



Queen Berengaria School

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*Children are at the heart of all we do*

## Monitoring Quality and Standards Policy

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### 1. Aims

To inform strategic school decision making at all levels to secure consistent school improvement and high performance.

### 2. Definition

Monitoring refers to all activities undertaken with the purpose of gathering information or evidence about learning and teaching standards, and the factors affecting them, in school. Effective monitoring leads to informed evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for future development.

### 3. Monitoring Activities

**Monitoring at QBS takes place in the following ways:**

- a. through self-reflection tools/activities
- b. scrutiny of teachers' planning and classrooms
- c. through observation of teaching and learning in classrooms and in the wider school environment
- d. through scrutiny and moderation of children's work
- e. through a 'deep dive' activity
- f. through discussions with learners – pupils voice
- g. through discussions with staff and staff feedback
- h. through discussions with parents and parental feedback
- i. through parental and pupil surveys and questionnaires
- j. through data analysis, review and setting SMART targets
- k. through learning walks, including staff, pupils, and School Governance Committee members.

**Appendix A - D provides examples to guide thinking, and suggests useful questions to consider when conducting monitoring activities.**

#### **4. Timing**

An annual programme of monitoring activities will be devised and agreed at the beginning of the new school year. These activities may take place discretely or may be combined in the form of 'Learning Walks', deep dives, and/or scrutiny of work/planning.

#### **5. Who is involved?**

Monitoring can be undertaken by members of staff when designated by the Headteacher or Line Manager. It is also good practice to involve a range of stake holders to achieve a balanced and objective range of evidence to base decisions and outcomes. The following individuals will have monitoring outcomes as a core responsibility within their role.

- Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher
- SEND Coordinator
- Subject Leaders
- School Governance Committee Members
- Visitors to school, such as DCS advisors/inspectors, moderators and visiting Headteachers.

#### **6. Principles for effective monitoring**

**Shared Understanding:** To be effective, the format of any monitoring activities must be mutually agreed and understood between all those involved. The format will vary according to the purpose and focus of the activity.

**Clarity:** All monitoring activities should have a clear agreed focus.

Some examples of foci are:

- Learning standards in individual curriculum area/subject across the school
- Elements of a subject across the school, e.g. Scientific enquiry, deep dive in reading, phonics teaching and learning
- Elements of teaching e.g. Differentiation, questioning, promoting thinking skills
- Elements of learning e.g. Co-operation and collaboration in groups, perseverance, independence, problem solving etc;
- Leadership capacity and impact

**Breadth:** Over time, monitoring should embrace wide ranging aspects of school life both within and beyond the classroom.

**Focus:** The priorities set out within the School Improvement and Action Plans are critical whole school monitoring priorities. Other aspects may be monitored by curriculum/subject leaders as and when necessary in order to help build a whole school picture of learning and standards.

## 7. Levels of monitoring

**Whole School Level** - This is led by the Leadership Team, which comprises headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteachers and key stage leaders. It will also involve other staff members as and when necessary. Whole school monitoring evaluates the impact of key initiatives within the School Improvement and Action Plans (SI/AP). There will be areas of school life that may not be on a SIP but will always be monitored on a strategic level by senior leaders/governors, (e.g. behaviour, safeguarding, SEND, attendance). Classroom observations and scrutiny of children's work at this level will also inform Performance Management. All staff are made aware when this is the case.

**Curriculum/Subject Level** - As part of their curriculum/subject leadership role coordinators, ambassadors, monitor their subject/s area (s) to glean the fullest possible picture of standards and achievement across the whole first school age range. In addition, a better judgement about the overall quality of the education delivered by a school can be made. Curriculum/Subject Leaders also need to consider continuity and progression of learning, curricular breadth and balance and use of resources across the school. Curriculum/Subject Leaders are given time in which to undertake these activities, and to collate the evidence which informs their findings. Time allowed for monitoring will depend on priorities identified. Priorities should align with whole-school priorities

**Headteacher/Individual Governor Level** - As well as playing a part in whole school strategic monitoring, the headteacher and individual member of the SGC may also carry out additional monitoring activities as and when necessary in response to the changing needs and circumstances of the school. All of the above principles still apply.

**Defence Children Services (DCS) Level** - DCS members, enables DCS to glean a clear and up to date impression of learning, standards, and teaching approaches across the school. DCS members, usually link School Improvement Advisors (SIA) and Assistant Chief Education Officers (ACEO), will already have established a professional working relationship with their schools. Therefore, as a result of monitoring activities, DCS members engage in a purposeful and constructive dialogue with school staff.

**External Monitoring** - This refers to all monitoring activities involving visitors to school, and includes:

- visits from teachers in partner schools to share practice
- visits by external moderators to judge assessment standards
- visits by our SAI and ACEO
- visits by Ofsted or HMI.

