



INSPECTING SCHOOLS

Handbooks for Inspecting

SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND PUPIL REFERRAL UNITS

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOLS

published by The Stationery Office



INSPECTING SCHOOLS

Handbook for Inspecting **SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND PUPIL REFERRAL UNITS** *with guidance on self-evaluation*

This *Handbook* applies to the inspection of schools in England from January 2000

published by The Stationery Office

on this site.



INSPECTING SCHOOLS

Handbook for Inspecting **SECONDARY SCHOOLS** *with guidance on self-evaluation*

This *Handbook* applies to the inspection of schools in England from January 2000

published by The Stationery Office

on this site.



INSPECTING SCHOOLS

Handbook for Inspecting **PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOLS** *with guidance on self-evaluation*

This *Handbook* applies to the inspection of schools in England from January 2000

published by The Stationery Office

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

9. OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

Where additional features are specified for inspection, inspectors must evaluate and report on:

- the overall effectiveness of each feature.

In determining their judgements, inspectors should consider the extent to which:

- one or more specified criteria are met.

SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

PART C OF THE INSPECTION REPORT

After other SPECIFIED FEATURES, if any, the inspection report will contain data and indicators which are defined by the report template which is in use at the time of the inspection.

THE INSPECTION OF OTHER FEATURES

The inspection focus for any additional features for inspection, for example a survey of an issue in secondary schools over a particular term, will be specified along with the feature itself.

Each feature specified will be accompanied by:

- an evaluation and reporting requirement indicated by ☐;
- up to three inspection criteria;
- a commentary covering the inspection focus;
- a summary of reporting requirements;
- guidance in the format of this *Handbook*, including sections on the inspection focus, making your judgement, and guidance on the inspection criteria.

Note

Different computer platforms view symbols differently, if you are using a Macintosh the symbol will view as ☐, if you are using a PC it will view as ☐.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

AFTER THE INSPECTION

THE FINAL TEAM MEETING

111 The main purpose of this team meeting is to arrive at accurate and thoroughly secure corporate judgements about the school, recording these in the *Record of Corporate Judgements*. You, as the registered inspector, need to manage this meeting so that the hypotheses tested out during the inspection are discussed and conclusions reached. You need to bring judgements together so that the culmination of the meeting is the team's overall view of the effectiveness of the school. The strengths and weaknesses recorded in WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL and WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED also need to be specifically agreed by the team.

112 Therefore, all inspectors need to have reflected on their evidence, to have reached their own views, and to be prepared to contribute these at the meeting. This means the meeting must not take place immediately after the inspection finishes. If the inspection finishes at lunchtime, you will need time to complete your *Inspection Notebook* in a FULL INSPECTION, or to gather your thoughts together in a SHORT INSPECTION before a meeting later in the afternoon. If the inspection finishes at the end of the school day, the final team meeting must not be held that day.

113 The meeting must be structured to achieve the goals set out above. In particular, the following areas must be included:

- discussions leading to the completion of the *Record of Corporate Judgements*;
- agreement about the contents of the summary of the inspection report;
- consideration, as a team, whether the school is in need of special measures, has serious weaknesses or is underachieving.

114 We expect that all inspectors will attend this team meeting. We recognise that there will be exceptional circumstances where this is not possible. If that is the case, the inspector concerned must provide the registered inspector with his/her completed *Inspection Notebook* (except the draft text for the report) and any additional points that need to be brought to the attention of other inspectors.

FEEDBACK TO THE HEADTEACHER AND SENIOR STAFF

115 Your feedback should give senior management an early but firm basis on which to start planning in response to the inspection's findings. In particular, the feedback to senior management should rehearse the significant evidence and judgements about:

- the school's outcomes, particularly standards achieved by pupils;
- the factors which most account for what is achieved, particularly the strengths and weaknesses in teaching in the school;
- the effectiveness of work done by managers and heads of departments;
- the issues identified by inspection as priorities for improving the school.

116 The staff attending the meeting should have the opportunity to clarify any of these findings, ask for further examples of evidence on which particular judgements about the school are based, and explore with inspectors the priorities for action.

117 The feedback to the headteacher and invited staff must be after the inspection has finished. It must not be on the last day of the inspection or even the day after. As the registered inspector, you must leave sufficient time to reflect on the evidence and corporate judgements in order to prepare properly.

118 The headteacher can invite whom he or she wishes to the feedback meeting, but it is usually for the senior management team only. No one other than the staff of the school should normally attend. There may be exceptional circumstances when the presence of an LEA officer as an observer is justified, for example:

- if the school has a temporary headteacher pending a permanent appointment;
- if the headteacher is judged likely to find the inspection findings distressing.

119 In such exceptional circumstances, the school can invite the officer only with the consent of the registered inspector.

120 The formal feedback should not be confused with the interim feedback offered to headteachers towards the end of an

inspection by many registered inspectors. This is helpful to the school in relieving uncertainties and stress.

FEEDBACK TO THE 'APPROPRIATE AUTHORITY'

121 The success of the feedback to the 'appropriate authority', usually the governing body, hinges on how effectively inspectors communicate the main inspection findings clearly and frankly to a mixed audience, many of whom are well-informed but not professional teachers or educators. The same general principles apply to giving feedback to the governing body as to the senior management team, but the presentation to the governing body should have much less detail. The presentation should include a careful explanation of specific matters which should be included in the post-inspection plan. This is to ensure that the governing body is clear at an early stage about what the school should do to improve. It will often help to use visual aids to summarise the main points of the presentation.

122 The governing body for an LEA-maintained school may, if it wishes, invite an LEA officer (or diocesan education officer or similar religious adviser in the case of schools with a religious character) to be present as an observer at the oral feedback to the governing body. In most cases you will wish to include these observers in the dialogue. However, as the registered inspector, you may need to remind observers of their role if they become too assertive.

SOME GENERAL POINTS ABOUT FEEDBACK

123 Formal feedback meetings must take place before the inspection report is finished and as soon as is practicable after the inspection. The content of the oral feedback is confidential and the findings of the inspection should not be released, particularly to parents and the press, until after the 'appropriate authority' has received the report. You may wish to remind those attending these meetings of their confidentiality.

124 The quality of the feedback is an important factor in influencing how the school responds to the inspection findings, and particularly in drawing up its post-inspection action plan for improvement. Effective feedback:

- is well structured, clear, succinct and unrushed;
- makes use of appropriate visual aids to help communicate the inspection findings, especially to governing bodies;
- places greater emphasis on what the school does well and what could be improved, and why, but also covers the relevant reporting requirements in the *Evaluation Schedule*;
- presents a balanced and rounded picture of the school;
- gives well-chosen examples or observations that show you know the school;
- allows opportunities for discussion and clarification of the inspection findings;
- avoids giving detailed advice to the school about how to tackle the improvements that are needed.

125 It is expected that all oral reporting will proceed smoothly and professionally and that feedback will be of value to staff and governors alike. If, however, the behaviour of those at a feedback meeting makes it impossible to proceed with a sensible professional dialogue, you as the registered inspector have the right to confine the feedback simply to the main findings of the inspection and the key issues for action. In extreme cases, you have the right not to proceed with the oral report.

126 The use of tape recorders by headteachers, governing bodies and individual teachers at feedback meetings is entirely at the discretion of the registered inspector. It is reasonable for you not to proceed with a feedback meeting if there is any insistence on their use against your will. OFSTED has no objection to the tape recording of feedback meetings if the registered inspector agrees.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

4. HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

Inspectors must evaluate and report on:

- **the quality and range of opportunities for learning provided by the school for all pupils, highlighting features which are particular strengths and weaknesses;**

including specific comment on:

- **extra-curricular activities** including study support;
 - **the provision made for personal, social and health education**, including sex education and attention to drug misuse;
 - **the quality of links with the community and with other schools, colleges or initial teacher training consortia;**
-
- **whether the school meets statutory curricular requirements, including provision of religious education where appropriate;**
 - **how well the school cultivates pupils' personal - including spiritual, moral, social and cultural - development.**

In determining their judgements, inspectors should consider the extent to which the school:

- provides a broad range of worthwhile opportunities which meet the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of pupils, including those having special educational needs;
- has effective strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy;
- provides enrichment through its extra-curricular provision, including support for learning outside the school day;
- is socially inclusive by ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all pupils;
- provides pupils with the knowledge and insights into values and beliefs, and enables them to reflect on their experiences in a way which develops their spiritual awareness and self-knowledge;
- promotes principles which distinguish right from wrong;
- encourages pupils to take responsibility, show initiative and develop an understanding of living in a community;
- teaches pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions and the diversity and richness of other cultures;
- provides effectively for personal and social education, including health education, sex education and attention to drug misuse;
- has links with the community which contribute to pupils' learning;
- has constructive relationships with partner institutions such as link schools.

INSPECTION FOCUS

You should evaluate the extent to which the content and organisation of the curriculum provide access to the full range of learning experiences and promote the high achievement and personal development of all pupils. The curriculum comprises all the planned activities within and beyond the school day.

The school should meet all it is required to by statute in Key Stages 1 and 2, and the beginning of Key Stage 3 for middle-deemed-primary schools. That is, it should meet National Curriculum requirements in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, the other foundation subjects and, where it applies, the locally agreed syllabus requirements for religious education.

You will need to refer to the appropriate section in *Form S3*, the school self-audit, to gauge the school's perception of how far it meets statutory curriculum requirements. Your analysis of the information from these sources should enable you to raise pertinent questions with the school and to focus on areas which may need to be followed up during the inspection. If everything is in order and the school has made its provision on the basis of what is right for its pupils, then do not waste time looking further. You should only pursue further evidence if you suspect there is a significant problem in terms of what the pupils are entitled to receive, or if there is an area or subject of the curriculum that is particularly good.

