



# ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

LNCT Local Agreement

**Aberdeen City Council**

**Strategic Leadership – (Planning and Policy – Children)**

## **POLICY ON MONITORING LEARNING AND TEACHING Music Service**

### **1.0 Purposes of Policy**

- 1.1 This policy is designed to make clear the expectations of Aberdeen City Council in relation to the on-going monitoring of Learning and Teaching and to provide clear advice and guidelines on how these expectations might be met.
- 1.2 The Authority already has a separate set of procedures in place to address concerns relating to standards of individual performance or other matters which might lead to disciplinary action<sup>1</sup>.

### **2.0 Rationale**

- 2.1 All members of staff share in the responsibility for ensuring the highest possible standards of Learning and Teaching in their areas of work.  
New Paragraph  
Each year, the service submits a development plan<sup>2</sup> stating in detail agreed targets and actions for improvements to the operation of the school as analysed using the Quality Indicators of *How good is our school?*<sup>3</sup> and where appropriate *The Child at the Centre*<sup>4</sup>.  
New Paragraph  
It follows then that all staff have a right and responsibility<sup>5</sup> to share openly their knowledge and experience of Learning and Teaching to ensure that these plans are as well-informed as possible and that resources allocated to support improvement might be deployed to maximum effect.
- 2.2 In Aberdeen City Council's Teacher Job Profile <sup>6</sup> it is agreed that instructors have a responsibility for:

“delivery of a quality instrumental music instruction to assigned pupils and contribute to the professional corporate life of the Music Service in relation to pupils, parents, staff and schools .”

2.3

2.3 It is recognised therefore that any form of monitoring activity aimed at improving Learning and Teaching can only be successful in an environment which is supportive and where good professional relationships exist.

### **3.0 Principles**

- Monitoring must be set in the context of improving the quality of learning and teaching.
- All staff involved have rights and responsibilities.
- The need for mutual respect and trust is paramount.
- Professional dialogue, both formal and informal, is integral to the process.
- Monitoring is a shared process involving pupils and staff.
- Adequate time for monitoring should be planned into the school year using the WTA for the Service

### **4.0 Expectations**

4.1 The monitoring of Learning and Teaching is part of a Music Service's self-evaluation procedures and as such will inform discussion and debate among members of staff and assist in the agreement of the development priorities for future sessions.

4.2 Each Music Service is expected to have an agreed on-going programme of activities for monitoring Learning and Teaching.

4.3 All staff are expected to participate in the agreed programme.

4.4 Monitoring will have as its focus Learning and Teaching and not the individual teacher involved.

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The Music Service might therefore agree on a whole-school theme or range of themes to be monitored over a period of time eg:

- Pupil behaviour
- Direct teaching
- Quality of pupil experiences

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- Inclusive practice
  - Use of ICT
  - 
  - Assessment is for Learning
  - Presentation of work
  - Cross curricular activity
- 4.5 There might also be specific curricular or *HGIOS?* themes to be monitored across a particular stage, department or group of departments.
- 4.6 The classroom is the principal location for formal learning and teaching. Classroom Observation is therefore an essential element in the effective monitoring of Learning and Teaching. Additionally, in certain circumstances, depending upon the theme being investigated, other strategies may also be considered eg
- [Sampling of pupils' work](#) Do they do this?
  - Sampling of teachers' plans/records
  - Discussions with pupils
  - Discussions with parents
  - Discussions with teachers
- 4.7 The specific activities to be employed will be those which are regarded as the most helpful and those most likely to provide further information on and improvement in the learning and teaching processes. The range of strategies to be adopted is a matter of negotiation among the staff involved in the exercise.
- 4.8 The nature, timing and themes to be employed are matters for discussion and agreement within the school.
- 4.9 The results of monitoring and any actions to follow will be discussed with staff, both individually and collectively, as appropriate, and will influence the determination of priorities in future development plans.
- 5.0 Strategies**
- 5.1 Classroom Observation**

- 5.1.1 The classroom is the principal location for Learning and Teaching and therefore Classroom Observation is an essential element in identifying strengths and encouraging the sharing of good practice.
- 5.1.2 It is important that classroom observation is conducted in an atmosphere of trust and confidence. Observation may be undertaken by Music Instructors other than members of senior promoted staff.
- 5.1.3 Prior to observation there should develop between observer and observee a shared understanding of the focus of the visit and the themes to be addressed.
- 5.1.4 Depending on the nature of the lesson being covered the observer may become involved in the work of the class. However the prime function of the observer is to gather information from the experience which might be used as a basis for discussion afterwards with the class teacher.

