

Observation Checklist Worked Example

October 2026

A made-up program. All names, places, organizations and figures are invented.

Visit Details

Item	Detail
Program	Midday Bowl School Meals Program, with the Oakmere Provincial Education Office and an international donor
Site	Karnel Hill Primary School, Eastfold District, Oakmere Province
Date and Time	24 September 2026, 11:00 to 13:30
Observer	Marisol Dalmar, Monitoring Officer, provincial program office
Type of Visit	Routine monitoring visit for the third school term, announced one day ahead
Permission Given By	Principal, on 23 September 2026, including for questions to five children
Activity Observed	Preparation and serving of the midday meal
People Present	371 of 412 enrolled children; 3 cooks, 2 servers, 2 teachers on duty

Purpose

This checklist is used on routine monitoring visits to the primary schools of the Midday Bowl School Meals Program in Eastfold District, Oakmere Province. The program is funded by an international donor (the funder) and run with the provincial education office. The checklist records, by direct observation, whether the daily meal is prepared, served and recorded to the program standard, and it captures what the observer sees at that moment. Scores are compared across schools each term and guide where extra support goes. The program tracks children's nutrition and learning separately, so the checklist leaves them out.

Observer Instructions

Before the Visit

- Check the visit plan: sites are chosen by the term plan, and every site is visited once before any site is visited a second time.
- Tell the principal the day before, without giving your arrival time.
- Bring this checklist, a pen, a watch, a tally counter and a copy of the week's menu.
- Read the standards for the five sections so you can rate without looking them up.

During the Visit

- Arrive an hour before serving and stay until the last child has eaten and the kitchen is cleaned.
- Watch first and ask questions afterward. Step in only when a child is in danger; keep other advice for the debrief.
- Rate each item from what you see at that moment. If you cannot see an item, ask to see it before you leave. If you still cannot, rate it Not Seen and say why in the notes. Use N/A only when the item does not apply at this site.
- Write the facts in the Notes column as you go: numbers, times and what you saw.

After the Visit

- Check that every item has a rating of 0, 1, 2, N/A or Not Seen, and add up the scores before you leave the site. If a safety item is Not Seen, plan a return visit.
- Share the main findings with the principal and cooks, good and bad, and agree on actions and dates.
- Send the signed form to the program office within two working days.

Ethics

Consent

The principal agrees to the visit and is told what will be observed and who will see the notes. Staff are told that the visit looks at the whole meal service. Five children, chosen by taking every tenth child in the line, are asked a few short questions, each answering in turn and in sight of a teacher, with the principal's permission (given on 23 September 2026). Observers record counts and leave out names and photographs of children.

Conduct and Child Protection

- Be polite, dress modestly, decline gifts and meals, and taste the food being observed only when asked to.
- Stay within sight of other adults when speaking with children, and keep questions on the meal service.
- Report any concern about a child's safety to the program safeguarding focal point the same day. If an adult says they are at risk, offer the referral list and pass it on only if they agree, unless there is an immediate risk to life or a legal duty to report.
- Leave if asked, and report this to the office.

Scoring

Rating	Meaning	How to Use It
2	Fully met	The standard is met in full at the time of the visit.
1	Partly met	Part of the standard is met, or it is met only some of the time.
0	Not met	The standard is not met.
N/A	Not applicable	The item does not apply at this site; leave it out of the score and say why in the notes.
Not Seen	Not seen	The observer asked and still could not see the item; leave it out of the score, count it in the Not Seen column of Scores by Section and plan a return visit if it is a safety item.

A section score is the points scored divided by the points possible, where the points possible are 2 for every item rated. Items marked N/A or Not Seen are left out of the score, and the Not Seen items are counted beside each section score so a reader can see how much of the checklist the observer saw. A score of 85 percent or more is Good, 65 to 84 percent is Adequate, and below 65 percent Needs Action. Any 0 on a safety item in the Quality and Safety section needs action the same day. A safety item that was Not Seen needs a return visit.

Observation Checklist

Setting and Readiness

No.	What to Observe	Standard	Rating	Notes
A1	Meal ready on time	Meal ready to serve within 15 minutes of the scheduled time (12:00).	2	Serving began at 12:08.
A2	Kitchen area clean	Surfaces wiped, waste covered, no animals inside.	1	Waste bin open; no animals inside.
A3	Safe water	Boiled or treated water used for cooking and drinking.	2	Boiled water in a covered drum.
A4	Staff in place	At least two trained cooks and two servers on duty.	2	Three cooks and two servers, all trained.
A5	Dining space ready	Shade and a place to sit for every child present.	1	Seats for about 300 of 371 children; the rest sit in the shade.

Delivery of the Activity

No.	What to Observe	Standard	Rating	Notes
B1	Children served	No child present is left without a meal.	2	371 children served; none turned away.
B2	Portion size	Servers use the standard scoop, level, for every child.	1	Scoop used, but heaped for some children at the start.
B3	Menu as planned	Meal matches the menu posted for the day.	2	Rice and beans, as posted.
B4	Serving time	All children served within 20 minutes.	1	Serving took 31 minutes (12:08 to 12:39).
B5	Supervision	A teacher supervises the serving line and the dining area.	2	Two teachers present throughout.

