Safe Teaching

Observation Guide

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BUILDING SAFE AND CARING SCHOOLS
TO FOSTER EDUCATIONAL INCLUSION
AND SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT

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PROMAESTRO

Author
Fundación Promaestro

Contributors

Universidad Pontificia Comillas (Spain), Cidalia (Spain), Consejería de Educación y Empleo de la Junta de Extremadura (Spain), Fachhochschule Vorarlberg GmbH (Austria), Istituto Comprensivo di Bosco Chiesanuova - Polo Europeo della Conoscenza (Italy), Kino Information Technology Education (Bulgaria), Panevezio Rajono Svietimo Centras (Lithuania), Stowarzyszenie ARID (Poland), Timelex (Belgium), Universidade Católica Portuguesa (Portugal), Uniwersytet Ignatianum w Krakowie (Poland), Zabala Innovation (Spain).

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Design and layout
Elisa Andueza Dosal

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I. Introduction

What is this guide for?

This guide has been designed as a one-stop-shop to help teachers reflect on the **relational dimension** of their teaching, and discuss aspects of the school culture and the school community that also have an impact on it. Our ultimate goal is to bring **Safe Teaching** to all European classrooms as a strategy for improving the quality and equity of education.

To this end, we propose to undertake a process of **observation, individual and collaborative reflection and systematisation of teaching practice** with a focus on Safe Teaching. The process will allow you to validate the impact of your classroom practices, create professional knowledge, strengthen collaboration between teachers and share your thoughts on Safe Teaching and practices with other education professionals.

In this guide you will find the essential **conceptual background, steps, tips, tools and materials** to try out this process in your classroom and school.

How did this guide come about?

The processes described in this guide and the templates provided are the result of **Promaestro Foundation**'s expertise in creating professional communities of teachers around peer observation and sharing of classroom knowledge. The unique contribution of this guide is its focus on Safe Teaching, which translates into specific tools for its observation in classrooms and schools.

The knowledge on Safe Teaching was gathered through **desk and field research**, including focus groups and classroom observations carried out by participating teachers from Bulgaria, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal and Spain as part of the European **Let's Care project** (Horizon Europe no. 10105945). The type of research carried out was action research, and as such, the relationship between the teachers and other research agents was one of **co-creation**, i.e. it was horizontal, collaborative and mutually enriching. The participating teachers took on a research role, as they collected the data by reflecting on their lived experiences in the classroom.

Participating teachers are valued as experts in the teaching-learning relationship and as those who have the most to offer in terms of knowledge about teaching and school practices.

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In the **focus groups**, teachers discussed the meaning of Safe Teaching and the factors that facilitate or hinder Safe Teaching. After a process of categorisation and analysis of the information, a number of criteria for Safe Teaching that they identified were compiled into two **observation tools**.

These first versions were used by the teachers to carry out **classroom observations and collegial reflection**, after which they compiled their impressions and conclusions in templates (Teacher Workbooks) and reports. They also completed an evaluation questionnaire to assess the usefulness of the tools. On the basis of the comments received from the teachers and the National Coordinators Board (NCB), the current versions of the tools have been developed.

Throughout this guide you will find comments representing the voices of participating teachers, as well as quotes from Promaestro's own observation guides.

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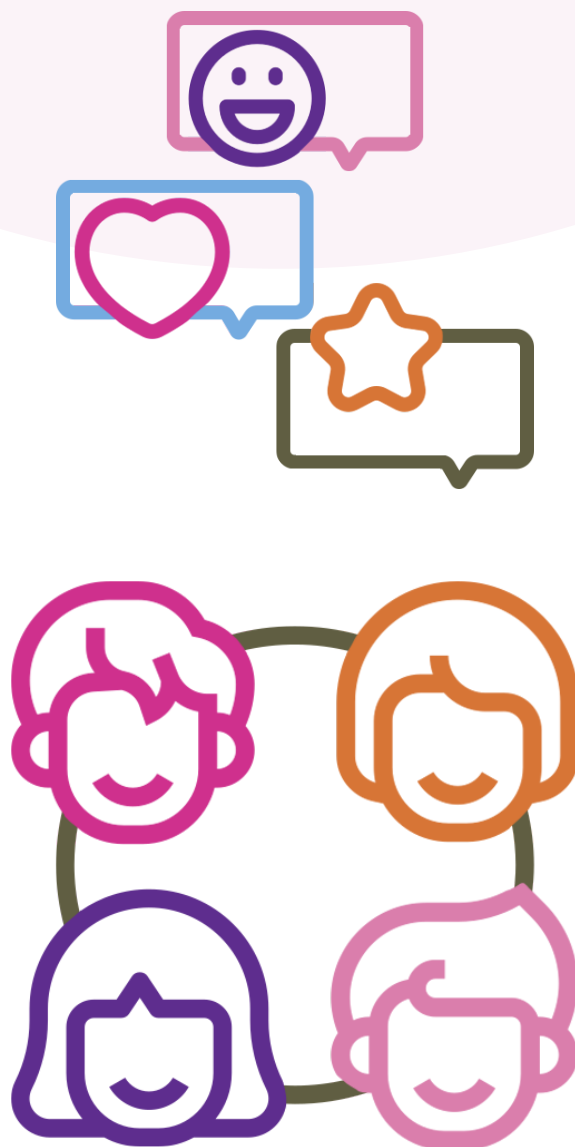
2. What do you need to know to observe Safe Teaching?

In this section you will find essential definitions for the purpose of this guide and the processes we invite you to try.

What is Safe Teaching?