## **5.2 Sampling of Pupils' Work**

- 5.2.1 Sampling is a helpful way of developing a common understanding across the school of the standards required in, for example, the quantity, pace, frequency and presentation of pupils' work.
- 5.2.2 The work of pupils may be sampled separately or in the course of classroom observation. Music Instructors should always be willing to make available examples of the work of their classes.

## **5.3 Sampling Teachers' Plans/Records**

- 5.3.1 Valuable information relating to pace, progress, methodology and resources is contained within Music Instructors' plans and records. This can help in discussing appropriate teaching and learning styles, content, resources and scheduling and in identifying any support or development required.
- 5.3.2 Music Instructors should always be willing to make available forward plans, records of work, and other related relevant documentation.

## **5.4 Discussions with Pupils**

- 5.4.1 In recent years initiatives such as Assessment is for Learning (AifL), profiling and personal learning planning have highlighted the benefits of engaging with pupils in discussion relating to their learning.



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5.4.2 The views of pupils should be included when any monitoring of the effectiveness of Learning and Teaching is being considered. Indeed Music Instructors are to be encouraged to engage in discussions with their pupils on matters relating to effective Learning and Teaching.

5.4.3 Care, however, must be taken to ensure that in any discussions with pupils, the learning process remains the primary focus.

### **5.5 Discussions with Parents**

5.5.1 The Music Service s are expected to have in place activities which encourage the engagement of parents in discussing developments relating to Learning and Teaching.

5.5.2 Parents are familiar with discussing the progress of their children in the course of traditionally organised formal parents' evenings. Schools may wish to develop events to provide opportunities to talk to parents about Learning and Teaching. Question this

5.5.3 Again care must be taken to ensure that in any discussions with parents the focus will be on learning and teaching.

### **5.6 Discussions with Music Instructors**

5.6.1 Whatever means of monitoring are employed there should always follow a detailed discussion with the Music Instructors involved both individually and collectively, as appropriate (see 4.8).

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The fact that monitoring has taken place should be recorded but details of the monitoring activity need not be logged. There should always be a record kept of any agreed action. Such action might include:

- Identifying future development priorities
- Sharing good practice with other members of staff.
- Encouraging further discussion among staff on related themes.
- Displaying pupils work in school.
- Providing appropriate CPD activities.
- Allocating additional resources.
- Providing specific support.

- 5.6.2 The primary purpose of Monitoring is to improve Learning and Teaching. Some actions which follow from a monitoring activity may relate to individual classes and will be discussed with individual teachers.

#### New Paragraph

In other cases it might be appropriate to bring together groups of staff eg departments, staff from the same ASG or indeed whole staff to discuss the findings of the process and to agree the best course of action to pursue. In all cases the agreed action to be taken will be recorded.

## 6.0 Review and Evaluation

- 6.1 The monitoring of Learning and Teaching should not be considered to be a free-standing exercise but should be considered to be an integral part of the Music Service's quality assurance procedures and a significant contributor to an overall strategy to raise standards and performance.
- 6.2 The effectiveness of the monitoring processes in a school should be a matter of continuous evaluation with a major review being carried out at least every three years.
- 6.3 As with other local authority agreements the effectiveness of this policy will be a matter of regular review.

## 7.0 References

<sup>1</sup>ACC Managing Discipline – Teachers' Version as amended November 2005.

<sup>2</sup>School Development Plans are drawn up in the context of the National Priorities in Education (Scottish Executive) and the Local Improvement Objectives (Aberdeen City Council).

<sup>3</sup>*How good is our school?* - Quality Indicators 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5.

<sup>4</sup>*The Child at the Centre- Self Evaluation in the Early Years*

<sup>5</sup>*A Teaching Profession for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* – Annex B.

<sup>6</sup>*Aberdeen City Council – Job Profile - Teacher*

*Improving Scottish Education – HMIE*

*How Good is Our School? - The Journey to Excellence HMIE*

**23 June 2006**