Effective schools help pupils to become confident people with enduring values, able to contribute effectively to society. The experiences offered are rich and stimulating, contributing to the personal development of all individuals, and so helping them prepare for life as adults.

In your assessment of the opportunities offered to pupils you should find out what the school is really good at. Take note of any areas of excellence, for example in art, music or sport. The good school will ensure that the quality and range of opportunities for learning cover all the key aspects of personal development, with an emphasis on provision for **spiritual, moral social and cultural development**.

Within the framework of '**best value**' (see *Annex 1*), the principle of 'challenge' means that the school should know why its curriculum has been planned as it has. Part of your work is to explore this; in particular, how the school has arrived at the balance of the statutory to the non-statutory curriculum, and how the school checks that it is providing what parents want when, for example providing a modern foreign language in the primary school.

The curriculum in nursery schools or classes and reception classes should cover the following areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; language and literacy; mathematics; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development. This curriculum should emphasise personal, social and emotional development, language and literacy and mathematics. The approach should be through talk, enquiry and play, with the aim of developing positive attitudes to learning.

The evidence you gather will be common to all inspections; however, in **SHORT INSPECTIONS** you are only required to make judgements and report on the three sections that relate to the quality and range of the curriculum, to the statutory requirements, and to pupils' personal development.

MAKING JUDGEMENTS

A wide range of evidence contributes to the evaluation of the curriculum. Before the inspection, refer to *Forms S2* and *S3* to gauge the school's perception of how far it meets the statutory curriculum requirements and the DfEE recommendations for 'taught time' for each Key Stage. If the taught time falls below the recommended minimum, you must report this. Form an impression of the quality of what the school offers through your reading of the prospectus and other documents. This impression will be reinforced or rejected once you begin gathering evidence in the school.

In **SHORT INSPECTIONS**, extensive evaluation of curriculum provision is neither possible nor desirable, but must include whether or not it meets statutory requirements and how well it provides for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

The following characteristics illustrate where to pitch judgements about the quality of the curriculum.

Very good or excellent The curriculum interprets statutory requirements in stimulating, as well as structured ways, providing for high achievement, particularly in core subjects, and offering pupils a wealth of additional opportunities. It uses resources from within and outside the school very effectively to enrich the curriculum. High priority is given to developing pupils' facility in the basic skills across subjects. Pupils' personal development is promoted through opportunities for pupils to take significant responsibility and initiative. Pupils clearly understand what is right and wrong, and show a high degree of respect for the differences between people and for their values and beliefs. The curriculum draws positively on their own cultural, family and religious backgrounds.

Satisfactory or better The curriculum meets the statutory requirements, including those for children aged 5 and under, and takes account of the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy. Some additional activities are provided which are suitable for children of different ages and needs. Reasonable use is made of resources within the community; visits and other activities are planned to contribute to pupils' learning. Some opportunities for responsibility and initiative are provided. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong, and respect the traditions, values and beliefs of others.

However, the curriculum **cannot be satisfactory** if:

- statutory requirements, including any significant aspects of the core subjects, are not met, and/or;
- it takes little or no account of the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy, especially where standards of literacy and numeracy are not high enough;
- it does little to inculcate respect, tolerance and good behaviour;
- it is unduly narrow in opportunities for personal development or curricular enrichment.

Example 4.1

Extract from a nursery school inspection report *The school provides a wide range of stimulating learning activities both in and out of doors for its children. An example was the area set up as an airport and aeroplane, where children 'check in' and 'travel' on a plane. The well-planned curriculum covers all the national Early Learning Goals. Both teachers and nursery nurses take an active part in planning and developing the curriculum, and build into it the role of volunteer helpers which include many parents. Staff are fully aware of the children with particular needs. For example, when a group of children were exploring the contents of a 'feely bag' the nursery nurse adapted her questions to match the different levels of the children's use of language. Teachers create too few opportunities for children to talk about what they are doing, however, and this detracts from the standards they could achieve in language and literacy.*

[Contributes to a judgement that the curriculum is satisfactory (4)]

Example 4.2

Extract from a Record of Corporate Judgements in the full inspection of a primary school

Strengths:	Sources of evidence:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ KS1 fully meets statutory requirementsmuch of high quality◦ EN and MA well planned building in LYN effectively both Key Stages◦ Broad range of extra-curricularactivities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ EFs on curriculum analysis; discussionswith HT and co-ordinators◦ EFs from Y2, Y6, Y3 EFs from co-ordinator◦ EF JS12
Weaknesses:	Sources of evidence:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ KS2 time allocation does not meetDfEE minimum◦ Emphasis on EN and MA at KS2 squeezed time for SC which is not sufficient to cover the NC◦ IT in KS2 only included communicatinginformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Form S2; discussion with HT◦ EF interview with SC co-ordinator; scrutiny of work EFs of SC lessons◦ EF on analysis of ICT policy

Overall evaluation:

School does not meet statutory requirements for NC in KS2 in science and ICT because too little time is provided for KS2 curriculum.

[Contributes to judgements of a good curriculum at KS1 (3) and a poor one at KS2 (6)]

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

SUMMARY REPORT	<p>In all inspections, the first boxes of the table headed other aspects of the school must be completed, with comment on particular strengths and weaknesses, and any areas that do not meet statutory requirements.</p> <p>If any of these are a feature of improvement in the school, report this in the section HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION.</p> <p>Any aspects that are particularly good or need to improve should be reported under WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL and WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED.</p>
SHORT INSPECTIONS	Expand your judgements in the commentary on matters listed in WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL or WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED.
FULL INSPECTIONS	Report on overall quality and, particularly, on curricular strengths and weaknesses under the heading HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

GUIDANCE ON USING THE CRITERIA

- **The quality and range of opportunities for learning provided by the school for all pupils, highlighting features which are particular strengths and weaknesses**
- **Whether the school meets statutory requirements, including provision of religious education where appropriate**

Does the school provide a broad range of worthwhile opportunities which meet the interests, aptitudes and special needs of pupils, including those having special educational needs?

Before the inspection you should refer to *Form S3* to check whether or not the school is meeting the statutory requirements for the curriculum. Section D2 of *Form S2* will enable you to evaluate how the school allocates the time available to the different subjects of the curriculum. Your evaluation of the breadth and quality of the provision requires you to consider how the school has made decisions about what will be included in the curriculum, and the time allocated to different aspects, taking account of:

- the programmes of study of the National Curriculum and the Early Learning Goals;
- the importance of literacy and numeracy;
- the current guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA);
- the needs of all pupils;
- the best use of the specialist skills of staff;
- the organisation of the school day;
- how the school ensures the needs of all pupils are met and that they have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and opportunities to succeed in them.

Displays can give a first impression of standards of work in some subjects. Look for displays which cover a broad range of the subjects of the curriculum and other aspects of school life and which encourage pupils to make a response.

Evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum gives you useful information about how the school sees its role in preparing pupils for the next stage of their education as well as for their future adult life. An effective school uses all sources of information about its incoming pupils to make sure it tailors the curriculum to meet their needs. This is particularly important when children are coming to school for the first time.

The way the room is set out, particularly in the nursery, can give you a lot of information about the opportunities provided. For example, if the resources are clearly labelled and easily accessible to pupils, it is more likely that they will draw from them as needed in their work. There should be a good range of books, materials and equipment.

Find out how pupils with special educational needs are organised, for example in withdrawal groups, in classes with support, or in set groups, as the arrangements may make a difference to the curriculum pupils receive. Judge how well the curriculum is organised so as to meet the needs of pupils with SEN, taking particular note of the class teacher's provision, as this forms the basis for further interventions by the school or from outside the school. Check that the arrangements for using IEPs are effective in ensuring that individual needs are met while enabling pupils to have full access to the curriculum. There are likely to be specific arrangements to provide extra help for these pupils in literacy and numeracy and other communication skills,

and for some of the pupils, help in gaining independence and mobility training, or extra help for those that are disturbed and need counselling. For pupils with statements, look at a representative sample by age and disability, and check that the provision in their statements is being implemented. In designated units or resource bases, judge whether the pupils' specific programmes are met, either by the class teacher in the base, or by the arrangements the school makes in all classes. Assess how well pupils in the unit are integrated in all aspects of the life of the school and whether the curricular arrangements promote inclusion of all pupils with SEN.

Does the school have effective strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy?

Every school is expected to have a strategy for teaching literacy and numeracy. Most schools reflect the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy. Whether or not they do, you need to evaluate how effective their strategies are. In reaching this judgement you must take account of the results the school achieves in National Curriculum tests and any other assessments.

Does the school provide enrichment through its extra-curricular provision, including support for learning outside the school day?

The effective school will make arrangements to help all pupils take advantage of opportunities to learn, for example by visits out of school if used well, running after-school homework clubs and extra-curricular activities at different times of the day so that all pupils who wish to can attend. The range of extra-curricular opportunities often depends on the skills and availability of staff and parents, but usually encompasses, at least, some sort of sport and musical activity. The opportunity to take part and the number of pupils involved in all such activities will contribute to your evaluation.

Is the curriculum socially inclusive by ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all pupils?

You need to make sure that you have accurately defined the groups of pupils who form the intake of the school in THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL. Once you have defined the groups, check if your preliminary analysis of performance and other output data indicate if there are any significant differences in the attainment, experience and benefit gained from what the school provides. If so use these to guide your observations, work sampling and discussions with pupils. Evaluate the extent to which:

- all pupils benefit according to need from what the school provides;
 - any groups of pupils do not do as well as others and if the school is aware of this;
 - the school offers justifiable explanations for any differences;
 - the school has taken any effective action if needed.
- **For FULL INSPECTIONS only, the school's provision for personal, social and health education, and the quality of the school's links with the community and other schools, colleges and initial teacher training consortia**

Does the school provide for personal and social education, including health education, sex education and attention to drug misuse?