Quality and Safety

No.	What to Observe	Standard	Rating	Notes
C1	Food cooked and hot	Food fully cooked and served hot, with nothing raw or burnt.	2	Served hot and fully cooked.
C2	Stock storage	Sacks off the floor, covered, dry and away from walls, with no expired or damaged stock.	1	Sacks stacked on the floor of a dry room; all stock in date.
C3	Utensils clean	Plates and pots washed in clean water and air-dried before use.	1	Plates rinsed in a shared basin.
C4	Handwashing	Station near the dining area with water and soap, used before eating.	0	Water but no soap at the station.
C5	Fuel store	Fuel kept in a closed store away from the kitchen and the children.	Not Seen	Store locked and the key holder away; asked twice, not shown.

Participant Experience and Inclusion

No.	What to Observe	Standard	Rating	Notes
D1	Respect	Staff speak to children calmly and without shaming.	2	No shouting or shaming seen.
D2	Equal treatment	Girls and boys are served in the same order and with the same portions.	2	Lines alternate girls and boys.
D3	Children with special needs	Children with disabilities have a place and help to eat if needed.	1	A helper for one child; no ramp to the dining area.
D4	Raising concerns	A feedback box or contact is visible and children know how to use it.	0	No box; 4 of 5 children, asked in turn in sight of a teacher, did not know whom to tell.
D5	Children's view	At least 4 of 5 children asked, each in turn, say they had enough to eat.	1	3 of 5 children asked said they had enough.

Records and Materials

No.	What to Observe	Standard	Rating	Notes
E1	Meal count	Today's count is recorded and matches the number served (within 5 percent).	2	Recorded 371; counted 371.
E2	Stock record	Stock card is up to date and agrees with the physical count (within 5 percent).	0	Card last updated 3 days ago; rice count differs by 8 percent.
E3	Menu poster	Menu and entitlements poster displayed in the local language.	2	Displayed in the kitchen and at the gate.
E4	Cold storage	Perishable items kept cold.	N/A	No perishable items on the menu.

Observer Notes

Saw: the serving line moved slowly at the start because one cook served alone for the first eight minutes. Smaller children were at the back and were served last.

Think: a second serving line would shorten the wait and would help the younger children most. The soap was most likely missing because no budget line covers it, but I did not ask.

Summary

Scores by Section

Section	Items Rated	Not Seen	Points Scored	Points Possible	Score
Setting and Readiness	5	0	8	10	80%
Delivery of the Activity	5	0	8	10	80%
Quality and Safety	4	1	4	8	50%
Participant Experience and Inclusion	5	0	6	10	60%
Records and Materials	3	0	4	6	67%
Total	22	1	30	44	68%

Main Findings

The meal was on time, hot and well supervised, every child present was served, and the meal count agrees with the number served. The overall score is 68 percent (30 of 44 points from 22 items rated), which is Adequate. Two sections need action: Quality and Safety (50 percent, mainly because there was no soap at the handwashing station) and Participant Experience and Inclusion (60 percent, because children had no way to raise a concern and some said they were still hungry). One safety item, the fuel store, was Not Seen, is left out of the score and needs a return visit.

Follow-Up Actions

Issue	Action Required	Responsible	By When
C4: no soap at the handwashing station.	Buy soap and add it to the weekly supplies list.	Principal	Same day, 24 September 2026
B4: serving took 31 minutes.	Open a second serving line.	Principal and cooks	1 October 2026
A2 and C3: waste bin open and plates rinsed in a shared basin.	Fit a lid to the bin; wash plates in clean water and air-dry them on a rack.	Cook in charge of the kitchen	1 October 2026
E2: stock card out of date and 8 percent off.	Update the card and count the sacks every Friday.	Cook in charge of the storeroom	1 October 2026
D4: children cannot raise a concern.	Put up a feedback box and explain it in each class.	Principal and class teachers	8 October 2026
C2: sacks stored on the floor.	Build a wooden platform for the sacks.	School management committee	8 October 2026
A5 and D3: seats for about 300 of 371 children and no ramp for a child who needs help.	Borrow benches for the meal and build a short ramp to the dining area.	School management committee	30 October 2026
B2 and D5: uneven portions and some children still hungry.	Retrain servers on the standard scoop and ask children again.	Program officer	30 October 2026
C5: fuel store not seen.	Keep a key at the school and show the store at the follow-up visit.	Principal	30 October 2026

Follow-up visit: the week of 2 November 2026, after the last action falls due on 30 October. The observer checks every action above, including the fuel store, which was not seen on 24 September.

Signatures

Role	Name	Signature and Date
Observer	Marisol Dalmar	Signed, 24 September 2026
Site Representative	Hollis Verne, Principal, Karnel Hill Primary School	Signed, 24 September 2026