Safe Teaching is an approach that ensures that educators are equipped and supported to promote a **protected and inclusive classroom environment**. It is based on the development of caring relationships between the teacher and their students, using attachment theory as a framework. It requires the adoption of practices that make learners feel **welcome, listened to and supported** in the classroom, so that they can focus on their learning, take risks and complete classroom tasks undisturbed (Let's Care, 2024).

"If a student feels accepted, [they are] not afraid of making a mistake, [of] not knowing something, [they are] not afraid to speak out openly".
Focus group participant

Because Safe Teaching is influenced by school and policy factors that facilitate or hinder it, we also consider the concepts of Safe Schools and Safe Education. **Safe Schools** are educational institutions that prioritise physical security, anti-bullying measures, a culture of respect and safety, and positive relationships among all members of the school community. **Safe Education** is a principle that integrates safety considerations into every level of the education system to ensure the well-being of all involved. This results in the creation of Safe Schools in which Safe Teaching can flourish (Let's Care, 2024).

"When we manage to build positive relationships with parents and they understand that we want the best for their child, this is the key to creating Safe Teaching".
Focus group participant

Why is Safe Teaching important?

A learning environment that is free from physical and emotional harm and where students can develop trusting and supportive relationships is key to raising educational attainment and reducing the **risk of disengagement and school dropout**, particularly among disadvantaged learners. Ensuring that all classrooms are safe and nurturing spaces helps to promote **academic success**, thereby helping to break the intergenerational transmission of social exclusion and inequality (Let's Care, 2024).

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"Attachment and affection [are some] of the most important factors […]
How that relationship develops between the child and the school staff will
determine to a large extent his or her whole future".
Focus group participant

What is observation of teaching practice?

Observing teaching practice means **looking at the teaching and learning process**, that is, at the pedagogical actions that take place, **in a deliberate, systematic and focused way**, with the aim of gathering information (Borich, 2015; Verástegui y Pérez, 2021).

The focus of observation can be on what happens **in the classroom**, that is, the actions and attitudes of teachers and pupils, or **at the school level**, that is, the actions, roles and relationships between stakeholders in the educational community, such as families and school management, which also influence the teaching and learning process.

The observation process involves the preparation of **observation criteria**, which define the aspect that will be the focus of the observation and how it will be evaluated. The development of these criteria reflects a judgement about what works best in the classroom in terms of contextualised approaches to teaching and learning (Borich, 2015; Croll, 1995; O'Leary, 2020).

During the observation, the teacher gathers **evidence** around these criteria, which they then use to reflect on the results and hold feedback conversations. Teachers can use a variety of **tools** to record what happens in the classroom and to identify strengths and areas for improvement in relation to the agreed criteria. Some of the most common tools for collecting information on teaching practices are (Verástegui y Pérez, 2021):

- Rubrics.
- Quantitative and qualitative record sheets.
- Field notebooks.
- Class diaries (in written or digital format, videos, audio recordings, etc.).

Depending on how it is done, observation can be **direct or indirect**. In direct observation, the person observes the phenomenon being studied in real time. Depending on the agent carrying out the observation, direct observation can be **peer observation or self-observation**. On the other hand, observation is indirect when it takes place through reflections or conversations about past experiences, video recordings, learning diaries, questionnaires, etc. (Verástegui y Pérez, 2021). In the context of this guide, we propose a modality of indirect observation that we call **pedagogical reflection**.

What is peer observation?

Peer observation is a process whereby **two or more teachers observe each other's lessons in a systematic way**, that is, recording and analysing the lesson or a specific teaching practice according to a set of criteria. They then share their reflections and give feedback (Croll, 1995; Verástegui y Pérez, 2021).

What is self-observation?

Self-observation is a process by which teachers **record information and analyse their own teaching practice according to a set of criteria**. It involves documenting or recording evidence of classroom practice during or after teaching, which is then interpreted to evaluate one's own teaching (Borich, 2015; Verástegui y Pérez, 2021).

Self-observation and peer observation are complementary activities that support the development of teachers' competences, the exchange of practices, an increased awareness of the impact of teaching on learners and the improvement of the learning experience.

Why is observation important?

Teachers observe their practice in order to **validate** it, that is, to **ratify its effectiveness and relevance in achieving its pedagogical goals** in a particular application context (Borich, 2015). Validation is a rigorous process that requires teachers to systematise, observe, reflect on and discuss their practice, and leads to the creation of new professional knowledge. Such validation motivates the **continuous improvement of teaching** and the **sharing of knowledge** within the educational community (Verástegui y Pérez, 2024).

Systematisation is a necessary step in observing and validating teaching practice. It consists of **collecting and organising all aspects of a teaching practice** into a template: the practice design or lesson plan, the theory that supports it, the materials from its implementation, the teacher's impressions, thoughts about its strengths, weaknesses and ways to improve it, etc (Verástegui et al., 2023).

