

# Annual open classroom list for preservice teachers

One way to improve the quality of a professional experience placement is to provide preservice teachers (PST) with a range of classrooms to visit. The 'open classroom list' includes all staff members who have volunteered to open their classrooms for the year. These teachers are happy to have a PST 'just pop in' for part or all of the lesson without notice.

## Who implements this strategy

- Professional experience coordinator (PEXC) or school executive sends out the email to all staff (e.g. in Week 3 Term 1) and completes the annual organisation of this list. They add this list to the professional experience induction package.
- Supervisor (ST) encourage PSTs to use the list to visit other classrooms during their non-teaching time. The ST can make recommendations on whose who to see based on their professional experience goals or areas for further development.

## How is it implemented?

- At the beginning of the year, the PEXC emails all staff, requesting them to nominate their classrooms as 'open' to all PSTs during their placement.
- If a staff member is happy to have an open door, the PEXC will use a recording system (e.g. internal phone list) and highlight that staff member's name.
- This open classroom list is explained and included in the induction package given to PSTs on Day 1 of their placement.
- Update the list annually.

## Variations:

- Two weeks of open doors to classrooms.
- ST informally organises the PST to visit other classrooms.
- Online observations.
- Invite beginning teachers to use this list also.

## What are the benefits of implementing this strategy?

- It encourages the PST to network with other classroom teachers and take a team approach. Reinforcing the notion, we do not work in isolation.
- Provides opportunities for PSTs to observe different settings and make the most of their time in schools.
- A useful strategy to implement if the ST has extra duties to fulfil.
- Creates a whole school approach to developing our future colleagues.

## Outcomes

- Provides opportunities and removes barriers for the PST to observe and increase their depth of knowledge and skills of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers — Graduate career stage.
- A supportive whole school working environment encourages PSTs to return to that school for employment as beginner teachers.
- Encourages classroom teachers to have a performance and development mindset.

## Success indicators

- An indicator that the strategy is working as intended: PST independently visits a range of different classrooms as they value the opportunity. The number of open classrooms increases every year. The classroom teacher is having a professional conversation with the PST after their visit.
- An indicator that the strategy is not working as intended: PST feels they did not have enough learning opportunities to develop their classroom practice or did not have any other experiences outside of their classroom. The PST mirrors their ST's classroom practice and reflects the same 'areas to develop'.

## Resource example: Email seeking *Open Classroom* volunteers

Our school is starting an open classrooms list for 2024.

The idea is to provide all our preservice teachers on a professional experience placement with a list of OPEN classrooms that they can just pop into (for part or all of the lesson) without notice, when they have non-teaching time.

If you are happy to have an open classroom (or to allow PSTs to shadow you) can you please let me know by xxx (date).

Please note we are not looking for the 'perfect lesson or class;' instead we are looking for PSTs to observe a normal 'day to day' lesson in a large/small comprehensive high/primary school.