

Effective Observations

Observations are a powerful tool to understand how pupils learn, support assessment and strengthen the home–school connection.

Emphasise skills

Try to avoid general statements such as, 'Prue was learning about addition', instead focusing on emphasising specific skills.

E.g. Prue used manipulatives to correctly add single digits together, demonstrating understanding of cumulative addition.

Evidence-based

Use multiple forms of evidence: Combine written notes, short pupil quotes, photographs and samples of work. This creates a richer picture of learning.

Learning & Development

Highlight progress: note areas of growth. E.g. 'Alex demonstrated improved fine motor skills by independently using the scissors to cut out the shapes.'

Identify areas of challenge: observe areas where the pupil may need additional support or practice.

Don't forget to tag the learning objective!

Strengths & next steps

Record what the pupil did well and what they need to improve on.

Some examples:

- Lila can solve addition problems independently. . Her next step is to work on subtraction.
- Alex created a bar chart from survey data independently, showing clear understanding of how to organise information visually. Next step: interpret the results.

How can observations enhance Parent-Child-Teacher relationships?

Share observations

Share observations with parents via the teacher app to give a concrete picture of learning.

For example: sending a photo of a child presenting their science experiment with a note on what they learned.

Celebrate achievements

Use awards with your pupils, highlighting small successes.

This helps to builds pupil confidence and strengthens trust between you.

Encourage discussion

Include reflection questions for parents to support them in discussions with their child.

For example: 'Did anything happen that you found tricky?' 'Was this something you learned today that you didn't know before?'

Practical tips for Teachers

- ✖ Observe regularly and consistently, but keep notes concise.
- ✖ Focus on learning behaviour, engagement and skills, not just outcomes.
- ✖ Use positive language that motivates pupils and reassures parents.
- ✖ Include pupil voice: ask them to explain what they did or what they found challenging.

Scan the QR code to see an example of an effective observation in action!

<https://youtu.be/sn8W0M1zVds>