Systematisation involves a **critical analysis of the aspects that make up a practice and its impact**, which in turn leads to a practice that is more likely to be relevant and transferable (Croll, 1995). In this case, the impact refers to the improvement of indicators of positive classroom relationships or the ability to address the challenges encountered in the classroom or school.
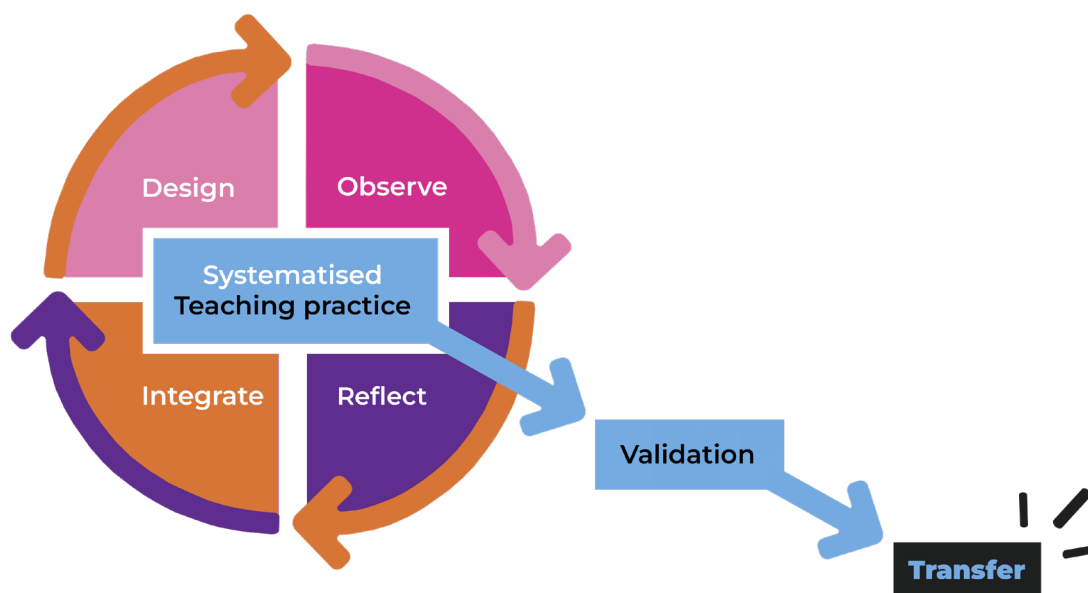
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Figure 1. The cycle of systematisation of teaching practice
Note: Adapted from Verástegui y Pérez (2024)

> Systematisation invites us to think about the pedagogical impact of our practice: the degree to which a practice achieves specific learning objectives (Malpica, 2013; Úbeda, 2018; Verástegui et al., 2022).

As mentioned above, observation and systematisation of practice are processes that allow teachers to **reflect** on their practice. We understand reflection as a process by which teachers **make decisions about their teaching** as they go about it, think about their teaching afterwards, identify possible challenges and derive solutions (Asprelli, 2010; Perrenoud, 2004). This reflection can take place individually, as after self-observation, or, better still, through conversations with other teachers, as when sharing and integrating **feedback** after a peer observation.

To go further, it would be ideal to create spaces for frequent **collaborative discussion**, where a group of teachers spend a certain amount of time talking about specific practices according to an agenda or plan (Day, 2006). As with observation, for the discussion to be productive, it is necessary to **agree on the criteria** that will be used to judge the teaching practice (Roget, 2020).

What is pedagogical reflection?

Pedagogical reflection is a **collegial dialogue** between teachers and other education professionals in a particular school, in which the actions and attitudes of the school community around a topic are **analysed in a structured way**. The views and opinions of the participants can be gathered to inform decision making (Domingo y Anijovich, 2017).

> It is through individual and collective reflection that teachers develop their pedagogical judgement (Verástegui y Pérez, 2024).

Finally, **transfer** is the process by which teachers **disseminate a classroom or school-wide practice** (objectives, sequence of activities, methodology, resources, content, evaluation and results) through various means (academic publications, presentations at conferences, information guides, social media, etc.) (Verástegui Martínez, 2024).

As well as building on teachers' strengths and encouraging colleagues to learn from each other, transfer allows teachers to **showcase their professional expertise**. This means that the criteria they use to judge their pedagogical practice and the way they respond to the needs of the school are made available to the wider community, school leaders and policy makers. This strengthens their position in the context of the school community and the education system as a whole (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2018).

Although this guide focuses exclusively on Safe Teaching, the processes just described can be applied to any teaching and learning practice or area of interest (Borich, 2015).

Why should you observe Safe Teaching?

Systematising, observing and reflecting on the implementation of Safe Teaching in your classroom and school has many benefits (Borich, 2015; O'Leary, 2020; Verástegui y Pérez, 2024):

1. Benefit from practical and contextualised **learning opportunities.**
2. Gain **insight into the needs of your students**, the challenges of your particular school context and your own professional approach.
3. Gather evidence to **assess the impact** of your teaching practice on your relationship with your students.
4. Identify your **strengths and areas for improvement** and obtain **practical ideas**, both from the tools we provide and from the colleagues you observe or discuss with.
5. Reflect on and express your perceptions of how the **culture and dynamics of your school and public policies** affect the safety of relationships with your students.
6. Encourage **coordination and collaboration** between teachers and other education professionals in your school.
7. Build a professional culture where teachers **learn continuously, together and from each other**.
8. **Share your knowledge** with teachers from other schools, contexts and countries.
9. Promote the **recognition of teachers** as valued professionals.
10. Ultimately, increase the quality of the **students' learning experience**.

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3. How do you carry out the observation process?

In this section you will find step-by-step instructions and tips to conduct Safe Teaching observation in your classroom and school.

The process in a nutshell

We suggest that you carry out two observation processes: a direct classroom observation using the **Safe Teaching Observation Tool** and an indirect observation using the **Pedagogical Reflection Tool** on Safe Schools and Safe Education, which you will complete together with other teachers in your school. You will also have at your disposal the **Teacher's Workbook**, which you will complete throughout and where you will systematise the whole process. To access these tools, see the next chapter.

