EARLSTON CLUSTER

LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

STAFF GUIDANCE

Purpose of the Framework

Striving for Equity, Consistency and Excellence

Scottish Borders Council (SBC) has developed a Learning, Teaching and Assessment Toolkit, driven by a core commitment to ensuring equity of opportunity and consistency in standards of learning for every child across the Council area.

Within Earlston Cluster, we recognise this Toolkit as the foundation for high-quality practice. To maximise its impact, we have developed a supporting framework around the SBC Toolkit – the Earlston Cluster LTA Framework. This framework aims to improve experiences for our learners and enable the Cluster to gather the specific information needed to design useful, robust professional learning resources that support both staff and learners.

Purpose of the Framework

Striving for Equity, Consistency and Excellence

Our Core Challenge ⚙️📚

- To ensure every learner achieves their best, we must provide a consistent foundation of high-quality teaching across all our schools. This Framework is the cornerstone of that consistency.

Our Primary Function 🎓🧠

- To support all staff in providing learning experiences that can be consistently described as 'very good' or 'excellent.'

Our Expected Outcome 🌱⭐

- Improved outcomes for learners and empowered, confident staff.

Embedding the Framework in Practice

Earlston Cluster is committed to embedding this framework at the centre of our work. We will develop complementary measurement tools and professional learning resources to ensure that the Toolkit's principles and standards are fully integrated into classroom practice.

Who Should Use the Framework?

This is a shared resource for all teachers—from provisionally registered teachers to experienced practitioners—and all members of Senior Leadership Teams (SLT).

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🧩 How to Use the Framework: Three Core Areas

The Toolkit and Framework are living documents designed to inform and enhance the key cycles of teaching practice across three core areas:

1. Informing Planning: Use the criteria within the SBC Toolkit proactively when designing learning experiences. This ensures that excellence is built into planning and that high-impact pedagogical approaches are prioritised.
2. Professional Dialogue and Reflection: The SBC Toolkit provides a shared professional language for discussing teaching quality. Use it in coaching, self-evaluation, and one-to-one discussions to identify strengths and set clear development targets.
3. Observation and Quality Improvement: The Toolkit serves as a benchmark for evaluating learning and teaching. It underpins peer observations, professional reviews, and quality improvement processes.

(See Appendix 1 for visual reminder of key principles of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Toolkit)

Measuring Progress and Planning for Improvement

We measure what matters – to grow what works

📊 Measuring Impact and Quality Assurance

To ensure the Toolkit is genuinely driving better outcomes, we will use a suite of measurement tools to gather evidence and complete the feedback loop.

1. Learner Surveys (twice per year)

- Focus: Learners will be surveyed on aspects directly related to the SBC Toolkit's criteria.
- Purpose: To gain essential, independent information on whether improvements in teaching practice are translating into positive experiences for learners. Pupil voice will be used to support both individual teacher and whole-school improvements.

2. Class Teacher Surveys (twice per year)

- Focus: Teachers will be surveyed on aspects directly related to the SBC Toolkit's criteria
- Purpose: The survey data will be triangulated with the pupil survey data to build an accurate and well-rounded picture of learning quality.