Schools must promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experience of adult life. This is achieved through the curriculum of the school, its ethos and its response to the individual needs of pupils.

You should establish whether provision is coherent, and appropriate to the ages and needs of pupils, and whether pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of health issues, and an awareness of their ability to make choices relating to their health. Sex education may be an element of health education provision if the governors have decided to include it as part of the curriculum.

Schools are free to decide for themselves how best to organise drug education for their pupils. They may provide it within science lessons or, as appropriate, within other subject areas or as part of a broader programme of personal, social and health education. The essential aim of drug education should be to give pupils the facts, emphasise the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, and give them the knowledge and skills to make informed and healthy choices now and later in life.

Does the school have links with the community which contribute to pupils' learning?

Assess the different links the school has established and gauge if the school has done all it can to tap the resources available within its locality and beyond. Access to the Internet and well-developed skills in information and communications

technology mean that many pupils now have enriching opportunities to link with others around the world. The school should be capitalising on these. Whenever possible, evaluate the school's involvement with the wider community, using such things as sporting or cultural events to broaden the experiences offered to pupils. There may be worthwhile visits out of school as well as inviting visitors and representatives of the community in to share their lifestyle and skills with pupils.

Does the school have constructive relationships with partner institutions such as link schools?

The most important link the school should have is with the children's families. Many primary and nursery schools, particularly those designated an Early Excellence Centre, will have other links, for example with visitors, playgroups, childminders, mother and toddler groups, and with other early years providers in the private and voluntary sectors. These links can be formal through a local Early Years Forum or informal and based on neighbourhood clusters which meet on a regular basis. Many primary schools have links with other local schools for all kinds of curriculum support, competitions, festivals and events which greatly enrich the curricular opportunities available to all pupils. Gauge the effectiveness of links with other schools the children have come from or to which they will transfer, particularly in relation to the transfer of their records and attainment data.

■ **How well the school cultivates pupils' personal - including spiritual, moral, social and cultural - development**

Your evaluation of the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development links these four aspects of personal development in which schools have an important part to play. Although each aspect of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development can be viewed separately, the provision is likely to be interconnected and your evaluation should reflect this. Your focus should be on what the school actively does to promote pupils' development in these aspects.

A good deal of your evidence for this section will come from your classroom observations. You need to be alert to situations which contribute to pupils' personal development and record them on your *Evidence Forms* so that you have a range of examples for possible inclusion in the written report.

Does the school provide pupils with knowledge and insights into values and beliefs, and enable them to reflect on their experiences in a way which develops their spiritual awareness and self-knowledge?

Assess how well the staff provide opportunities that help pupils explore the values of others. Young children will only be able to develop insight into the values and beliefs of others if their own ideas are valued by their peers, parents and teachers. As they get older, acceptance of these ideas continues in importance and spreads across all aspects of the curriculum, for example in stories, drama, art, music, history and religious education.

This is more likely to be developed well when pupils have opportunities to reflect on life's fundamental questions in ways appropriate to their age and stage of learning. Good teachers use events, such as the birth of a brother or sister or the death of a pet, to help pupils reflect on who we are, why we are here and our place in the world. You will need to judge how effectively the school plans to develop spiritual awareness. The pupils will usually be very keen to tell you about special moments in their lives. This does not need to have any religious connection, but in many schools, particularly church schools, religious education will make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development.

Collective worship

In all schools other than nursery schools, the law requires the provision of a daily act of collective worship. In denominational schools this will be inspected under section 23 School Inspections Act 1996. Evaluation should focus on whether the acts of worship are well planned and encourage pupils to explore questions about meaning and purpose, values and beliefs. Compliance with statutory requirements on collective worship will be recorded in *Form S3* by the school.

Taken over a term, the majority of such acts of worship should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character. The school prospectus should make clear the parents' right to withdraw their children from collective worship. In forming a judgement about the character and quality of worship in schools, the following points may be helpful:

- worship is generally understood to imply the recognition of a supreme being. It should be clear that the words used and/or the activities observed in worship recognise the existence of a deity;
- collective worship should not be judged by the presence or absence of a particular ingredient. It might include: sharing values of a Christian nature; opportunities for prayers or meditation; opportunities to reflect upon readings from holy texts or other writings which bring out religious themes; and performance of music, drama and/or dance;
- each act of worship observed in the school should be considered together before reaching a judgement and then set alongside what is planned over a term. On balance, if it is judged that what the school provides is not in keeping with

the spirit of the law, then this should be reported clearly;

- worship may be judged not to fulfil statutory requirements but could still be observed to make a powerful contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. If this is the case it should be explained in the report.

Does the school promote principles which distinguish right from wrong?

It is a fundamental responsibility of teachers and other adults who work with nursery and primary-age pupils to help them understand the difference between right and wrong. Moral development means that the child's actions are governed by an internalised set of principles and values rather than any fear of sanctions or craving for reward. With support, nursery children are aware of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Older pupils are able to make moral decisions through the application of reason, even though they may not cope quite so securely with problems in which they are emotionally involved. In other words, their learning about moral issues may be at a different point from their behaviour. Moral and social education are closely related and depend on the school promoting and fostering values such as honesty, fairness and respect for truth and justice.

Evaluate how effectively the school provides a moral code as a basis for behaviour which is promoted throughout the life of the school. Pupils should be given chances to develop and express moral values and extend their personal understanding across a range of issues, including equal opportunities and personal rights and responsibilities. Incidents which arise in school and well-chosen stories may also be useful in helping children distinguish between right and wrong behaviour.

Does the school encourage pupils to take responsibility, show initiative and develop an understanding of living in a community?

Schools which are effective in promoting the social development of their pupils provide many opportunities for them to take responsibility, show initiative and develop an understanding of living in a community. Whatever the age of the child, social competence hinges on the acceptance of group rules. Learning how to relate to others and to take responsibility for one's own actions is an important part of social education. The quality of the relationships in the school is of crucial importance in forming pupils' attitudes to good social behaviour and self-discipline.

Adults provide powerful role models for children and should, therefore, model the values such as courtesy and respect in all their dealings with other adults and pupils in the school. Assess how well the adults in the school encourage pupils to work together co-operatively, to compete fairly and to act on their own initiative. Look for the ways in which pupils are helped to take responsibility. In the nursery, this may include getting out and putting away resources or caring for living things such as plants or pets. For older pupils there may be chances to look after younger pupils or run activities such as fundraising for a charity. It may also include taking part as a member of a school council, with real opportunities to voice opinions and have them acted on.

Does the school teach the pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions as well as the diversity and richness of other cultures?

The school's approach should be an active one. Look for evidence of how the school promotes the cultural traditions of its own area and the ethnic and cultural diversity of British society. You may see it in something as simple as teaching traditional playground games, or in capitalising on the skills of local artists, workers and residents of the area. Contributions to cultural development can come from all subjects of the curriculum as well as extra-curricular activities. Art, literature and music are often areas where traditions of other cultures can be drawn upon, appreciated and valued. These areas are enriched when the school is able to draw on people from different cultures and countries to share experiences with the pupils.

5. HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

Inspectors must evaluate and report on:

- the steps taken to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety, including the school's arrangements for child protection;
- the effectiveness of the school's assessment and monitoring of pupils' academic performance, and monitoring of personal development and attendance;
- the effectiveness of the school's educational and personal support and guidance in raising pupils' achievements.

In determining their judgements, inspectors should consider the extent to which the school:

- ensures the health, safety, care and protection of all pupils;
- has effective measures to promote good attendance and behaviour, and to eliminate oppressive behaviour including all forms of harassment and bullying;
- has effective arrangements for assessing pupils' attainments and progress;
- uses its assessment information to guide its planning;
- provides effective support and advice for all its pupils, informed by the monitoring of their academic progress, personal development, behaviour and attendance.

INSPECTION FOCUS

Focus your inspection on how effectively the school cares for its pupils, whatever their needs or circumstances, not just on the policies and systems. There are three components to the inspection of care and guidance:

- the welfare and safety and child protection arrangements for pupils;
- the assessment of pupils' academic and personal development, as well as their attendance;
- the use of support and guidance to raise pupils' achievement.

Although much of the evidence you gather will be common to all three components, in **SHORT INSPECTIONS** you are only required to make judgements and report on the first of these, *unless* concerns emerge about the care of pupils. If you are concerned, you will need to explore these further. In all inspections:

- give priority to pupils' safety and protection, and in your report summary and commentary state any aspect of care which is a strength or weakness;
- always report orally any shortcomings in health and safety matters to the governors. Do not publish any information that could jeopardise pupils' safety.

If pupils are not well cared for they will not be able to learn effectively. This is particularly true of the youngest children in nursery and primary schools who are much more dependent upon adults for their welfare. There are other particularly vulnerable pupils that the school needs to protect, for example those with special educational needs, those who are shy and withdrawn, and those who are known to be at risk.

From your pre-inspection analysis and initial visit you already know some of the challenges and issues the school faces. These will give a specific focus to your inspection.

MAKING JUDGEMENTS

In **SHORT INSPECTIONS**, take account of all the relevant criteria to come to your judgement about whether pupils' welfare is safeguarded, even though you are not required to report on them. This ensures that all aspects of welfare are considered.

The following characteristics illustrate where to pitch judgements about how well the school cares for its pupils.