We recommend that you to carry out the observation process in **three stages**, which are explained below:

STAGE I
Design and preparation

STAGE II
Conducting the observation and reflection sessions

STAGE III
Systematisation and transfer

Main actions:
- Complete Teacher's Workbook part 1
- Arrange observation

Main actions:
- Perform self- and peer observation
- Fill in the Safe Teaching Observation Tool
- Hold feedback conversation
- Pedagogical reflection session with other teachers

Main actions:
- Complete Teacher's Workbook part 2
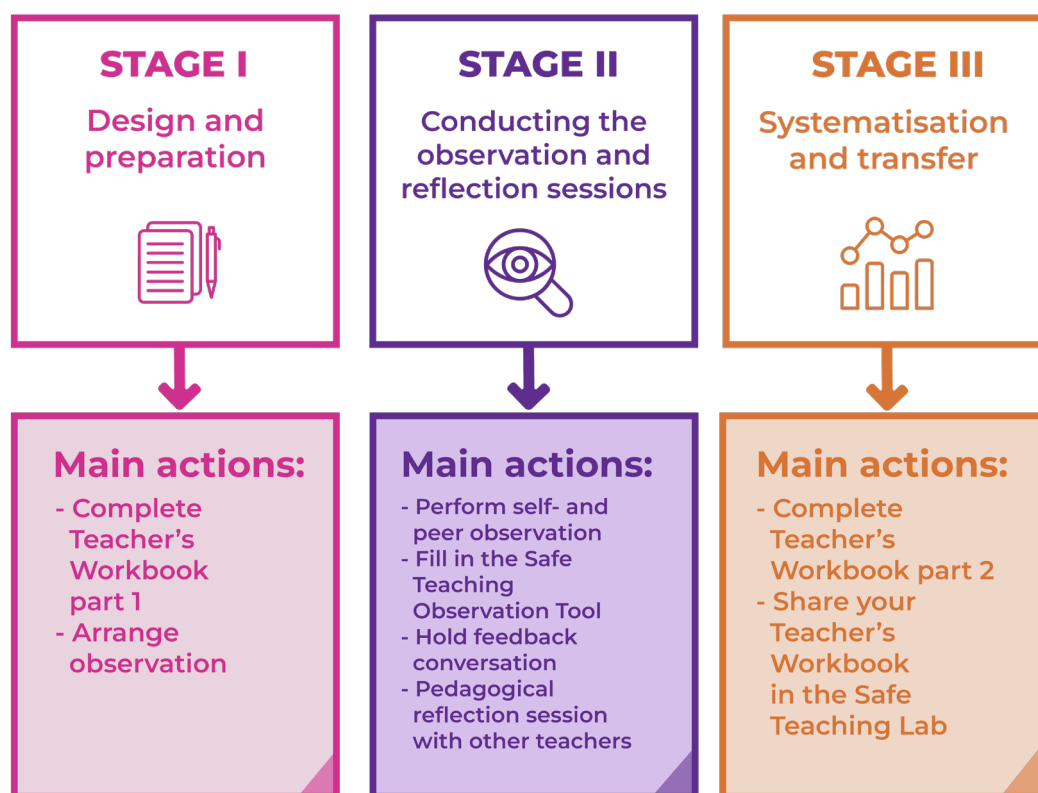- Share your Teacher's Workbook in the Safe Teaching Lab

Figure 2. The stages of the observation process
Source: Prepared by the authors

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Stage 1: Design and preparation

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

Self- & peer observation

- Select the lesson you wish to observe (grade level, group of pupils, subject). The lesson you choose should be an ordinary one where you conduct your instruction as usual. This will maximise the value of the insights you will gain through this process, and their applicability to your everyday practice.

- Fill in **Teacher's Workbook part 1**, in which you will specify the context of the school and your student group, the objectives and plan of the lesson, as well as important aspects of the classroom culture.

- Read the **Safe Teaching Observation Tool**, which contains the criteria for classroom observation, and **make the modifications** you deem appropriate for your circumstances (add, subtract, set targets for each indicator, etc.). Share your version of the tool with the observer.

- Choose a colleague from your school to carry out your peer observation. It is preferable if you teach the same year group or subject area. If you are carrying out observations as part of a school or departmental initiative and there is an odd number of participants, you can carry out the observation in a group of three.

- Share your expectations and concerns about the observation process with the observer, and how they can best share their reflections and feedback with you. It is crucial to establish a trusting professional relationship with the person who is observing you and who you are observing.

- Arrange a date and time for the observations: one for them to observe you, and one for you to observe them.

- Inform the school management about the observations.

- Tell your students that a visiting teacher will be observing and taking notes.

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SCHOOL OBSERVATION

- **Assemble a group of teachers** from the school to participate in the pedagogical reflection session. In this session you will analyse teaching in a broader dimension, i.e. in the dimension of Safe School and Safe Education.

- We recommend that you **appoint a facilitator** to introduce the factors and indicators, and to control the time and the participants' interventions so that everyone has an equal chance to participate.

- Read the **Pedagogical Reflection Tool,** which contains our suggestion of main themes and subthemes to discuss.

- You are free to **modify the tool** (add, subtract or change the criteria) to better suit your context.

- **Arrange a date and time** for the discussion session.

- **Inform the school management** and, if appropriate, invite them to participate.

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Stage II: Conducting the observation and reflection sessions

	CLASSROOM OBSERVATION	SCHOOL OBSERVATION
WHO	Teacher pairs	Teacher group with facilitator
WHEN	During a lesson and a feedback session	Discussion session at the school
HOW	Safe Teaching Observation Tool	Pedagogical Reflection Tool
WHAT	Teacher and students' actions and attitudes	School culture and stakeholder actions
ROUNDS	At least twice: once being observed (and self-observing), once observing	At least once

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CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

Self- & peer observation

BEFORE THE LESSON	DURING THE LESSON	AFTER THE LESSON: FEEDBACK

For the teacher being observed

BEFORE THE LESSON

■ Provide the observer with the **Teacher's Workbook part 1** well in advance of the observation to ensure that they are aware of the context of the lesson they will be observing.

