



# JEDDAH PREP AND GRAMMAR SCHOOL

## Observations and Work Scrutiny

Observation of lessons and scrutiny of written work and assessment by peers and managers should be a normal and regular occurrence at Jeddah Prep and Grammar School. Observation of lessons and work scrutiny takes place to ensure high standards of teaching and learning in the school, and to share useful and effective techniques. Colleagues are welcomed to observe others, and cover will be routinely provided to support this if at all possible. It should not be a threatening or unpleasant occurrence but a chance to share and discuss teaching practices with colleagues. In the same vein, scrutiny of work must take place to ensure standards of teaching are high, the range of progress of students is appropriate and that School policies and procedures of homework and marking are being adhered to. Teachers within a Key Stage are encouraged to compare students' work and marking, and standardisation of levels and grades must be undertaken for formal assessments.

Comparison of practice can stem from the normal practice of brief visits to a parallel teacher during the working day, informal sessions within a Key Stage, or more formal scheduled observations from Heads of Department, KS Coordinators and/or members of SLT. We should also consider the role of external Inspectors from the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia and International Accreditation bodies.

### **Frequency of Observation and Scrutiny**

Observation of lessons should be common practice. All members of the Academic Staff are encouraged to observe others during term. Over the course of an academic year, it is suggested that each Teacher undertakes two peer observations. One within their Key Stage/Subject Department and one in another area. Teaching Assistants are likewise encouraged to do the same, although this may take the form of swaps with another TA for an agreed group of lessons. Notification of intent to undertake peer observations should be logged with the Head of School, and cover implications if any. Sufficient prior warning (48 hours minimum) must be given if cover is required.

Formal lesson observation from team leaders and managers should take place for all colleagues, including teachers and Teaching assistants, although these may be combined in observation of a team in operation in a normal classroom situation.

School expectations are that each teacher in the group is observed formally by a leader and/or manager at least three times per year.

- **One full observation with advance notice by SLT**
- **One full observation with minimal notice by HoD/ KSCo**

Drop in observations which follow the Learning Walk format will be on-going and frequent throughout the year from any member of SLT and/or Head of Department and/or KS Coordinator. The other two formal observations will take the majority or entirety of a lesson. It is preferable if the Observer can be present close to the start of the lesson. They should be no shorter than forty minutes. One observation should be arranged with advance warning, whilst the other should take place with no more than a day's notice.

Work sampling may take the form of checking either a sample of above average, median or below average work from a class, year group or subject, or all work from the same. Managers and team leaders should provide notice of sampling periods in order to ensure the Class Teacher is not deprived of exercise books or the like during lessons, thus preventing any negative impact on the pupils.

### **Nature of Observation**

Lesson observations will focus on five overall key areas: Learning, Teaching, Pupils, Assessment and Environment. Each section contains a large number of sub-sections which support grading and conclusions. Examples of particular strength or areas required for development in sub-groups will be marked when observed, and reasons for this judgement are stated, with a brief example or illustration provided.

### **Planning**

Peer observations will not require individual lesson plans to be produced during the lesson, but colleagues are encouraged to share plans and they should be part of the discussion between peers after the observation has taken place. When formal observations take place, the member of staff should provide both the overall weekly plan and/or where this fits into a scheme of work (SoW) and the individual lesson plan, either in advance by email or in hardcopy at the start of the observation. Copies of additional resources such as notes or worksheets are also appreciated. Plans should show learning objectives, success criteria, intended timings and differentiated activities where and when relevant and required.

Colleagues should not fear to deviate from plans if the nature of the lesson or pupil response suggests a better or more appropriate response. Improvisation is a necessary skill in teaching and evidence of this will not be viewed negatively. Such a situation does not need to be indicated to the observer during the lesson as it may disrupt the flow and pace of teaching, but is likely to be discussed in feedback sessions.

### **Feedback Procedure**

Feedback following observation and sampling is essential to support and inform colleagues, and promote discussion. Feedback must be supportive and constructive in order to be useful. The degree of subject specialism and level of experience in our fields should be taken into account. The nature of feedback will vary depending on the role of the observer/inspector. Peer observations are best organised at times where both parties can stop to discuss the lesson directly afterwards, and the aspiration should be that a discussion can take place within 24 hours of the observation. Records of the discussion are not necessarily required unless specifically requested.

For team leaders and managers, an email response detailing aspects of the observation should be sent within 24 hours. The following points indicate what should be covered.

- Date, time and description of the Lesson
- Summative comments on aspects of the lesson
- Role and effectiveness of Teaching Assistants or EAL Support (if appropriate)
- Identification of areas for attention and future development, with simple suggestions
- Request to schedule a one to one meeting

Following receipt of this email, a private meeting should be held within one week of the observation under normal circumstances, where the teacher and observer will discuss the nature of the lesson, using the observation pro-forma and any other notes made. The purpose of this is to provide a chance for a useful private dialogue between members of staff to take place. In such an environment, acknowledgement of good practice, advice, tips and concerns may be shared. All members of staff must expect that their opinion regarding judgements and opinion can be raised and will be listened to, but that grades and judgements will be shared with the Headmaster as a matter of routine, and other members of SLT in some instances. Such meetings will be usually no more than twenty minutes in length unless causes for concern and/or disagreement between colleagues have occurred.

If causes for concern have been identified in the feedback, it may be necessary for further observations and meetings to take place, and more senior colleagues to be asked to undertake similar observations. These should take place after the colleague has had sufficient time to take advice into account and build it into future planning. A two-week break between first and second observation is advised to enable a full weekly planning cycle to pass.

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