Very good or better	Teachers know individual pupils very well, including those from particular groups or with SEN, and are fully aware of their physical, emotional and intellectual needs. They respond to them in a positive and supportive way. The day-to-day work of the school, in terms of supervision, awareness of hazards within and beyond the school, and the promotion of healthy living, creates a strong sense of the importance of health and safety of pupils. The school has effective practices to identify how well pupils are making progress, particularly in the core subjects, and the achievements of different groups. This identification is followed by good diagnosis of what such groups do well and how they might improve. The school has effective ways of being aware of developing patterns in pupils' behaviour or attendance and relating these patterns to achievement. The systematic monitoring of pupils leads to changes or modifications to the curriculum, for example, or to individual support for pupils' performance and development.
Satisfactory or better	Teachers know pupils well, recognise their needs and respond well to them. The working environment is safe and pupils are well supervised at work and at play. The school maintains records of pupils' achievements in most aspects of the core curriculum and individual action plans are in place and used for pupils with special education needs to monitor progress and guide teaching. The school promotes good behaviour and attendance through agreed, shared and successfully implemented policies. The monitoring of the school carries out of pupils' performance and development is used to make changes in approach and emphasis.

The school's care of its pupils **cannot be satisfactory** if:

- it does not take reasonable steps to ensure the care of individual pupils and minimise the possibility of significant harm;
- it does not have satisfactory arrangements to track the progress of pupils in English and mathematics and take action to raise achievement;
- it does not adequately monitor and deal with problems of behaviour and attendance.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

SUMMARY REPORT	On all inspections you must complete the box, HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS? , in the table headed OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL with comments on any particular strengths and weaknesses. If any of these are a feature of improvement in the school, record this in the section HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION . Any aspects that are particularly good or need to improve should be reported under WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL or WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED .
SHORT INSPECTIONS	Expand your judgements in the commentary as reported in either WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL and WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED .
FULL INSPECTIONS	Report under the heading HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

On **FULL INSPECTIONS**, assessment and monitoring of pupils' academic performance and monitoring of personal development and attendance **must be considered unsatisfactory** if:

- the school is ineffective in assessing the pupils' attainments and does not track their progress in core subjects;
- the school is not effective in monitoring the pupils' personal development;
- the school does not adequately monitor and promote attendance, and does not take effective steps to reduce unauthorised absence.

Example 5.1

Extract from the inspection report on a full inspection of a first school

Teachers and support staff keep good records to keep track of the pupils' academic or personal development. They know the pupils well and have precise information to tell them what the pupils have done well or where they need help. As a consequence, support is directed effectively to the pupils who need it most. For example, the learning support assistant was directed to help the youngest reception pupils that needed assistance in getting undressed and dressed for physical education.

[Good assessment and support for pupils (3)]

On FULL INSPECTIONS, the effectiveness of the school's educational and personal support and guidance **must be considered unsatisfactory** if:

- the support and guidance to pupils fails to give attention to raising pupils' achievements and improving behaviour and attendance.

GUIDANCE ON USING THE CRITERIA

The following guidance provides further details for each of the criteria. Refer to these as appropriate to your inspection in the context of the particular school.

- **The steps taken to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety, including the school's arrangements for child protection**

Does the school ensure the health, safety, care and protection of all pupils?

The quality of care is evident in *all* the relationships in the school, in teachers' knowledge of pupils and their needs, and how the school acts to promote the best interests of all its individual pupils. Take account of the four main principles which govern the Children Act and check whether they are understood by the school. These are that the school should:

- work in pupils' best interests to safeguard their welfare and promote their development;
- work in partnership with other responsible agencies to secure pupils' welfare;
- consider the wishes and feelings of those with parental responsibility;
- give due consideration to the child's religion, racial origin, cultural and linguistic background.

Pupils' welfare and safety are reflected in the quality of care they receive and the effectiveness of the school's arrangements to:

- ensure that each pupil is well known by at least one teacher, who links effectively with staff with key responsibilities in the school;
- ensure that all pupils and staff work in a safe environment;
- ensure child protection arrangements comply with procedures that are agreed locally;
- promote good attendance;
- promote good behaviour which is free from harassment and bullying;
- identify and meet individual needs, including those of pupils with special educational needs;
- promote healthy and safe living.

In all inspections, the data provided by the school will give you a starting point for your further investigations. For example, the data on attendance and exclusions and information from the headteacher's statement in *Form S4*, will give you important indicators.

When you walk around the school judge the safety of the environment for pupils and staff:

- ask about the day-to-day working practices to ensure that pupils and staff are protected from harm;
- check the health and safety policy is regularly monitored;
- check the quality of supervision of young children during playtime, and before and after school, and the collection arrangements for young children.

Good schools will successfully build on their day-to-day arrangements in complying with procedures adopted by the local

Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC). You should check whether:

- staff are aware who the designated senior member of staff responsible is;
- the school policy is in line with local procedures;
- staff are aware of what to do if they suspect, or have disclosed to them, that an individual child may need protection;
- the designated member of staff has detailed knowledge of local procedures;
- staff know who the LEA responsible officer is;
- staff have knowledge of the possible signs and symptoms of child abuse;
- new staff are informed about what to do as part of their induction;
- all staff receive in-service training to maintain and update their knowledge and understanding of procedures.

Find out how the school liaises with other agencies to monitor the progress of pupils on the 'at risk' register. For example, find out the arrangements for attending case conferences and for providing reports at the request of the ACPC on how individual children are getting on at school. In addition, you will find evidence in the school's curriculum to judge how the pupils are helped to look after themselves and to develop a responsible attitude as they grow up. If you find a school does not have effective procedures complying with those of the ACPC, explain any mis-match when it occurs. This must be reported to the headteacher and the governing body and included in the inspection report.

You will need to evaluate how successfully the school cares for pupils who are known to need particular attention and for whom the school needs to be especially vigilant. The school has a duty, for example, to ensure that the provision outlined in statements of SEN is implemented. The provision may require liaison with external SEN support staff and other agencies such as health authorities and social services departments. Other pupils with dietary or medical problems, or difficult home circumstances, may require the school to take particular care. Find out how well aware the school is of any pupils 'looked after' by the local authority, and how sensitively staff who need to know the particular circumstances liaise with carers.

In an effective school, staff will know in detail about the different needs of pupils and will provide consistent and convincing responses to your questions about what they do to help pupils, and how pupils are helped to look after themselves. Look at the impact the personal, social and health education programme has in helping pupils to be increasingly independent, self-confident and knowledgeable about themselves and healthy and safe living. If the school is part of the government's 'healthy school' initiative, you should be able to trace and evaluate the impact of this participation in the day-to-day work of the school. Look, for example, at how the school teaches pupils to remember their home address or telephone number in case they are lost, and how, in liaison with the police, they deal with strangers whom they may encounter.

Does the school have effective measures to promote good attendance and behaviour, and to eliminate oppressive behaviour such as all forms of harassment and bullying?

The priority that staff give to encouraging good attendance and behaviour is a strong indicator of the steps taken by the school to ensure pupils' welfare and safety. In nursery schools, see whether the staff work with parents and carers to ensure they bring and collect their children on time. In primary schools do class teachers encourage individual pupils to attend and be punctual, and is this backed up in assemblies, which are often occasions when the whole school is reminded about attendance? You may have picked up from the parents' questionnaire, or at the meeting before the inspection, how the school encourages parents to ensure their child's attendance.

In primary schools much of the responsibility for reminding pupils about how to behave well, and about their attitudes to others, rests with class teachers. Look at the evidence from how well are pupils taught? which tells you how successfully teachers minimise disruption and poor behaviour through their skilful handling of pupils in lessons and help pupils know what behaviour is expected of them. You should assess the impact of the school's statutory behaviour policy in promoting respect and tolerance towards others and their beliefs, cultures and ethnic backgrounds.

Check that the policy makes clear the school's intolerance of bullying and racial and sexual harassment. Check that policies for recording the pattern and frequency of racial incidents are in place and that such incidents and the actions taken are reported annually to the governing body, parents and the LEA. See how consistently staff reward pupils for good work and behaviour in and outside the school and, when there is poor behaviour, how consistently and appropriately sanctions are used in proportion to the misdemeanours.

Your observations around the school, in lessons, and in discussions with pupils will help you evaluate how the school eliminates oppressive behaviour, bullying and harassment. Ask for the records of any incidents that have taken place during the previous 12 months. Take particular note of the measures the school takes to prevent bullying, harassment and racial incidents. See whether, in your view, the measures are working. Check that no groups or individuals are unfairly treated and disadvantaged.

- **The effectiveness of the school's assessment and monitoring of pupils' academic performance, and monitoring of personal development and attendance**

Does the school have effective arrangements for assessing pupils' attainments and progress?

Does it use its assessment information to guide its planning?

In FULL INSPECTIONS you should evaluate how effective the school is in assessing how well pupils are doing academically and how well they are developing in their personal skills.

For the younger pupils in nursery and reception classes, find out how they are assessed in relation to the Early Learning Goals and other aspects of their development, such as their disposition to learning. Usually this is done by regular observation and staff discussion involving all the nursery staff. The important issue is how well the assessments are used for planning. In reception classes, look at the outcomes of baseline assessment. See if teachers and other staff make assessment a natural part of the teaching and learning, and if the results are cross-checked regularly to ensure their validity. Find out how good teachers are at establishing a consensus about different levels of attainment in subjects in the National Curriculum, particular in English and mathematics. Check that assessment arrangements conform to what is required by QCA at 7 and 11 years of age.