■ Specify your observation focus/priority for this lesson.

■ Familiarise yourself with the **Safe Teaching Observation Tool** as you will be using it to self-observe during the selected lesson.

■ Remind your students that another teacher will be visiting the classroom.

■ Send the observer a reminder two days before the scheduled observation to confirm.

DURING THE LESSON

■ Introduce the observer to the students.

■ Conduct the instruction in the most natural way possible. Focus on your lesson and your students, not on the observer.

■ You will also need to self-observe your practice, so keep the **Safe Teaching Observation Tool** at hand, and if possible, take your own notes during the session. Alternatively, complete the Safe Teaching Observation Tool after the lesson.

■ Pay particular attention to your words and actions and note how the students react.

AFTER THE LESSON: FEEDBACK

■ During the feedback conversation, listen to your colleague's feedback and ask for clarification if necessary.

■ Share and contrast the impressions you have recorded in your **Safe Teaching Observation Tool.**

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CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

Self- & peer observation

BEFORE THE LESSON	DURING THE LESSON	AFTER THE LESSON: FEEDBACK

For the observer

BEFORE THE LESSON

- Familiarise yourself with the **Teacher's Workbook part 1** prepared by the teacher you will be observing. It will give you an idea of the context and sequence of the lesson you will be observing.

- Read the **Safe Teaching Observation Tool** carefully, focusing on the aspects and indicators that you will be looking for.

- Ask the teacher you are observing any questions you may have about the observation (e.g. the location of the classroom, the length of the lesson, where to sit).

- You can ask for clarification about the details of the lesson, but avoid judging or influencing your colleague's decisions.

DURING THE LESSON

- Arrive in the classroom a few minutes before the lesson starts.

- On entering the classroom, greet the group and sit in a place where you have a good view of the classroom and do not interfere with the development of the lesson.

- Record evidence in the **Safe Teaching Observation Tool.** These notes should be as good a record as possible of what happened during the lesson.

- Avoid interacting with the teacher or students. Be aware of your body language as it may distract the teacher.

AFTER THE LESSON: FEEDBACK

- During the feedback discussion, share with your colleague the evidence you have gathered using the **Safe Teaching Observation Tool** and comment on the strengths and areas for improvement of the teaching practice you have observed. Base your feedback on data and offer examples to facilitate understanding.

- Ask questions to encourage your colleague to develop their thinking.

- Remember that the purpose of your feedback is not to criticise, but to provide constructive comments to help your colleague reflect on Safe Teaching and its impact on the teaching-learning process.

- Give your **Safe Teaching Observation Tool** with all your comments to the teacher you observed.

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CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

Self- & peer observation

DURING
THE LESSON

For both

■ We recommend that you have a brief conversation immediately after the lesson to discuss first impressions and feelings about the observation.

■ Complete the **Safe Teaching Observation Tool**. Make sure you complete all the sections.

■ Review and reflect on your notes individually. Summarise your findings for each indicator and draw conclusions about strengths and areas for improvement in the lesson/teaching practice.

■ Schedule a feedback session to share and discuss in depth the evidence you have gathered. This conversation can take place on the same day or later.

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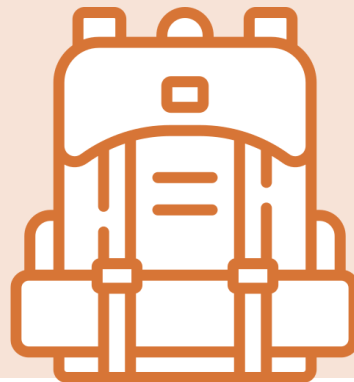
Golden rules of peer observation: advice for teachers

👉 The purpose of peer observation is not to evaluate teacher effectiveness, but to help your colleagues reflect on how their teaching practices affect their relationships with students.

👉 Peer observation is not about judging, impressing, or undermining your colleagues. You should never feel threatened or anxious.

👉 Successful peer observation depends on an environment of respect, trust, and support. Be open to sharing and working together.

👉 If you are being observed, conduct the lesson in the most natural way possible so that you receive useful, applicable feedback.

👉 If you are observing or giving feedback to a colleague, focus on the agreed aspect of teaching practice, in this case the relational dimension of teaching. Teaching is a very complex process and its development requires us to focus on one thing at a time.

👉 Feedback should be impartial, and evidence-based. Take the necessary distance from prejudices and personal beliefs, and always refer to what happened during the lesson.

👉 Feedback should be honest and constructive. Constructive feedback is not always positive and can sometimes be uncomfortable to hear. Nevertheless, make sure that your presentation of strengths and weaknesses is balanced.

IMPORTANT NOTE

To complete a full round of peer observation, you will go through this process at least twice: once being observed (and self-observing your own lesson) and once being the observer. Feel free to do **further rounds of peer observation** to enrich your learning and to get feedback on the implementation of ideas that emerge from the first round of observation.

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SCHOOL OBSERVATION

Pedagogical reflection session

■ Use the **Pedagogical Reflection Tool** as a script for the discussion.

■ You can each take your own notes on the printed or electronic version of the tool, or appoint a note-taker.

■ The facilitator will introduce the topics for discussion and manage speaking turns.

■ The discussion should last about an hour.

Feel free to organise further reflection sessions to acknowledge progress or share new concerns.

