



Solid Foundations Primary School

Lesson Study and/or collaboration Policy and Procedure (2025/11)

The school recognises Lesson Study and/or collaboration as an effective vehicle for the professional development of teachers.

All Solid Foundations teachers (Grade RRR-7) teaching academic subjects are expected to participate in at least two Lesson Study cycles/ collaborative endeavours per year (usually a total of 8 meetings). Teachers may participate in more Lesson Study cycles/ collaborations should they wish to.

SECTION A: LESSON STUDY

1. Lesson Study introduction

- 1.1. Lesson Study meetings can be held at any time convenient to team participants. (Keep in mind that based on prior experience with our teachers, Lesson Study meetings average 2 hours). Erika strongly welcomes suggestions on timetable adaptations to accommodate Lesson Study meetings.
- 1.2. A basic Lesson Study cycle (as expected in our school) entails an initial meeting to discuss the curriculum, a second meeting to discuss the desired outcomes of a particular lesson within the curriculum, a third meeting to plan a lesson and prepare resources, teaching of the lesson, a final meeting to discuss the outcome of the presented lesson.

2. Suggested Lesson Study procedure:

- 2.1. In January (or December of the previous year) identify the subject and grade you wish to do Lesson Study for. It does not have to be a subject or grade that you are currently teaching, but for your own PD, it will help you to keep as close as possible to your area of expertise or interest. Select peers that have the same subject/ grade in mind as you. It is recommended that you team up in pairs or up to a maximum of 5 teachers.
- 2.2. Decide on a time and place to have your first meeting. At the first meeting your team will determine when the next meetings will commence (see 3.5.). On average, plan for about 3 meetings for each “cycle”, excluding your demonstration lesson. If you keep the same team, grade and subject for more than one cycle, you can skip meeting 1 (see point 3) from your second cycle onwards.
- 2.3. Appoint a team facilitator. The facilitator is responsible for reminding team participants of Lesson Study meeting dates, live-recording meetings for Erika (save in Google Drive) and generally facilitating the flow of the meetings (see point 3 to 7).
- 2.4. The meetings listed hereafter are guidelines. They can be combined or shortened.

3. First meeting:

The first Lesson Study meeting is dedicated to orienting all team participants to the subject and grade that they have selected. (Suggestion: come to the meeting with your year-plans, textbooks, CAPS document and a calendar). The following curriculum-related issues should be discussed in the first meeting:

- 3.1. The current year-plan. Topics that are prescribed for the grade (do you agree/disagree?)
The division of the current curriculum topics into weeks and terms and the reason for this. (Use this time to argue the benefits and shortfalls of the year plan. Do you need more time for topics? Do you labour too long on others? Note that the first meeting may result in a review or adaptation of the current year-plan for the subject. This is a

good thing! Do not find yourself saying, “But we’ve always done it this way!” Why? Motivate. Argue. Make changes if necessary.)

- 3.2. The use of a spiral or a block curriculum approach and the reason for this. (Motivate why. Do not be scared to make changes again if necessary!)
- 3.3. The content link between preceding grades and grades to follow (learning trajectories across the grades). It helps to have teachers from more than one grade in your team for this to be really beneficial, otherwise you will have to depend on the CAPS document.
- 3.4. The possibility of needlessly repeating curriculum content in other subjects of the same grade (explore the possibility of integration between subjects in your grade).
- 3.5. Whether the topic for the Lesson Study demonstration lesson should be decided by the DATE that the lesson occurs in the year (option 1), or a topic THAT PUPILS OR TEACHERS ARE STRUGGLING WITH (option 2), which might not necessarily coincide conveniently with your teams’ planned Lesson Study schedule. For example:

Option 1: The Grade 1 and 2 teachers decide that they want to do a mathematics demonstration lesson for a Grade 1 class on the 3rd of March. They look at the Grade 1 year-plan. They notice that the given topic is “addition to 10” on the 3rd of March (T1W6). They use this topic to guide their Lesson Study meetings and they work 3 meeting dates backwards from the 3rd of March to confirm the date of their next meeting.

Option 2: The Grade 1 and 2 teachers decide that they want to do a mathematics demonstration lesson for Grade 1 on the topic of “introductory multiplication”, because they have noticed that this is a difficult concept to teach and for learners to grasp. They look at the Grade 1 year-plan. “Introductory multiplication” is being taught in T3W5. They use this topic to guide their Lesson Study meetings and work 3 meeting dates backwards from T3W5 to confirm the date of their next meeting.

3.6. Once a topic and date has been selected, team members are encouraged to prepare thoroughly and research (homework) the topic for the next Lesson Study meeting.

Limit research to:

3.6.1. Important definitions that children should grasp. At this grade level, how much/what should they really know at the end about this topic/subject?

3.6.2. Known methods or “ways” (P.S. not activities – there is a difference) of teaching and learning about this topic at this age (hint: YouTube is really helpful) *E.g. I can teach Grade 7 pupils 3 different methods of prime factorisation. Do I know all these methods?*

3.6.3. Current research on the topic e.g. Google articles - academic or informal are both beneficial.

3.6.4. Pitfalls learners and teachers face, or I would expect them to face, when you teach this topic.

3.6.5. The specific CAPS requirements for the topic (do you agree? -motivate).

3.6.6. Other curriculum’s ways of handling of the topic e.g. Montessori or Cambridge.

4. Second meeting

The second meeting is dedicated to discussing the “homework” participants bring to the table (see 3.6.). The more homework that was done, the richer your meeting will be.

4.1. Through discussing the content that research participants bring to the table, a list of potential goals will emerge. The facilitator should write these down.

