

Lesson Observation Guidance for Teachers



What are the aims of the lesson observation process?

The observation process aims to:

- Monitor the musical and non-musical outcomes of the Flagship Schools Programme
- Identify areas where teachers may need support and use this to inform future plans
- Enhance the quality of teaching and learning
- Promote consistently high professional standards
- Provide teachers with the opportunity to engage in professional dialogue about their practice

Observations may be carried out by internal staff or external expert musicians and educators. In all cases, verbal feedback will be provided to the teacher. However, the observation process is about monitoring the programme, not individual teachers, and as such we do not provide teachers with written feedback or set them targets. Teachers are welcome to take notes during the feedback meeting, and the observer will take notes to support the Music Masters Programmes Team in monitoring the outcomes of the Flagship Schools Programme.

The process

Preparation

The Music Masters team will pair teachers with appropriate observers and put together a timetable for the observation. All observers will receive this toolkit, and external observers will also receive the Visitor Guidance. Observers will look at the teachers' assessments prior to the observation so that they have some understanding of the context.



Lesson Observation

The observation will usually be a group lesson, or consecutive individual/paired lessons.



Discussion

The observer and the teacher will have an informal discussion so that both parties can reflect on the lesson – ideally immediately after the lesson or at another point during the school day, or if necessary in a Zoom meeting.

What will the observer be looking for during the lesson?

In order to promote consistency and transparency in the approach to lesson observations, observers are given guidance on what to look for.

Music Masters teachers bring a wealth of individual expertise and creativity to their role, and therefore observers will see a variety of teaching styles and approaches in action when watching lessons. We embrace this variety and do not seek to standardise teaching approaches across our schools. However, we do seek consistent standards in terms of the following four themes:

- **Professional behaviours** for Music Masters teachers;
- Commitment to **progression**, in terms of students' development of skills and breadth of musical learning;
- Creating an effective **learning environment**, including productive use of lesson time, structured planning, assessing and giving feedback;
- **Outcomes** (both musical and non-musical) for students, as laid out in the [Music Masters Curriculum and Assessment Framework](#).

We ask that observers consider points related to these four themes when carrying out lesson observations. The Lesson Themes chart on the following page includes some prompts for them to consider. This is not a checklist to be ticked off; these are simply suggestions of what to look for. Observers will of course have their own thoughts and opinions about the teaching they see and are encouraged to express things that do not sit neatly within these themes.

Professional behaviours

- Does the teacher have positive, respectful relationships with students?
- Does the teacher promote a positive culture of safeguarding?
- Does the teacher begin and end lessons on time?

Progression

- Is the lesson focused on developing musical skills?
- Is there a good balance of learning in different areas of the Music Masters curriculum (singing/playing/musical terminology and understanding/rhythm and pulse/improvising and composing/listening and reflecting)?
- Are activities differentiated so that all students can make progress?

Lesson Themes

Learning environment

- Are activities well planned and structured?
- Does the lesson have a good pace?
- Is time used well?
- Are learning objectives communicated clearly to students (and other adults)?
- Does the teacher assess the students' understanding and proficiency and provide appropriate feedback and support?
- Where appropriate, are students given guidance about how to practise outside of the lesson?

Outcomes

- Are students engaged?
- Do they understand what they are learning, and why?
- Are students' **musical outcomes** in line with the expectations of the Music Masters Curriculum Framework? If not, can teachers articulate their revised expectations and reasons behind them?
- Are students demonstrating the **non-musical outcomes** of the Music Masters Curriculum Framework?