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Stage III:
Systematisation and transfer

CLASSROOM & SCHOOL OBSERVATION

■ Having developed the whole process of direct and indirect observation, you will need to collect all the evidence you have gathered and use it to complete **part 2** of the **Teacher's Workbook**.

> **- Part 2A**. Analyse and interpret the results of self- and peer observation; identify strengths, areas for improvement and needs of the observed teaching practice, and make pedagogical proposals to address these needs.

> **- Part 2B**. Fill in a template identical to the previous one, but responding to the criteria of the **Pedagogical Reflection Tool**. To do this, summarise the reflections that emerged during the reflection session with teachers from your school.

> **- Part 2C**. Reflect on the conclusions of the whole process of observing and validating your teaching practice in relation to Safe Teaching.

■ Finally, we invite you to share your systematised work with the wider educational community. In this way, others can learn and benefit from your ideas and findings. Visit the Practices repository and share your **Teacher's Workbook**.

■ If you feel it is appropriate, share any concerns or ideas that have arisen during the pedagogical reflection session with your wellbeing lead, school leadership team or local representatives to inform school improvement processes.

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4. Tools for observation
Teacher's Workbook

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Teacher's Workbook

INTRODUCE A TITLE	
PRACTICE DATA	
Author's name	
School (country)	
Students' grade level	
Subject area of the session	
Learning outcomes (session)	

Important: In order to complete this document, you will need to carry out a process of observation and reflection using both the Safe Teaching Observation Tool and the Pedagogical Reflection Tool. Please refer to the **Safe Teaching Observation Guide** for instructions on how to use these tools.

All these resources are available at www.letscareproject.eu

Available at https://letscareproject.eu/hub/toolkit/

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PART 1 – OBSERVED PRACTICE DESCRIPTION
CONTEXT
Write down the characteristics of your school. Please include: • Size (number of students/teachers). • Location (urban/rural). • Type of school and educational levels offered. • Other comments (e.g. infrastructure, resources...). Write down the characteristics of your student group. Please include: • Gender balance. • Socio-economic status. • Presence of students belonging to an ethnic minority group, • with migrant background, • with non-parental care, • with disabilities…
CLASSROOM CULTURE
Write down the following information: • Classroom management strategies and other routines (e.g. to start/end the lesson, get students' attention, discourage off-task behaviour, regulate speaking turns). • Classroom rules and consequences (reinforcements and punishments). • Conflict resolution protocols (school-wide or classroom-specific). • Distribution of students in the classroom and composition of student groupings. • Other characteristics of the space (e.g. positioning of furniture, light, temperature, decoration…).
LESSON OUTLINE
Write down the following information: • Learning objectives (knowledge, skills and attitudes). • Sequence of activities and timing. • Resources and materials required. • Teaching methodologies, differentiation plans and opportunities for student choice (if contemplated). • Assessment strategies and tools.

Note: Complete this table before the observation.

Available at https://letscareproject.eu/hub/toolkit/

	PART 2A – CONCLUSIONS FROM SAFE TEACHING OBSERVATION Descriptions are required for each factor. These are the result of the joint reflection of peer observation and self-observation.			
Factor	***Strengths** of the educational practice*	***Areas for improvement** of the educational practice*	***Needs** of the educational practice*	*Proposed **improvements***
1. Students have a positive attitude towards learning				
2. Students foster a positive classroom climate during the session				
3. The teacher provides a safe haven for emotional regulation				

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Factor	Strengths of the educational practice	Areas for improvement of the educational practice	Needs of the educational practice	Proposed improvements
PART 2A – CONCLUSIONS FROM SAFE TEACHING OBSERVATION Descriptions are required for each factor. These are the result of the joint reflection of peer observation and self-observation.				
4. The teacher encourages students to engage with the learning objectives				
5. The teacher ensures all students are included and can succeed				
6. The teacher ensures a suitable learning environment through safe classroom management				

Note: Complete this table after the observation.

Available at https://letscareproject.eu/hub/toolkit/

PART 2B – SYNTHESIS OF RESPONSES TO PEDAGOGICAL REFLECTION TOOL ON SAFE SCHOOLS AND SAFE EDUCATION				
Factor	*Strengths of your school*	*Areas for improvement of your school*	*Needs of your school*	*Proposed improvements*
1. The teacher's role as a tutor (also known as homeroom/form teacher) and their working conditions favour Safe Learning and Safe Teaching in the school				
2. The working methods of the school promote a culture of Safe Learning and Safe Teaching				

Available at https://letscareproject.eu/hub/toolkit/

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PART 2B – SYNTHESIS OF RESPONSES TO PEDAGOGICAL REFLECTION TOOL ON SAFE SCHOOLS AND SAFE EDUCATION				
Factor	*Strengths of your school*	*Areas for improvement of your school*	*Needs of your school*	*Proposed improvements*
3. Family participation promotes Safe Learning and Safe Teaching				
4. The management team and administrative conditions facilitate and promote Safe Learning and Safe Teaching				

Note: Complete this table after the observation.

Available at https://letscareproject.eu/hub/toolkit/

PART 2C – THOUGHTS ON THE OBSERVATION PROCESS

Reflect on the conclusions of the whole process of observing and validating your teaching practice in relation to Safe Teaching. You can also describe the experience of self-observation and peer observation (feelings, impressions, sensations...).

Available at https://letscareproject.eu/hub/toolkit/

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Safe Teaching Observation Tool

For direct self/peer observation of Safe Teaching in the classroom

This tool will help you reflect on aspects of **Safe Teaching**, identify strengths and areas for improvement in your teaching practice and select specific actions you can take to develop Safe Teaching in your classroom.

For more information and resources, please refer to the **Safe Teaching Observation Guide**, available at www.letscareproject.eu

→ How is the tool organised?