4.2. Allocate these goals to several lessons within the topic unit. They will more than likely have to be tackled over a few lessons (not the purpose or realm of your Lesson Study, but interesting for the teachers).

4.3. Select one lesson within the unit that you would like to try as your demonstration lesson. A clear and precise lesson goal should emerge for your one lesson. *E.g. At the end of our demonstration lesson we would like pupils to use a problem-solving approach to discover the multiples of 2 and 4.*

4.4. For the next meeting (homework), team members are encouraged to prepare thoroughly and research teaching activities to meet the goal selected in 4.3. Look for:

4.4.1. Unique or interesting activities (preferably NOT worksheet based) to provoke learner learning.

4.4.2. Unique or interesting resources to inspire learner learning.

5. Third meeting

The third meeting is again dedicated to discussing the “homework” participants bring to the table in the form of activities (see 4.4.).

5.1. Each person has a chance to present their lesson and activity ideas.

5.2. The team selects activities that most accomplish the lesson goal and are most interesting.

5.3. A basic lesson plan starts emerging (recorded by facilitator). Work on the “flow” and order of the activities and the expected time each will take.

5.4. Be careful not to include too many activities!

6. Fourth meeting (optional – if the third meeting hasn’t reached a detailed lesson plan stage)

The fourth meeting is dedicated to perfecting the lesson plan and preparing for lesson presentation. It might be a much shorter meeting if the preceding meetings have been thorough.

6.1. Select the teacher who will present the lesson. ***(Hint: Leave this for the last meeting and do not mention it before this time. It’s also helpful if all teachers present a part of the lesson, splitting the teaching load).***

- 6.2. Prepare the final, complete lesson plan. Include expected problem and questions from learners. Talk through each activity properly to make sure that everyone concurs about the “vision” for the lesson (the facilitator needs to carefully keep records and type up the lesson plan).
- 6.3. Prepare resources together (*e.g. do the actual cutting, gluing, drawing, photostatting together*).
- 6.4. (Optional) do “mock” parts of the lesson for each other or for pupils (who are not in the demonstration lesson class) if you are uncertain about the activity or want to hash out details.
- 6.5. Concur with Erika about an ideal time for the demonstration lesson. The time-table will be adjusted to accommodate you.
- 6.6. Invite teachers to view your demonstration lesson.

7. Demonstration lesson

- 7.1. Viewing teachers are given a copy of the Lesson Plan before the lesson. They are reminded by the facilitator beforehand that they are to ***switch off to the teacher’s teaching and switch on to the learner’s learning.***
- 7.2. The following criteria can be given to give direction to viewing teachers:
 - 7.2.1. Evaluate the link between the lesson goals and what you see happening with the learners.
 - 7.2.2. Record any learners who may have missed out on learning and why you think they did.
 - 7.2.3. Record what “worked” in terms of learner learning (what did they enjoy).
 - 7.2.4. Record compliments or criticism you have for the resources used – did they aid or hinder learning?
 - 7.2.5. Record compliments or criticism about the design/flow of the lesson.
 - 7.2.6. Record comments made by learners that you would like to share.

7.2.7. Record your thoughts on the possible transferability of parts of the lesson to your own classroom.

7.2.8. Notice mistakes that children made.

7.2.9. Notice things that surprised you.

7.2.10. Focus on things you learnt.

7.3. The following rules are adhered to by viewing teachers:

7.3.1. You may not interact with the pupils at all during the lesson. Please don't talk to, correct, help or teach them in any way. If you notice a child struggling, record their name and give feedback after the lesson.

7.3.2. Please refrain from speaking to your colleagues during the lesson. Write down your comments to discuss afterwards.

7.3.3. You can move freely about the class at any time during the lesson. This includes standing right next to a child while observing them.

7.4. The demonstration lesson is followed immediately by a post-lesson discussion (chaired by the facilitator).

7.4.1. This discussion may not, at any time, centre on the demonstration teacher's ability or skill. Comments are only limited to the design of the lesson (see 7.2.)

7.4.2. The demonstration teacher may have "first say" at the feedback meeting, opening the floor to what he/she experienced.

7.4.3. The facilitator should try to invite an "expert" to the demonstration lesson and post-lesson meeting. This should be someone who has intimate knowledge of the subject and grade and can give insightful feedback. Ideally a teacher not involved in the preceding steps of the Lesson Study process. Erika can assist in allocating an expert if necessary. In traditional "Japanese style", the expert should refrain from commenting at all during the post-lesson feedback discussion, but provide the final insightful comments at the conclusion of this meeting.

Please remember that the purpose of Lesson Study is personal and professional growth.

SECTION B: COLLABORATION

In the case of a collaboration, the facilitating teacher decides on a topic to investigate and explore with a team or decides to teach a team of teachers regarding a specific topic. The following criteria must be met for the collaboration to be considered a professional development cycle for a teacher at Solid Foundations (bearing in mind that teachers are expected to participate in two such cycles annually):

- 1.1. The content is explored in a pragmatic and “hands on” way. Teachers don’t “sit for a lecture”, but participate through homework, research or physically “doing” something.
- 1.2. The collaboration takes longer than 2 hours and should span more than a single meeting.
- 1.3. The collaboration results in a tangible project or idea that the teachers must produce or must demonstrate in their teaching (preferably for each other).
- 1.4. The collaboration results in a feedback session (compulsory) during a Thursday staff meeting in which participants give feedback about their learning experience during and after the collaboration.
- 1.5. Record is kept in the Lesson Study folder on the Google Drive, of new learning content adopted through collaboration.