Judge how well teachers assess pupils in all aspects of their work, behaviour and personal development and whether they have a full picture of their pupils' strengths and weaknesses. This should include qualities such as persistence, application, co-operation with others, ability to concentrate, and self-confidence. Check how well subject and assessment co-ordinators work together with class teachers so that consistent records are produced and made use of throughout the school to guide planning.

See how effectively the school builds on its assessment procedures when identifying pupils with SEN to comply with the Code of Practice. Judge how effective and consistent the procedures are for placing pupils on the register, and for deciding what further help is needed in accordance with the school's SEN policy and the guidance in the Code.

Judge how well the school monitors the results of its assessments so as to identify the achievements of different ethnic groups by ability or by gender. Check how well this information is recorded and analysed (particularly in providing support for EAL) to help the school take action to improve achievement. If there is no evidence of monitoring the achievement of different groups of pupils, it raises questions about how effective the school is in meeting the needs of all the pupils.

Look at how the school monitors its attendance and analyses the attendance data. Do teachers understand what constitutes authorised absence? How consistent are they in recording unauthorised absence?

If exclusions take place, is the governing body properly involved, and what action does the school take to review its practice, if necessary? Parents should be kept informed about the behaviour policy at least annually.

- **The effectiveness of a school's educational and personal support and guidance in raising pupils' achievements**

Does the school provide effective support and advice for all its pupils, informed by the monitoring of their academic progress, personal development, behaviour and attendance?

In FULL INSPECTIONS, your judgement on how effectively the school supports pupils to raise their achievements relies on what you have already found out about assessment practice and the use made of assessment. What does the school do to acknowledge pupils' achievements, particularly when great strides in progress have taken place? Evaluate the effect this has on encouraging pupils to achieve more.

Find out and assess how well the school identifies what action it can take to help individuals or groups of pupils, for example through changes to the day-to-day organisation and through the provision of extra help. Does the school discuss what it knows about pupils' strengths and weaknesses with the pupils themselves, and with parents and other agencies? In primary schools, much emphasis will be placed on how well pupils achieve in literacy and numeracy. Assess how carefully the school deals with pupils who need to improve their skills in literacy and numeracy and how, in liaison with parents, they are encouraged, yet challenged, to improve. If targets are set for individual pupils, do they focus only on attainment or also on other specific aspects of their life at school, such as their behaviour or attendance? Check that the targets are clear and can be monitored for success. Make sure the school discriminates between those occasions where outside agencies must be asked for help (for example, child protection) and where it is reasonable for the school to provide support internally.

Does the school meet the statutory requirements for day and residential provision where relevant or as outlined in a statement of special educational needs?

Your pre-inspection work on the characteristics of the school should alert you to those pupils who have statements of SEN. Evidence from the section on how good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? should help you in making this judgement. You should make sure that you scrutinise pupils' statements; all of them when there are five or less, and no less than half when numbers are greater, so that a representative sample by age and disability is looked at. You should check that the statements or reviews are up to date so that you know that the provision outlined in the statement is implemented by the school and any other agency involved, such as speech therapists or LEA support staff. Any evident shortfall in the provision should be further checked to find out why this is so. Ensure that specific disability-related provision is implemented, such as aids for hearing, seeing, writing or to facilitate mobility or for specific arrangements in respect of personal hygiene. Check that access to additional staffing indicated in the statement is available and used effectively. Make sure that specific curricular arrangements are met such as work in literacy, numeracy and oracy and that, overall, pupils have their entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum. Check that arrangements specified in the statement for ensuring that pupils have full access to the whole of the school's curriculum are in place. Where residential provision is specified, check that the arrangements provided by the school match the statement, particularly in respect of the number of nights boarding, regularity of contact with pupils' parents or carers, and specified programmes, for example to boost independence or self-care skills. You need to be sure that suitable arrangements ensure that all key members of staff who need to know the provision are aware of the contents of the statement and are able subsequently to contribute to any review that takes place. If it is possible to attend an annual or transition review during the inspection it will demonstrate if the provision is re-examined in the light of any progress made and that key people attend as appropriate.

6. HOW GOOD DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

Inspectors must evaluate and report on:

- parents' and carers' views of the school;
- the effectiveness of the school's links with parents and carers;
- the impact of the parents' and carers' involvement with the work of the school.

In determining their judgements, inspectors should consider the extent to which:

- parents and carers are satisfied with what the school provides and achieves;
- parents and carers are provided with good quality information about the school, and particularly about pupils' progress;
- links with parents and carers, including the use of home-school agreements, contribute to pupils' learning at school and at home.

INSPECTION FOCUS

Parents depend on the school to provide well for their children. You need to find out whether they feel the school lives up to their expectations and responds to any concerns.

Where a school uses the OFSTED parents' questionnaire you will be able to evaluate how parents feel about the main aspects of the school. You need to use your professional judgement as to the number of responses to a question that signify an important strength or weakness as perceived by parents. The responses to the questionnaire will indicate where you may need more information and issues you may want to follow up at the parents' meeting.

The best opportunity for parents to share their views with you comes at the meeting for parents who have children at the school. Use this meeting:

- to explore the views of parents on those aspects of the school specified in the inspection schedule;
- to follow up issues from the parents' responses to the questionnaire;
- to allow parents to tell you what they think about the school;
- to judge whether there are groups of parents who have not been heard and to provide an opportunity for their views to be heard.

There are many other opportunities for you to find out what parents think of the school. For instance:

- parents may request to see you or speak to you on the telephone during an inspection;
- talking with parents who work and help in the school;
- talking with parents at the beginning and the end of the school day when they bring and collect their children;
- by visiting events held for parents by the school during the period of the inspection.

On **SHORT INSPECTIONS**, you are only required to follow up the areas relating to issues raised by parents' views that seem from the parents' meeting and questionnaire to be important.

On **FULL INSPECTIONS**, evaluate also: how well the school involves parents and carers as partners in their children's learning; and the quality and effectiveness of the information it provides for parents and carers, and particularly the effect

these have on improving pupils' achievements, including their personal development.

Evaluate how well the school consults parents and carers about its curriculum provision and about major spending decisions. This will tell you about the application of the principle of consultation within the best value framework.

MAKING JUDGEMENTS

To make your judgements, use all the evidence you have about the parents' level of satisfaction with the school, the effectiveness of the school's partnership with them and the contribution that this partnership makes to pupils' learning.

Consider this alongside the other evidence and judgements that you have made in how well does the school care for its pupils? In particular, examine those judgements you have made on the effectiveness of support and advice provided by the school for its pupils and how well parents are able to use this information to help their children learn.

The following characteristics illustrate where to pitch judgements about how well the school works in partnership with parents and carers.

- Very good or excellent**
- The school has a very good range of productive and consistent links with parents and carers that help pupils learn. These extend from involvement in hearing individual children read to, for example, homework projects and workshops. The mechanisms for exchanging information between school and home work very well and include opportunities for parents and carers to give information to the school about their child. Information to parents and carers through written reports are excellent, making clear what pupils need to do to improve and how parents can help. There is strong parental satisfaction with the school, based on secure understanding and regular involvement in its work. There is evidence of improvement in children's learning, behaviour and personal development resulting from good liaison with parents and carers.
- Satisfactory or better**
- The school has effective links with parents and carers to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. Parents are, in the main, satisfied with the standards achieved and what the school provides, with no major concerns. Reports to parents are clear and useful, and the exchange of information is sound.

However, the partnership with parents **cannot be satisfactory** if:

- there is a significant degree of dissatisfaction among parents about the school's work, which is supported by inspection findings;
- information to parents and carers does not give a clear view of children's progress, particularly in English and mathematics;
- parents are kept at arm's length and the school makes little effort to communicate with them and involve them in the life of the school.

Example 6.1

Extract from Record of Corporate Judgements on a short inspection of a primary school

Strengths:	Sources of evidence:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large number of parents help in school, well-targeted to meet needs of all pupils, particularly in reading• Parents like way school values all pupils whatever their ability; extra-curricular activities; community spirit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parents' meeting; parents' questionnaire; EFs on discussion with parent helpers and HT• Parents' meeting and parents' questionnaire
Weaknesses:	Sources of evidence:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Homework policy not clear• Information about the curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parents' questionnaire• Parents' meeting

Overall evaluation:

Parents support the school in many ways and value what it provides for their children. Inspection supports parents' views about homework and curriculum information.

[Good links with parents (3)]

Example 6.2

Extract from a full inspection report on a middle school

Parents are kept well informed about school events through a regular newsletter. There are too few opportunities for parents to make informal contacts with the school other than at the school gate at the beginning and end of the school day. This largely superficial contact with parents means that they do not feel encouraged to participate in school. There are no helpers in classrooms and considerable difficulty in persuading parents to stand as governors. Parents, therefore, have little impact on the school.

[Poor involvement and links with parents (6)]

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

SUMMARY REPORT All inspectors must complete the table headed PARENTS' VIEW OF THE SCHOOL, and state the extent to which the inspection team agrees with parents' views. If the school's work with parents and carers is a feature of improvement in the school, record this in the section HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION.

Any aspect that is particularly good or needs to improve should be reported under WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL and WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED.

SHORT INSPECTIONS Only parents' and carers' views of the school are reported. Expand any points made in the commentary under WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL and WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED.

FULL INSPECTIONS Report under the heading HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

GUIDANCE ON USING THE CRITERIA

■ Parents' views of the school

Are parents satisfied with what the school provides and achieves?

You need to establish how far parents are satisfied with the quality and effectiveness of what the school provides and achieves. Decide whether the inspection evidence supports or refutes the views of parents and why. These judgements must then be reported in the summary and, as appropriate, in Part B of the report.