The instrument consists of two dimensions:

- <u>First dimension</u>. **The attitude of students towards the educational practice facilitates Safe Teaching**. It includes factors relating to student actions during the lesson.

- <u>Second dimension</u>. **The teacher's actions facilitate Safe Teaching**. It includes factors relating to teacher actions during the lesson.

The dimensions are broad categories of focus, which are divided into more specific components called factors.

The factors are themselves divided into indicators, which represent observable attitudes or actions that may be assessed during the lesson.

In other words, factors answer the question «*What do we need to observe to know that something is happening?*» and indicators answer the questions «*What tells us that what we expect is happening? How do I measure what I observe?*».

Available at https://letscareproject.eu/hub/toolkit/

Safe Teaching Observation Tool

→ *Is the tool ready to use?*

We have refrained from making this tool overly specific, recognising that classrooms across Europe are extremely diverse. **You can add, subtract or specify indicators** according to your context or grade level, and tailor them to your goals.

We also recommend that you **set targets for the indicators** that are appropriate to your circumstances. For instance, you may want to specify the number or percentage of students required for an indicator to be fully achieved (e.g. instead of saying 'most students', you may want to say '80% of students' or 'at least 10 students').

Where examples of actions are given, they are by no means exhaustive, and are intended as a guide to help teachers understand what each indicator means. We also recognise that many of the factors go beyond what happens in the classroom or even the school.

Instructions on how to complete the instrument

1. Complete the first table with information from the lesson observed.

2. For each indicator, assign an achievement level (column: Level) from 1 ("not at all achieved") to 5 ("fully achieved"). If the indicator could not be observed in the lesson, answer NOT OBSERVED (N/A).

3. Leave comments in the notes section if details are required.

Data from observed practice

School (country)	
Observed teacher's name	
Observer's name	
Agreed observation date	
Students' grade level	
Subject area of the session	
Learning outcomes (session)	

Available at https://letscareproject.eu/hub/toolkit/

First Dimension. *The attitude of students towards the educational practice facilitates Safe Teaching.*

Observation Criteria			Observation Record	
Factors		**Indicators**	**Level**	**Notes**
1 *Students have a positive attitude towards learning*	1.1	Most students trust their teacher: they ask for help, are interested in answering the teacher's questions, accept the teacher's decisions...		
	1.2	Most students actively engage in the lesson: they watch and listen to the teacher's explanations, complete activities, respond to the teacher's prompts, participate in group discussions…		
	1.3	The students communicate their doubts, ask questions and express their ideas to the teacher.		
	1.4	Most students work autonomously when the activity requires it.		
	…	…		
2 *Students foster a positive classroom climate during the session*	2.1	Most students respect their peers: they actively include them and do not discriminate based on gender, origin, ability, or family situation.		
	2.2	Most students respect the teacher: they accept the teacher's rules, do not challenge the teacher, do not show threatening or aggressive behaviours towards the teacher…		
	2.3	When engaging in group activities, students are willing to work in their assigned groups, and they go to their peers for help.		
	2.4	Most students follow the classroom rules or can correct their behaviour when they fail to do so.		
	2.5	Most students can resolve conflicts through communication and understanding (if a conflict arises).		
	…	…		

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Second Dimension. *The teacher's actions facilitate Safe Teaching*

Observation Criteria			Observation Record	
Factors		**Indicators**	**Level**	**Notes**
3 *The teacher provides a safe haven for emotional regulation*	3.1	At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher creates a welcoming space with the students.		
	3.2	The teacher has a caring and friendly attitude towards the students.		
	3.3	The teacher communicates directly with the students to find out how they are doing.		
	3.4	The teacher communicates respectfully and equally with all their students (they show no preference).		
	3.5	In addition to teaching content, the teacher helps their students to identify and express their emotions.		
	3.6	The teacher conveys to their students that they trust them and their abilities.		
	3.7	The teacher promotes social skills among students: listening, initiating a conversation, holding a conversation, asking a question, thanking others, presenting oneself…		
	…	…		
4 *The teacher encourages students to engage with the learning objectives*	4.1	The teacher shows motivation while delivering the lesson.		
	4.2	The teacher plans an activity at the beginning of the lesson designed to capture the students' attention.		
	4.3	The teacher encourages student participation, aiming to include more introverted students.		
	4.4	The teacher takes into account the voices of the students, allowing them to make decisions.		
	4.5	The teacher provides specific, action-oriented feedback on tasks during the learning process.		
	4.6	The teacher reinforces the positive actions taken by the students.		
	4.7	The teacher frames mistakes as learning opportunities.		
	…	…		

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Second Dimension. *The teacher's actions facilitate Safe Teaching*

Observation Criteria			Observation Record	
Factors		**Indicators**	**Level**	**Notes**
5 *The teacher ensures all students are included and can succeed*	5.1	The teacher adapts activities to help all students reach the learning goals. Adaptations may include varied materials, extra time, fewer tasks, alternative assessments, tailored supports…		
	5.2	The teacher guarantees respect for the diversity of the students by meeting their needs: responding to students' emotional needs, adapting to unforeseen situations, being proactive and flexible…		
	5.3	The teacher seeks the support of other education professionals present in the classroom (psychologists, special education teachers, speech therapists, etc.).		
	5.4	The teacher promotes cooperation and collaborative work among students and encourages heterogeneous grouping (including students from different backgrounds and with different needs).		
	5.5	The teacher attends to students individually to check that they are learning.		
	…	…		
6 *The teacher ensures a suitable learning environment through safe classroom management*	6.1	The teacher gives clear instructions and reminds students of classroom rules.		
	6.2	The teacher addresses the behaviour and not the character of the student.		
	6.3	The teacher does not raise their voice excessively when trying to restore silence and classroom dynamics. Instead, they use non-verbal or less invasive behaviour management strategies.		
	6.4	The teacher enforces classroom rules using consequences that are coherent, fair, and consistent, ensuring students learn from misbehaviour and are treated equally when similar actions occur.		
	6.5	The teacher provides a space for conflict resolution when conflicts arise. If necessary, they mediate through respect and communication.		
	…	…		

