Guidance on judging the quality of Learning and Teaching

The overall judgement will be a ‘best fit’ of the descriptions below, except in the case on an inadequate lesson where particular conditions mean that the lesson cannot be satisfactory.

Observations should focus on pupil outcomes and progress.

Outstanding
- All learners are engrossed in their work and almost all make rapid and sustained progress.
- Achievement is very high.
- Teaching is at least good in all major respects and is exemplary in significant elements.
- Teaching is stimulating, inspiring, imaginative, enthusiastic and consistently challenging stemming from expert knowledge of the curriculum and how to teach it.
- Teaching reflects a very good understanding of how pupils learn and how to adjust the curriculum to promote full access.
- Every opportunity is taken to successfully develop crucial skills, including being able to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.
- Astute planning is based on systematic, accurate assessment of pupils’ prior skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Sharply focused, timely support and intervention match individual needs accurately.
- The teacher has consistently high expectations of all pupils.
- There are excellent relationships and attitudes to learning in the classroom.
- Time is used very productively for independent and collaborative work.
- Activities and demands are matched sensitively to pupils’ needs.
- Resources, including new technology, make a marked contribution to the quality of learning.
- Precisely targeted teaching assistants, and paired or joint teaching, reinforce and strongly support learning.
- Teaching promotes pupils’ high levels of resilience, confidence and independence when they tackle challenging activities.
- Difficult ideas or skills are taught in an inspiring way.
- Assessment of pupils’ work successfully underpins the teaching and learners have a clear idea of how to improve.
- Teachers systematically and effectively check pupils’ understanding throughout the lesson, anticipating where they may need to intervene and doing so with notable impact on the quality of learning.
- Homework is an integral part of the learning process and takes pupils onto the next steps and is regular.

Good
- Most pupils make good progress and achieve well over time.
- Pupils are motivated and engaged.
- Teaching is imaginative, well informed, confident, precise, and leads to a good level of interest from almost all pupils.
- The teacher has high expectations of all pupils.
Lessons deepen pupils’ knowledge and understanding
Pupils are confident, feel secure, have positive attitudes to learning and communicate well with others.
Behaviour overall is good and pupils are keen to get on with their work in a secure and friendly environment in which they can thrive.
Individual needs are well catered for.
Accurate assessment of pupils’ prior skills, knowledge and understanding informs teachers planning and helps them to set challenging tasks.
Targeted support and intervention enables pupils to learn effectively.
Pupils have suitable opportunities to make choices, learn to be more independent and work cooperatively with others.
Teaching generally promotes pupils’ resilience, confidence and independence when tackling challenging activities.
The teacher regularly listens astutely to, carefully observes and skilfully questions groups of pupils and individuals during lessons in order to reshape tasks and explanations to improve learning.
Pupils are provided with detailed feedback, both orally and through marking so they know what they have done and what they need to do to improve.
Pupils are guided to assess their work themselves.
Pupils work at a good pace.
The level of challenge stretches pupils without inhibiting.
Support staff and additional adults are well deployed, enthuse and motivate pupils, and make a significant contribution to pupil progress.
Adults relate well to pupils and expect them to work hard; the level of challenge is realistic and pupils are productive or make continuous efforts to be so.
Staff understand the next steps pupils need to take in their learning and they provide a wide range of activities to help them to do so.
Homework is challenging and extends what is learned in lessons.

Requires Improvement
Most pupils’ learning and progress are at least satisfactory.
Pupils show interest in their work and have a positive attitude to learning.
Teaching is accurate; teachers and other staff have a secure understanding of the curriculum and the teaching of key skills.
Teachers monitor pupils’ work during lessons, picking up any general misconceptions and adjust their plans accordingly to support learning.
Behaviour is generally satisfactory and, even where a minority is disruptive, this is not sufficient to cause the progress of most learners to be unsatisfactory.
They seek to make work interesting and varied, and they involve pupils productively.
Pupils work steadily and occasionally show high levels of enthusiasm and interest
Pupils understand what they are expected to do, and tasks have sufficient challenge to keep them working well, independently or cooperatively.
Pupils are given some scope to make choices and use their own ideas.
Regular and accurate assessment informs planning and generally meets the needs of all groups of pupils.
Pupils are informed about the progress they are making and how to improve further through timely marking and dialogue.
• The school provides satisfactorily for pupils who do not respond well to who have difficulties in learning or behaving.
• Relationships are constructive and there is sensitivity to the needs of individuals and groups.
• Little time is wasted
• Support staff and additional adults are effectively managed and make a sound contribution to pupils’ learning.
• Homework extends class learning well.

**Inadequate**

• Pupils generally, or particular groups of them, do not make adequate progress.
• Pupils do not enjoy their work.
• Behaviour is often inappropriate.
• Teachers’ knowledge is inadequate.
• The level of challenge is wrongly pitched.
• Teaching fails to excite, enthuse, engage or motivate particular groups of pupils.
• Learning activities are not sufficiently matched to the needs of pupils.
• Teaching methods do not sufficiently engage and encourage learners.
• Pupils are excessively passive.
• Too many pupils fail to work effectively unless closely directed by an adult and give up easily.
• Assessment is not frequent or accurate enough to monitor progress
• Assessment takes too little account of the pupils’ prior learning or their understanding of tasks.
• Pupils do not know how to improve
• Teaching Assistants and resources are inadequately utilised to support learning
• Homework does not extend class learning