On SHORT INSPECTIONS, you are unlikely to have much time for more detailed work on the quality of the partnership between parents and the school. Where you do find evidence, for instance when examining information provided by the school for parents, you may want to take it into account. On SHORT INSPECTIONS, you should only follow up those areas of the school's relationship with parents that seem from the meeting and questionnaire to be burning issues or that shed important light on what the school does well or not so well.

- The effectiveness of the school's links with parents
- The impact of parents' involvement with the work of the school

Are parents provided with good-quality information about the school, and particularly about pupils' progress?

On a full inspection, you must evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the school's partnership with parents. The good school sees parents as a rich resource with an important contribution to make and helps them to support their children's learning. The way in which the school does this, and the extent to which the school and parents work together, will have an effect on how well pupils make progress in school.

You must evaluate the extent to which the school actively draws in all parents. This includes those from minority ethnic backgrounds, especially those who do not speak English as a first language, and encourages them to support their children's learning. Your starting point and the source of issues you wish to pursue will be the parents' responses to the questionnaire and their contributions to the parents' meeting. Further evidence will emerge from:

- talking with parents before and after school;
- meeting with parents who work and help in the school and on school visits and finding out how the school 'trains' and prepares parents who are involved;
- talking with parent governors and any representatives from parents' associations and clubs;
- how far information provided for parents can be understood and used;
- how well the school keeps in touch with parents who speak little English.

Do links with parents, including the use of home-school agreements, contribute to pupils' learning at school and at home?

An effective partnership includes the sharing of information about children, their learning and how they feel about school. If any visits are made to children and parents before children enter school, evaluate the impact of these on both the parents and children. Find out whether the induction programmes, particularly in nursery and reception, are flexible enough to suit the needs of all children. Evaluate the extent to which parents with toddlers and babies are encouraged to come into school, and how easy it is for parents to borrow books and other resources for children. Examine the effectiveness of arrangements for contacts with pupils' homes, to identify and help children who are unhappy, and for involving parents who rarely come near the school.

Assessing the quality of information provided for parents is one part of this evaluation. Examine, for instance:

- any policies on home-school contracts and the extent to which they work;
 - what account the school takes of what parents know about their own child's learning;
 - how far parents and teachers can talk informally together about children, and the arrangements that are made for parents whose first language is not English;
 - whether reports to parents about pupils' progress tell them clearly what their children are doing, how well they are doing it, whether it is good enough and what they need to do to improve;
 - to what extent written reports are followed up and discussed with parents;
 - the extent to which pupils' reports and records incorporate the views of parents and show the action agreed to help pupils learn;
 - how well the school helps parents to understand what is taught;
 - the extent to which any home-school agreements contribute to pupils' learning;
 - the extent to which parents know about and use lending libraries for toys and books;
 - whether parents of children with special educational needs are properly involved in identifying their needs, provide appropriate support and regularly review their child's progress;
 - how well the school communicates with parents who have disabilities, learning difficulties or who live a long way from the school without easy transport;
 - how well the school consults parents about its curriculum and about major spending decisions within its application of the consultation principle in the best value framework.
-
-

on this site.

8. WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The report must include:

- **specific matters - key issues - which the appropriate authority for the school should include in its post-inspection action plan, listed as issues for action in order of their importance in raising standards in the school;**

Each issue must be followed by a reference to the main paragraph(s) in the inspection report where the weaknesses are discussed.

These issues should be based on any weaknesses identified in the inspection and include all the matters listed in what could be improved in relation to **standards** achieved and the **quality of education** provided, with particular emphasis on **teaching**.

Where the inspection highlights issues already identified as priorities in the school's development plan, this section should acknowledge this.

Any non-compliance with statutory requirements where it detracts significantly from the quality and standards of the school, or where it relates to care, health and safety, should be reported here.

- **a statement indicating paragraphs of the inspection report which refer to other weaknesses, not included in issues for action, but which should be considered by the school.**

INSPECTION FOCUS

This section of the report is linked directly to the statements made in the summary under the heading **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**. In that section, you need to summarise the school's main weaknesses without, at that stage, giving the direction in which the school might move to bring about improvements. The statements included in **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?** take that step. They set out what needs to be done to bring about improvement. However, you must not go further than this to indicate how the school could take the required action; that is the proper remit of the school's governors and staff. But you must make it absolutely clear what needs to be done, breaking down the statement into several parts if it helps to clarify what the school must do.

- **Specific matters - key issues - which the appropriate authority for the school should include in its post-inspection action plan, listed as issues for action in order of their importance in raising standards in the school**

Each bullet point in the section **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED** must, one by one, be covered in this section so that the reader can immediately link each issue for action by the school to an inspection judgement. You must use this section to make it very clear to the school the steps they must take to bring about the improvement that you have identified. This means that you will almost certainly need to use a list format with a number of actions under a heading linked back to the bullet point in **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**.

These key issues should be the big issues for the school, and not matters which are less significant. The detail of this section must naturally lead the school to improvement. A compliance issue should only be included here if it detracts significantly from the quality of the school's provision or the standards that pupils attain. In a **SHORT INSPECTION**, the level of effectiveness of the school means that it is unlikely that there will be significant compliance issues, but if they do arise they should be indicated here. In a **FULL INSPECTION**, you should avoid making a long list of compliance issues here unless they are significant.

Example 8.1

Extracts from a primary inspection report

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- *The teaching of mathematics in Key Stage 2*
- *The attainment of higher-achieving pupils in Years 3 and 5*
- *The effectiveness of monitoring teaching to identify what does or does not work well in lessons*

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- *Improve the teaching of mathematics in Key Stage 2 so that it challenges all pupils and fully meets the National Curriculum requirements by:*
 - *increasing teachers' knowledge of data handling and algebra (paragraphs 7, 10, 36);*
 - *planning tasks which involve pupils in investigative approaches to learning mathematics (paragraphs 14, 15, 23, 28).*
- *Improve the attainment of high-attaining pupils in Years 3 and 5 by:*
 - *accurately assessing their attainment and using this information to develop a programme of work in each section which stretches these pupils further;*
 - *setting challenging learning goals in lessons for these pupils.*
- *Sharpen the evaluation of teaching and learning by:*
 - *having a clear focus when observing lessons and scrutinising pupils' work;*
 - *identifying what each teacher does well to promote successful learning;*
 - *agreeing where improvements are needed to make learning more effective.*

- **A statement indicating paragraphs of the report which refer to other weaknesses not included in issues for action, but which should be considered by the school**

In FULL INSPECTIONS, only you should use this statement to bring to the attention of the school those weaknesses which need to be considered by the school but which do not appear as one of the main areas for improvement. You should also use this statement to include compliance issues which, although important, do not significantly detract from the education pupils receive or the standards they achieve.

Example 8.2

Extracts from a primary inspection report

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- *Completing the fragmented schemes of work in history, geography and art (paragraphs 25, 102, 105, 107)*
 - *Extending and improving the amount of information given to parents about the curriculum (paragraph 35)*
 - *Ensuring that child protection training for the newest members of staff is completed as soon as possible (paragraph 44)*
-
-

on this site.

10. THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

FULL INSPECTIONS ONLY - PART D OF THE INSPECTION REPORT

Areas of learning (or the Foundation Curriculum for nursery and reception pupils) The report must include evaluation of:

- the standards achieved, stating the extent to which pupils are on course to reach the expected outcomes or goals by 5 years and the quality of teaching in each area of learning;
- changes since the previous inspection;
- any other factors which have a bearing on what is achieved.

The report should highlight any differences in provision or attainment for pupils who are 5 or under in nursery, reception or mixed-age classes.

Subjects

For each subject, where evidence allows, the report should include evaluation of:

- standards of work in the subject, particularly the standards achieved by the oldest pupils in each Key Stage, highlighting what pupils do well and could do better;
- changes since the previous inspection;
- how well pupils are taught, highlighting effective and ineffective teaching in the subject and relating the demands made by teachers to pupils' learning and the progress they have made;
- any other factors which have a bearing on what is achieved, especially the extent to which management of the subject is directed towards monitoring, evaluating and improving performance.

In English and mathematics, the subject reports of work should draw on evidence of the contribution made by other subjects to pupils' competence in literacy and numeracy. In information and communications technology (ICT), the report should draw on evidence of contributions made to pupils' IT capability from all other subjects.

The report must include separate sections on English and mathematics. It should include sections on other subjects of the curriculum where there is sufficient evidence.

PART 2

GUIDANCE FOR INSPECTORS ON CONDUCTING INSPECTIONS AND WRITING REPORTS

INSPECTION QUALITY

1 This guidance will help you to interpret the inspection requirements set out in *Inspecting Schools*, the inspection Framework. It follows the sequence of work required before, during and after an inspection.

2 The guidance is for all inspectors and contractors. The registered inspector is ultimately responsible for the inspection and the report. This guidance therefore focuses particularly on his/her role. However, all inspectors in a team must work to the inspection requirements set out here, especially the Code of Conduct, and measure up to the Quality Guarantee for teachers. The inspection contractor has to meet OFSTED's Quality Assurance Standard as a condition for being awarded inspection work.

Setting a standard for inspection

3 As an inspector, you need to have high personal and professional qualities. When inspecting, you should treat all the people you meet - pupils, parents, staff, governors and others - as you would expect them to treat you, with interest, courtesy and respect. You should regard your right of entry to schools as a privilege.

4 Assessing the professional competence of others can arouse anxieties. Inspection is no exception. You must see to it that you recognise and praise strengths as well as probe areas of weakness. You must be alert to the sensitivities of staff but also be objective in all you do.