Available at https://letscareproject.eu/hub/toolkit/

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Pedagogical Reflection Tool

For indirect observation of Safe Schools and Safe Education

This tool is designed to help you discuss how your school is working towards **Safe Teaching**. It will guide you in the indirect observation and analysis of the school culture and the participation of the different stakeholders. The goal is to reflect on the strengths, needs and areas of improvement of your school and administrational area, in order to encourage or enact change at the school level.

For more information and resources, please refer to the **Safe Teaching Observation Guide**, available at www.letscareproject.eu

→ *How is the tool organised?*

This tool is organised into four factors, which in turn are divided into a series of indicators. These are intended as prompts to guide the discussion.

→ *Is the tool ready to use?*

We have refrained from making this tool overly specific, recognising that schools and school systems across Europe are extremely diverse. You may wish to modify, add or subtract indicators to suit your specific context.

Instructions on how to complete the instrument

1. Discuss the factors in turn, using the indicators you consider most appropriate to encourage discussion.
2. Note down the most interesting reflections and proposals for action.

Available at https://letscareproject.eu/hub/toolkit/

Indirect Observation Criteria

Factor 1. *The teacher's role as a tutor (also known as homeroom/form teacher) and their working conditions favour Safe Learning and Safe Teaching in the school.*

Indicators for reflection	
1.1	The time dedicated to pastoral care and guidance is adequate to cater for the number of students supervised.
1.2	The tutor has spaces to communicate with their students outside the classroom or in addition to their teaching sessions.
1.3	The tutor takes part in activities that allow them to get to know their students beyond academics.
1.4	The tutor has regular personalised meetings with families.
1.5	In meetings with families, the tutor highlights the positive aspects of their child's learning.
1.6	In meetings with families, the tutor mentions the student's main needs.
1.7	The tutor works collaboratively with other teachers in the school.
…	…
Notes	

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Factor 2. *The working methods of the school promote a culture of Safe Learning and Safe Teaching.*

Indicators for reflection	
2.1	Extracurricular activities are carried out involving different educational agents (families, teachers, non-teaching staff, the management team, etc.).
2.2	Teachers are available to offer a space of physical and emotional security to their students outside of the classroom (e.g. during playtime, in the corridors, in the cafeteria).
2.3	There are various education professionals who respond to the needs of students (counselling, psychology, therapeutic pedagogy, speech therapy, social services, translation specialists, etc.).
2.4	The school has a conflict prevention policy and a protocol for tackling potential conflicts when they arise.
2.5	The school has a mental health policy and a protocol for teachers to follow in the event of an emergency with a student.
2.6	The teacher substitution processes ensure minimal disruption to the teaching and learning process.
2.7	Teachers work collaboratively and engage in dynamics such as co-teaching, peer observation, peer-to-peer feedback, joint planning and coordination, organising interdisciplinary projects or sharing resources.
2.8	Professional relationships between teachers are characterised by open communication, trust and support.
...	...
Notes	

Available at https://letscareproject.eu/hub/toolkit/

Factor 3. *Family participation promotes Safe Learning and Safe Teaching.*

Indicators for reflection	
3.1	They actively participate in the various activities that take place in the school.
3.2	They provide a safe home that fulfils the elementary needs of their children (hygiene, nutrition, sleep, etc.).
3.3	They have the availability to help teachers when needed.
3.4	They are actively concerned about their children's learning process.
3.5	They value the role of their child's teachers and tutors.
3.6	They encourage their child's learning (curiosity for learning, reading, verbal communication skills, etc.).
3.7	They do not exert excessive pressure for good academic results.
3.8	They listen to teachers and support them in their decisions.
3.9	They accept mistakes as part of the learning process and look for ways to improve.
3.10	They ensure their child goes to school regularly.
...	...
Notes	

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Factor 4. *The management team and administrative conditions facilitate and promote Safe Learning and Safe Teaching.*

Indicators for reflection	
4.1	The management team is involved in the pedagogical practice of teachers, appreciating and supporting them.
4.2	The management team demonstrates availability, trust, and the ability to listen to teachers.
4.3	The management team encourages collaborative work and creates spaces for reflection and coexistence among the education professionals at the school.
4.4	The management team and the administration promote professional development on issues such as attachment, safe learning, emotional management, classroom management, attention to diversity, dropout prevention, etc.
4.5	The management team has a strong relationship with the students in the school.
4.6	The student/teacher ratio set by the governing body or the school allows for appropriate personalisation of teaching and learning.
4.7	The management team conveys a perspective that diversity is enriching, and the organisational structure of the school reflects this (i.e. students with different backgrounds and learning needs are included in the same classrooms as others).
4.8	The school has ties to organisations and public services within the community, which act as a support network to meet the needs of the students.
4.9	The management team and the administration offer programmes or action plans to guide families in the teaching-learning process (parenting plans, homework, study recommendations, etc.).
4.10	The management team and the administration take steps to meet the elementary needs of vulnerable children whose families are unable to do so.
…	…
Notes	

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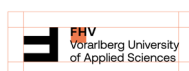
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