staff who has been observed (see Elm House School Teacher Appraisal Policy).

Where practice is deemed to be falling below the standard that is required of a teacher within Elm House School, additional observations will occur. These standards are based on the DfE's Teaching Standards. The following progression rates should be achieved in order to advance learning to the level expected:

Where formal observations highlight inadequate practice or performance below the level indicated in the skill descriptors for teachers, the following process will be put in place:

- Step 1: Another formal observation within 1 week of the inadequate observation. This observation should demonstrate learning from the feedback given after the initial inadequate observation. Coaching pathways and/or support set up if required.
- Step 2: If teaching is still deemed to be inadequate another formal observation must occur within 2 weeks, this will be as part of the Halliwell 'Going for Good' programme. If practice is still inadequate following this observation the first stage of the Capability procedure will be triggered. An intervention support plan will be produced as part of this informal stage.

Where, under Teacher Appraisal processes, teachers are not making the expected progress, for example failing to progress from Required To Improve to Good over the course of a cycle, a 6-week intervention process will be put in place, to seek to raise teaching up to the required level. If teaching does not progress following the Teacher Appraisal process, then this may trigger the informal stage of the capability procedure. If any qualified teacher delivers three lesson observations at 'required to improve' within any two half term cycles a similar process will be instigated.

Support and strategies to secure successful teaching and learning should run throughout the staged process outlined above, if necessary, above and beyond the usual formal mentoring processes.

Partisan Political Views

Any staff member found to be promoting the political indoctrination of pupils through the curriculum will be subject to disciplinary procedures. It does not mean that political themes which are covered in subjects such as History, Geography, English, Religious Education or modern foreign languages cannot be discussed. Pupils should not be prevented from being exposed to political views or from discussing political issues in school, but they should not be actively encouraged by teachers or others to support particular political ideologies or viewpoints.

Please refer to 'Promoting Fundamental British Values' policy for more detailed information.

Policy review

This policy document will be reviewed by the Education Director on an annual basis to ensure it is up to date with current legislation and best practice.

Date approved: April 2014

Date last reviewed: September 2025

Next review (or before): September 2026

Signed: 

Position: Education Director

Staff Acknowledgement

In signing this document I am confirming I have read the information and have an understanding of the procedures outlined within the information provided.

I have had the opportunity to discuss this document with a Senior Leadership member of staff to gain further clarity.

I also know that if I feel I need further guidance I know I can access through the Head of Education.

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