5 There are four main strands to inspection:

- finding out what the school is like, and its strengths and weaknesses;
- diagnosing what makes it the way it is;
- identifying what it needs to do next to improve;
- reflecting these findings back to the school, both orally and in the written inspection report.

6 Inspection is effective when it is seen by schools as fair, rigorous and helpful. The school must respect and value the quality and expertise of the inspection team. If it does, it will accept and make use of the inspection's findings to help it move forward. Otherwise, the usefulness of inspection is greatly reduced.

7 Inspection, therefore, must not only arrive at the right judgements but also be done in the right way.

Quality Guarantee for schools

8 We attach such a high priority to the effect of inspection on schools, that we expect all inspectors actively to reflect and promote the Quality Guarantee we give to teachers.

QUALITY GUARANTEE

- *Inspectors will do everything possible to work with you in keeping the stress of an inspection to a minimum.*
- *Inspectors will not expect you to create additional paperwork specifically for the inspection.*
- *Inspectors will always treat you in a courteous and friendly manner, particularly when entering and leaving your classroom.*
- *Normally, you will be observed teaching for no more than half of any one day, and never more than three-quarters.*
- *Inspectors will not judge teaching unless they have observed a significant part of the lesson, normally for at least 30 minutes.*
- *Inspectors will use confidential information responsibly.*
- *Inspectors will discuss important aspects of your teaching with you.*
- *Inspectors will explain the reasons for their judgements and be helpful in identifying where improvement is needed.*

9 Most inspectors reflect these principles naturally in their work. The great majority of the responses we receive from teachers and schools show that most inspectors have high standards of conduct and professionalism.

10 But there are exceptions. There is no place for inspectors who are remote from the teachers, brusque, overbearing in their behaviour, or insensitive. Nor should you ask the school for paperwork it does not normally use, such as lesson plans to a particular format.

OFSTED's expectations of inspectors

11 Our expectations of inspectors are set out in the Framework and include the following.

12 You must be thoroughly prepared for the inspection and understand the context of the school and its pupils. It takes time to prepare properly. You should ensure that the contractor gives you enough time. If you are a registered inspector, the quality of your *Pre-Inspection Commentary* is vital. If the issues it identifies are clear, and you brief your team well, the inspection will get off to a good start.

13 You must have thorough knowledge and understanding of the Framework, this *Inspection Handbook*, the subjects and aspects you inspect and the age range of the pupils concerned. You work in a changing educational scene. Curriculum requirements change, as do the national policies. You must keep yourself up to date. This means consulting documents from various sources: from OFSTED, the DfEE, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and other relevant bodies. To inspect English in a primary school, you should have a thorough knowledge of teaching the skills of literacy and of the National Literacy Strategy. Only then will you be able to judge unequivocally how effective a school's own literacy strategy is. Equally, those who enter the world of 3- or 4-year-olds must be thoroughly conversant with the needs of these young children, the curriculum framework which applies to them, and what makes for good teaching.

14 You must uphold the highest professional standards required by the Code of Conduct, thus securing OFSTED's Quality Guarantee to teachers (*see above*).

CODE OF CONDUCT

15 The Code of Conduct has been revised. To meet its principles, you must:

- **evaluate the work of the school objectively, be impartial and have no previous connection with the school, its staff or governors which could undermine your objectivity;**

We take the questions of impartiality and connection seriously. If you have had anything to do with the school in the past few years, you should consider carefully whether you should be part of the school's inspection team. You should certainly rule yourself out if this contact included any 'pre-inspection' work, staff appointments, advice or staff development. If in doubt, you should err on the side of caution. If you are a team inspector you must, as a condition of your enrolment, inform the registered inspector and contractor of any connection at all with the school.

- **report honestly and fairly, ensuring that judgements accurately and reliably reflect what the school achieves and does;**

Judgements must be robust and fully supported by evidence so that you can defend them, if required. They must be accurate and carefully weighed and tested against the inspection criteria. They must also be reliable, which means that other trained inspectors, using the same evidence, would be highly likely to come to the same judgement.

- **carry out your work with integrity, treating all those you meet with courtesy and sensitivity;**

It is important that you leave staff feeling as though they have been treated well and fairly.

- **do all you can to minimise stress, in particular by ensuring that no teacher is over-inspected and by not asking for paperwork to be specifically prepared for the inspection;**

We are committed to reducing stress among teachers as far as possible. Inspectors must do everything they can to allay anxiety. This must start from the moment they begin to have dealings with the school and continue until the report is published. Teachers are naturally apprehensive about inspection. We expect you to do what you can to put them at their ease. There are clear guidelines about how much teachers should be observed during a day. If you are the registered inspector, we expect you to ensure that these guidelines are followed.

- **act with the best interests and well-being of pupils and staff as priorities;**

The deal the pupils get is at the heart of your work. It is essential that you discover their views of the school as well as evaluating their educational progress and achievements. You must certainly not cause pupils any anxiety. You have many dealings with them during an inspection. Your questioning should not make them feel vulnerable or inadequate. Your relations with them must be a model of propriety. You must not put them in a position where they may feel conflicting loyalties.

- **communicate with staff purposefully and productively, and present your judgements of the school's work clearly and frankly;**

In your dealings with teachers, you should build confidence and mutual respect. You should seek to understand what they are doing and why, and share with them your views about what you find. We cannot stress enough the importance of feeding back your findings in a helpful way.

- **respect the confidentiality of information, particularly about teachers and the judgements made about their individual teaching.**

In judging teaching, you are undertaking a form of professional appraisal. You should not criticise the work of a teacher, or anyone else involved with the school, within earshot of someone else. You should relay concerns to the headteacher or appropriate manager, but not before discussing them with the teacher concerned. Do not allow yourself to be placed in a position where you cannot use information you are given in the way you think best. At times, you may need to make it clear that you reserve the right to do as you see fit with certain information or evidence.

THE RECORD OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

16 The record of evidence comprises:

i. forms completed by the school:

- *Form S1*, consultation with the appropriate authority about the specification for the inspection, and data about the school;
- *Form S2*, further data about the school;
- *Form S3*, school self-audit;
- *Form S4*, school monitoring and self-evaluation;

ii. the *PICSI report* supplied by OFSTED;

iii. documentary evidence from the school (normally returned to the school after the inspection) and the previous inspection report;

iv. evidence and judgements recorded by inspectors, including:

- *Pre-Inspection Commentary*, with issues for inspection;
- *Evidence Forms*;
- *Inspection Notebooks* - one is completed by each member of the team on full inspections (optional in short inspections);
- the *Record of Corporate Judgements*;
- evidence from parents.

17 Further details of the record of evidence are given in the sections which follow. Instructions for their completion are summarised in Annex 3.

EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE INSPECTION

18 The process of inspection, like developing a photographic image, is the progressive unveiling of the school until its essential character can be seen. As each part of the picture is revealed the image becomes clearer. Because inspection is such a concentrated process, from the start it must use all the evidence available to hypothesise about the school's quality and standards, and its potential strengths and weaknesses. This gives a focus for the inspectors' work.

19 However, inspection is not a mere snapshot of a school. The quality and standards of each school in England are now documented in one or more previous inspection reports. Each school's performance has been measured, year after year. The school's own planning also reflects its changing priorities and needs. Each school has an ongoing record, showing where it has come from: a performance trail.

THE INSPECTION SEQUENCE

20 The registered inspector should take full account of the recent history of the school's quality and standards, particularly when gauging the extent of improvement. Much of the information needed is presented in the *Pre-Inspection Context and School Indicator (PICSi)* report. Most schools have detailed performance data to augment the *PICSi* indicators.

21 You should also note what the school does to monitor and evaluate its own performance and what its evaluation shows. The inspection forms the school complete reflect the wish of many schools for inspectors to take self-evaluation into account.¹ *Form S3* invites the school to make its own assessment of compliance with statutory requirements: a self-audit. *Form S4* invites the school to present its own view of how it stands in relation to each of the areas of its work to be inspected. Using inspection to test the school's perceptions of itself gives an insight into how well it is managed. Inspection thus provides a mirror for the school.

22 The first stage of pre-inspection analysis should provide early hypotheses to follow up at the preliminary visit to the school. This visit should give you, as the registered inspector, a very helpful first impression of the *quality* of the school. It may be difficult for some headteachers to be available for discussion during the school day. In very small primary schools it may be possible for them to make arrangements for their classes to be covered for part of the time should this be necessary. By meeting the headteacher, staff, governors and pupils, and by looking round the school, you will get an important contextual picture to set alongside the data and documentary evidence.

23 You should now be in a position to complete most of the *Pre-Inspection Commentary* for the rest of the inspection team. Ideally this should take into account the views of parents, although this may depend on the timing of the parents' meeting. Your analysis must identify important issues and lines of enquiry for the inspection. Some of these may relate to apparent areas of strength or weakness, others to:

- issues for action identified in the last inspection;
- claims made by the school in its self-evaluation report;
- features that relate to the school's particular circumstances;
- areas identified by the headteacher for inspection.

Above all, the issues must be specific to the school.