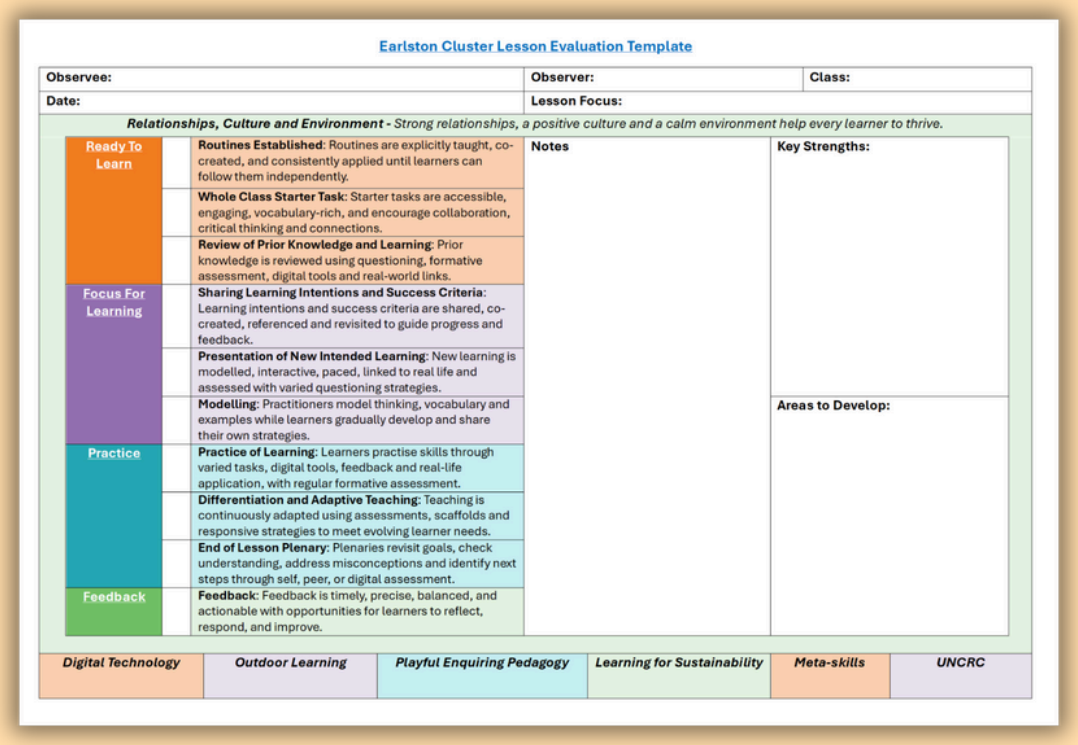
Measuring Progress and Planning for Improvement

We measure what matters – to grow what works

3. SLT Observations (twice per year)

- Focus: Senior Leadership Team (SLT) observations will use the SBC Toolkit as the central point of reference. Observations will take place at an agreed time between the SLT and the class teacher and will focus on all aspects of the Toolkit. Following the observation, coaching conversations will support teachers in identifying key strengths and areas for further development.
- Purpose: Findings from SLT observations will be used to recognise and celebrate individual teacher strengths, identify specific areas for improvement, and highlight emerging trends across the whole school to inform ongoing professional development and quality improvement.

(*See Appendix 2 for observation template)*



Earlston Cluster Lesson Evaluation Template

Observee:		**Observer:**	**Class:**
Date:		**Lesson Focus:**	

Relationships, Culture and Environment *- Strong relationships, a positive culture and a calm environment help every learner to thrive.*

Ready To Learn	**Routines Established**: Routines are explicitly taught, co-created, and consistently applied until learners can follow them independently.	**Notes**	**Key Strengths:**
	Whole Class Starter Task: Starter tasks are accessible, engaging, vocabulary-rich, and encourage collaboration, critical thinking and connections.		
	Review of Prior Knowledge and Learning: Prior knowledge is reviewed using questioning, formative assessment, digital tools and real-world links.		
Focus For Learning	**Sharing Learning Intentions and Success Criteria**: Learning intentions and success criteria are shared, co-created, referenced and revisited to guide progress and feedback.		
	Presentation of New Intended Learning: New learning is modelled, interactive, paced, linked to real life and assessed with varied questioning strategies.		
	Modelling: Practitioners model thinking, vocabulary and examples while learners gradually develop and share their own strategies.		**Areas to Develop:**
Practice	**Practice of Learning**: Learners practise skills through varied tasks, digital tools, feedback and real-life application, with regular formative assessment.		
	Differentiation and Adaptive Teaching: Teaching is continuously adapted using assessments, scaffolds and responsive strategies to meet evolving learner needs.		
	End of Lesson Plenary: Plenaries revisit goals, check understanding, address misconceptions and identify next steps through self, peer, or digital assessment.		
Feedback	**Feedback**: Feedback is timely, precise, balanced, and actionable with opportunities for learners to reflect, respond, and improve.		