## 8. Links to other policies

All policies, particularly

- Teaching and Learning
- Early Years/ Curriculum and Assessment
- Marking and Feedback
- Performance Management

### Strategic Monitoring - Some Useful Questions.

#### 1. Focus: Whole School Strategic thinking for improving teaching & learning, pupil achievement and leadership capacity.

- a. What is the quality of teaching and learning now? How do you know? This should include triangulated evidence from data, pupil voice, pupil work and lesson observations.
- b. What do you believe about effective teaching and learning and how will this be lived out under your leadership?
- c. What is your strategy for improving the quality of teaching?
- d. How will you support teachers to improve (whatever their current practice)?
- e. Who in the school will lead on this?
- f. How often will you 'walk the school' and what will you do as a result?
- g. When will you or your leaders evaluate pupils' work? What will you look for and what will you do as a result?

#### 2. Focus: Strategy for improving pupil achievement

- a. What are the strengths and weaknesses in pupil achievement across the school? This should include data scrutiny backed up by analysis of pupils' work.
- b. What system will you have for checking that pupils are doing as well as they can in every subject and every year group?
- c. How will you hold class teachers and middle leaders to account for pupil achievement?
- d. How can you be sure teacher assessment is accurate and what processes will you have in place to check this throughout the year?
- e. How will your staff know what strategies and interventions are effective for pupils who are not achieving?
- f. Who is responsible for all these elements in your school and how as a headteacher will you ensure you have an up to date view?

#### 3. Focus: Strategy for developing leadership

- a. Who are the key leaders in your school? What are their capabilities, and in what areas do they need further development?
- b. How will you ensure your key staff are developed effectively and what will this development look like?
- c. How will you make your expectations explicit? How you will achieve this on a daily/weekly and termly basis.

- d. What are the accountability systems you will put in place across the school and how will you know they are effective?
- e. How will you ensure that performance management is effective and impacts on school improvement?
- f. What will you expect of your senior leaders, middle leaders and teachers?

## APPENDIX B

### Monitoring for Impact - Some Useful Questions

#### 1. Focus: Identifying Impact - Have you selected your monitoring actions based on impact?

For each activity, you need to be confident that the impact outweighs the disadvantages (e.g. interruption to teaching and learning).

##### Consider:

- a. What's the purpose of each activity?
- b. What's the impact on staff (including leaders) workload?
- c. How do we use the evidence we collect and feed back to staff?
- d. What's the impact on school improvement?

#### 2. Focus: Curriculum/Subject Areas - Do you know for each age group in the school, for your area of responsibility?

- a. the standards achieved by the range of children?
- b. the quality of learning?
- c. the continuity of learning throughout the school?
- d. the contribution of your subject area to cross curricular themes /activities?
- e. the effectiveness of resources?
- f. the process and criteria for monitoring and evaluation of standards in your subject? g) the match against national expectations?
- g. How secure is your information - hunch, impression, observation, clear evidence?
- h. Can you clearly articulate a-g?

## Example of Work Scrutiny

### 1. Focus: Pupils with SEND

Suggestions to guide thinking during a work scrutiny for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

QUESTION	RESPONSE/NOTES
<b>DIFFERENTIATION</b>	
Is the work differentiated to meet pupils' needs?	
Is the work accessible to pupils?	
<b>WORK SET BY TEACHERS</b>	
Do teachers scaffold work for pupils?	
Are visual resources in exercise books?	
Are targets for pupils visible?	
Does the teacher refer to targets throughout the pupil's book?	
How has data had an impact on the work the teacher has set for each pupil?	
Is homework placed inside exercise books?	
<b>TEACHER'S MARKING AND FEEDBACK</b>	
Is the teacher's marking in line with the school's marking policy?	
Is the marking clear, i.e. can pupils understand it?	
Does it set out action's pupils can take to improve their work? (For pupils with SEND, this may involve marking with symbols such as smiley faces or using thumbs-up stickers)	

Do teachers model what they expect to see from pupils with SEND? For example, a teacher may write a sentence out the correct way for a pupil to copy	
<b>PROGRESS</b>	
<i>To answer the questions in this section, you'll need to look at a spread of work across a few weeks from the same pupil</i>	
If the pupil made a mistake a few weeks ago, have they rectified this in their current work?	
How does the pupil present their work in their exercise book, for example, how legible is their handwriting? Is this the same across all subjects?	

## 2. Focus: Work scrutiny reviewing a specific focus i.e. differentiation

### Focus on:

- a. How pupils have developed a particular skill over time/rates of progress over time?
- b. How misconceptions are addressed in classwork.
- c. The font size and colour of writing on worksheets
- d. The amount of work being produced in exercise books
- e. How teachers are adhering to the school's Marking and Feedback Policy
- f. Planned differentiation to meet needs



## Expectations of a 'Deep Dive' - Six Key Areas to Review and Checklist

### 1. Discussing curriculum plans

Takes place BEFORE the deep dive activity with the aim of securing a view on school's overall curriculum aims, approach and rationale.

QUESTIONS to explore:

- What do we want children to learn and when will they learn it?
- How is the curriculum designed? Why?
- How is the curriculum ambitious for all children?
- What are we trying to achieve with our curriculum?
- How does the curriculum support the school's aims?
- How have we decided to sequence the curriculum? Why?
- How do we know that children are learning the curriculum content?
- What is the action plan for curriculum development?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum

*A deep dive... involves gathering evidence on the [curriculum intent, implementation and impact](#) over a sample of subjects, topics or aspects. This is done in collaboration with leaders, teachers and pupils. The intent of the deep dive is to seek to interrogate and establish a coherent evidence base on the quality of education.'*

### 2. Meeting curriculum and subject leaders

This stage will involve a talk in depth with about a chosen deep dive subject with the subject leader to understand how a subject has been planned across the school, the rationale behind it, how the children learn it, and how the school knows this.

- drill down into programme of study specifics, 'Where is light covered?' in science.
- See questions in 5 above.

In May 2021, [Ofsted released a report on the subject reviews](#) they undertook which is a useful reference.

### 3. Observing learning

Observe lessons to see if what's happening in a lesson matches the outline given by the subject and senior leaders. This stage will involve visits of four to six subject specific lessons and questions on progression, SEND and resourcing will be asked. For example:

- How what is observed builds on subject learning to help children transition to the next stage? how key subject vocabulary is used in the lessons.
- How teachers ensure that Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) pupils benefit from the same ambitious curriculum as other pupils wherever possible, and the flow and pace of knowledge and skills acquisition.
- Are resources matched to the curriculum coverage, progression and/or sequence? Do they identify and introduce children to knowledge as outlined in the curriculum and sequence it correctly?

#### 4. Talking to teachers

Talk to teacher on how they plan and deliver a sequence of lessons over time to help children learn the curriculum content in class. Is there an understanding of what key knowledge and skills they are teaching that will be essential for their study in later years at school?

This stage may also involve talking about the lesson observed and discussing how the lessons fit within the larger sequence of teaching on that subject, what key concepts the teacher wanted pupils to take from the lesson, and how that builds on what children have learned before, and how it prepares them for the future.

#### 5. Work scrutiny

Looking at children's work, combined with other evidence, will provide a fuller picture of children's learning of the curriculum. Work scrutiny may be undertaken alongside the subject or curriculum leader.

It involves looking at:

- a selection of books from a range of classes to scrutinise subject learning and ensure that learning intentions are tight.
- how misconceptions are addressed in classwork.
- If it is clear to the children which subject they are learning.

A cross section of children's work

#### 6. Talking to children

This will involve:

- Holding conversations with children about their learning will take place to build a clearer understanding of how well curriculum content is learned and retained in school. 'Progress in curricular terms means knowing more and remembering more'. section of children, including those they have seen in lessons and whose work they have scrutinised.

- Asking children to recall and describe their learning in the previous year, which provides evidence regarding progression and sequencing. The main objective is to connect lots of different types of evidence.
- Hearing a selection of children read. This includes looking at how early reading is taught to help children become as fluent as they need to be in order to access the curriculum.
- Discussion about the learning of reading with the children.

### Summary: Bringing the six areas of deep dives together

The overall aim of the six deep dives is:

- To gain an overall picture of curriculum quality.
- Bringing the evidence together to see if any issues identified during the deep dives are 'systemic'. Systemic means the underlying problem or strength rather than what's on the surface.

### Subject Deep Dive Checklist

#### Questions to reflect on as leaders

1. Do we ensure clear subject coverage, progression and sequencing in our curriculum?
2. Does actual taught and learned coverage match intended coverage?
3. Are transitions smooth between year groups?
4. Does the provision meet the same standards across different subjects?
5. Do children know more and remember more?
6. Are subject misconceptions addressed?
7. How do teachers and children record learning? Can this be easily accessed?
8. Do teachers teach, and children learn, key subject vocabulary?
9. Do teachers have sound subject knowledge?
10. Do senior leaders, subject leads and teachers have good pedagogical content knowledge?

#### Questions to think about in your subject

1. How have you designed your curriculum?
2. What are you trying to achieve in your curriculum?
3. What are your aims for this subject in the school?
4. What schemes do you follow?
5. Why is this subject taught in this way?
6. How do children progress in this subject over their time at the school? (Remembering that progress is knowing more, remembering more and being able to do more.)
7. How do you ensure that subject knowledge is retained?
8. How do you ensure that pupils with SEND benefit from the curriculum in this subject? Are expectations high enough?
9. What do curriculum leaders expect that inspectors will see when they visit lessons and speak to pupils?

10. How are misconceptions addressed in the subject?
11. How does this subject link to other curriculum areas?
12. How do you support staff? How do you avoid unnecessary workload?
13. What subject resources do you offer children and how are they matched to the curriculum

Ref: [Ofsted inspection framework edition](#) of *The Curriculum* magazine from Cornerstones Education.