Digital Technology	*Outdoor Learning*	*Playful Enquiring Pedagogy*	*Learning for Sustainability*	*Meta-skills*	*UNCRC*

Measuring Progress and Planning for Improvement

We measure what matters – to grow what works

4. Peer Observations (once per year)

- Focus: Peer observations will focus on a teacher's personal development goals in relation to the SBC Toolkit. Each teacher will choose a focus area. This focus area will be shared with a peer, who will carry out an observation focused on the development area. Following the observation, a coaching conversation should be arranged to reflect on successes and opportunities for further improvement.
- Purpose: The peer observations are designed to support professional development in relation to identified teacher targets. In addition to supporting teachers to recognise improvements, this process will help foster a positive ethos around professional learning.

(See Appendix 3 for Peer Observation Template)

5. Walkthroughs (termly)

- Focus: Walkthroughs will focus on a narrow or specific aspect of the SBC Toolkit identified by Senior Leadership Team. Following the walkthroughs, general information will be shared with all teachers, ensuring all staff understand the school's strengths and development needs in relation to the SBC Toolkit.
- Purpose: To give SLT regular information about the school's performance in relation to the SBC Toolkit. Data from walkthroughs will inform school improvement planning.

Tracking and Monitoring Progress

Turning data into dialogue – and dialogue into progress

To support continuous improvement in our learning and teaching approaches, we recognise the importance of systematically tracking and monitoring progress over time. This process ensures that data informs reflection, dialogue, and next steps at both individual and school levels.

We will achieve this through Individual Teacher LTA Trackers and Whole-School LTA Trackers.

Tracking and Monitoring Progress

Turning data into dialogue – and dialogue into progress

👩‍🏫 Individual Teacher LTA Trackers

Each teacher will be provided with their own LTA Tracker — a secure space where data from class learner surveys and self-reflections against the SBC Learning and Teaching Framework can be stored and reviewed.

The system will analyse and display this data in a clear visual format, enabling teachers to:

- Compare pupil survey feedback with their own self-reflections
- Identify successes and areas for further development
- Track trends in their practice over time

Senior Leadership Teams (SLT) will populate these spreadsheets with survey data and make them available to staff. Teachers should use this information to enhance their practice and inform future LTA target setting.

🏫 Whole School LTA Trackers

Data from all pupil surveys and teacher self-reflections will be combined in the Whole School LTA Tracker. This will allow the SLT to:

- Identify common strengths and areas for improvement across the school
- Monitor progress and trends over time
- Evaluate the impact of LTA improvement initiatives
- Identify future priorities for school-wide development

Supporting Career Long Professional Learning

Growing our practice to grow our learners

Collected data will be analysed to understand progress and identify development needs. This evidence will guide targeted professional learning, ensuring both individual and systemic improvement.

🏛️ **Scottish Borders Council Professional Learning Opportunities**

Scottish Borders Council offers a wide range of professional learning opportunities. These can be found via the CLPL weekly communications email or the SBC Professional Learning Blog: Professional Learning – A one-stop shop for CLPL in Scottish Borders

Courses can be booked directly through Business World.

📚 **Free online Professional Library**

Staff can access a range of e-books and professional texts through our CLPL e-Library.

Further information is available on how to request e-books and view current titles within our cluster library.

CLPL e-Library

Supporting Career Long Professional Learning

Growing our practice to grow our learners

💡 Earlston Cluster Suite of Professional Learning Resources

Our goal is to build a strong and sustainable professional learning culture within the Earlston Cluster.

To support this, we are developing our own CLPL resource directly linked to the SBC Learning, Teaching and Assessment Toolkit.

For each area of the Toolkit, our resource will include:

- Key principles
- Digital tools to enhance this aspect of pedagogy
- Practical strategies for Implementation
- Helpful online resources (e.g., videos, podcasts)
- Links to further professional reading
- Reflective questions to support professional dialogue

If we get it right for our staff, we get it right for our children.

Our learners deserve consistency, challenge and joy in every classroom.

Through this framework, we strengthen collaboration across the Earlston Cluster—building shared language, shared expectations and shared success.

Together, we grow our practice to grow our learners.