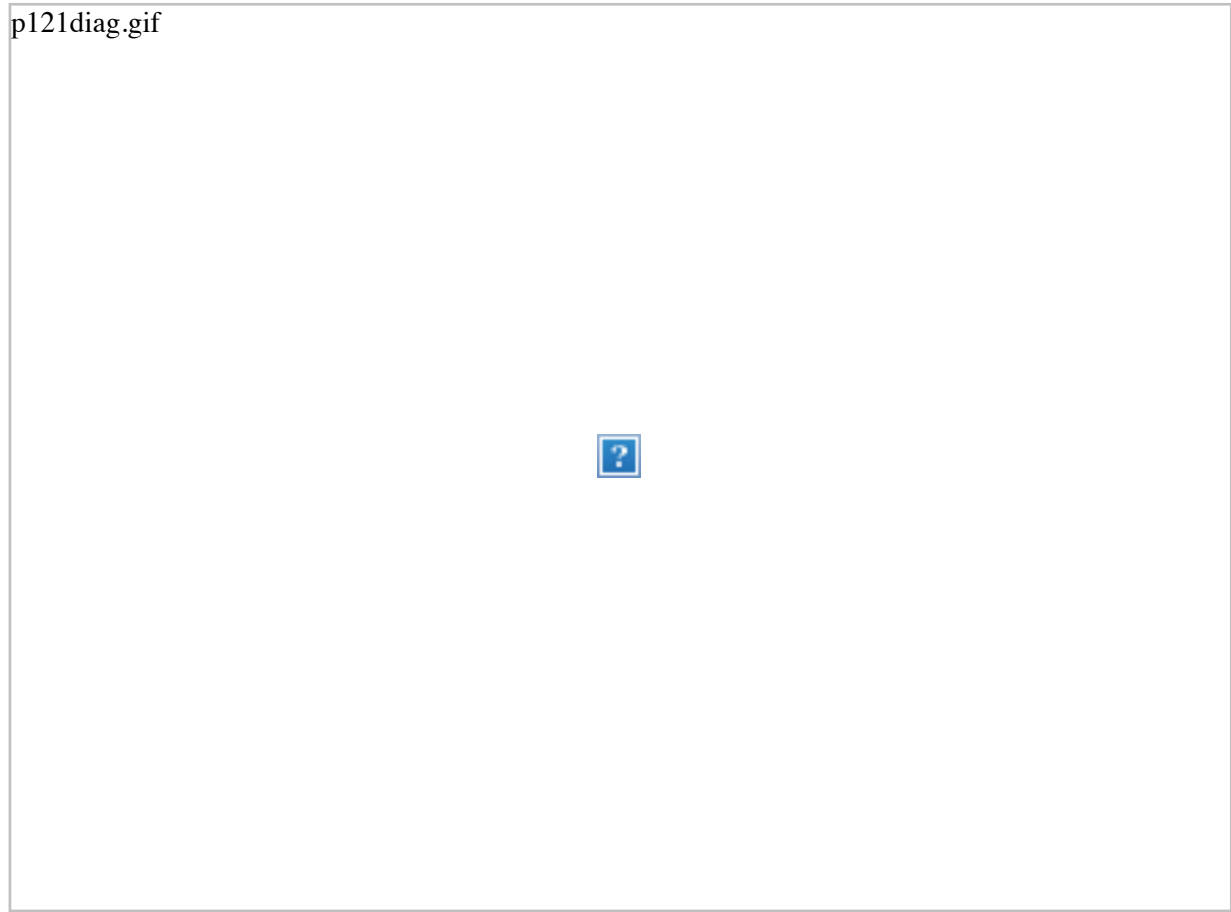
24 The *Pre-Inspection Commentary* has three purposes. First, it forms the basis for briefing other members of the team so that they know a great deal about the school when they arrive to start the inspection. Secondly, it provides an agenda of inspection

priorities. Thirdly, it contributes to the judgements for the inspection report.

25 As the inspection progresses, there is often a change in emphasis, from establishing what the standards are and how well they reflect the earlier data, to securing explanations of why the achievements of the school are as they are. The quality of teaching will be an early focus.

26 At the end of the inspection, there should be a clear and shared view among the whole inspection team of the overall quality and standards of the school. In other words, how good it is. You should evaluate against each of the main requirements of the inspection schedule, and the team should reach a consensus view on the school's strengths, any areas for improvement, and what the school needs to do to improve. This process is summarised below.

The inspection sequence



¹ This was also recommended by the Education and Employment Committee of the House of Commons, Fourth Report, *The Work of OFSTED*, London 1999.

BEFORE THE INSPECTION

NOTICE OF INSPECTION

27 OFSTED has reduced the notice of inspection given to schools to between six and ten school weeks. The purpose of this is to reduce the pressure on teachers and other staff, and to avoid long, drawn-out processes, such as re-writing documents and making other preparations which some schools have felt they needed to do. The shorter notice has been welcomed by most schools. However, it does put some pressure on the school to complete the inspection forms on time, and on the contractor and registered inspector to make the necessary arrangements for the inspection.

28 The shorter notice of inspection places a premium on efficient procedures in the run-up to inspection. The inspection will take place during a five-week 'inspection window'. The possible sequence of pre-inspection events is illustrated below. The first five steps are fixed by the 'inspection window'; the rest will vary slightly in timing, depending on the date of the inspection.

Summary of pre-inspection steps

Six school weeks before the 'inspection window' (typically eight weeks before the inspection)	1. School receives notification of inspection, and whether this will be SHORT or FULL, a set of inspection forms, and a copy of the <i>PICSI report</i>	
Five school weeks before the inspection window (typically seven weeks before the inspection)	2. School returns <i>Form S1</i> to OFSTED	3. Contractor receives specification and <i>PICSI report</i> from OFSTED with <i>Form S1</i> and sets date of inspection with school and registered inspector 4. Registered inspector contacts school
Two school weeks before the inspection window (typically four weeks before the inspection)		5. Contractor sends outline inspection plan to OFSTED and item list to OFSTED and the school
Four weeks before the inspection	6. School sends <i>Forms S2-S4</i> , plus previous inspection report, prospectus and development plan to registered inspector and calls meeting for parents	7. Registered inspector receives documents from school, and prepares for visit
Two or three weeks before the inspection		8. Registered inspector visits school 9. Registered inspector plans the inspection in detail
Two weeks before the inspection		10. Registered inspector meets parents 11. Registered inspector completes <i>Pre-Inspection Commentary</i>
Before the inspection begins		12. Registered inspector meets and briefs team

STEPS 1 AND 2: INSPECTION SPECIFICATION

29 As soon as the school is notified of the inspection and whether it is to be short or full, it is asked to complete *Form S1* and return it to OFSTED within one week. At the same time, OFSTED supplies the school with *Forms S2, S3* and *S4*, which the

school has three weeks to complete in electronic or hardcopy format.

30 *Form S1* allows the appropriate authority to provide basic information about the nature and composition of the school. *Form S1* is used to draw up the specification which OFSTED issues to the contractor as part of the contract for inspection; it will help the contractor to determine the composition of the inspection team.

STEP 3: SETTING THE DATE

31 Once it has the specification, the contractor should move immediately to let the school know who is to be the registered inspector, and to establish the date of the inspection with the school and the registered inspector.

STEP 4: COMMUNICATING WITH THE SCHOOL AND PARENTS

32 If you are the registered inspector for the inspection, you should make contact with the headteacher of the school and:

- introduce yourself;
- find out how the headteacher, staff and governors are viewing the forthcoming inspection;
- enquire about progress in completing the *Forms S2-S4* and arrange for them to be *sent to you*, together with the other prescribed documents (*see paragraph 34*);
- arrange a date and time to visit the school, explaining what you wish to do during the visit, and set up a programme for it;
- discuss and agree dates and times for other events, including the parents' meeting, feedback to senior management team and governing body or appropriate authority, the period over which the school can check the draft report, and the days the inspection will last;
- check that the school has received the *PICSI report* from OFSTED;
- make the CVs of the inspection team available to the school.

STEPS 5, 6 AND 7: INITIAL PREPARATION

33 To make the most of your visit to the school you must prepare thoroughly. Contractors must make sure that time is provided for this.

34 You first need to assemble the core documents required before the visit. These are:

- *Form S1*, completed by the school and sent to you by OFSTED;
- *Forms S2, S3 and S4* completed and sent to you by the school;
- the *PICSI report*, provided by OFSTED;
- the last inspection report, provided by the school;
- the current school development or management plan, provided by the school;
- the school prospectus or brochure, provided by the school.

35 You must not require any other documents from the school at this stage. The school has enough to do in completing the four forms, calling the parents' meeting and communicating with governors. Remember that the inspection must do everything possible to avoid putting an extra burden on schools or significantly affecting their normal patterns of work.

36 Your analysis of indicators and documents should be systematic and your enquiries related to the questions posed in the inspection *Schedule*. What sort of school is it? is both the starting point and the finishing point for your inspection. Start with the school's view of itself, expressed in its prospectus. Look at how it presents itself and what it considers to be important. Consider the extent to which pupils' interests are at the centre of the school's presentation and aspirations.

37 *Forms S1 and S2* indicate who the pupils are, their background, mobility, home language and special educational needs. Look for evidence of effectiveness. Look at the pattern of the school's results, trends over time, high and low spots, and comparative data. Look at other indications of effectiveness, such as how the budget is constructed; the pattern of exclusions, if there are any; and attendance.

38 Then your analysis can move from outcomes to the quality of provision. Look at the curriculum as expressed qualitatively in the prospectus and quantitatively on *Form S2*. Consider whether it is giving the range of experiences you might expect, across the age range. Consider staffing and class organisation, the staff profile and deployment, and possible management issues. Look for the school's priorities for improvement reflected in the development plan.

39 After this analysis you should have a useful but partial picture of the school. This will include hypotheses that you will

need to investigate further. What does this picture add up to? Where has the school come from and where is it heading? What appear to be the big issues in the school? What are the school's targets and is it likely to meet them? Three strong pieces of evidence are: the previous inspection report; the headteacher's evaluation report on *Form S4*; and the *PICSI report*.

40 By putting the information from these different sources together, you should be able to: estimate how the school is performing; know what its priorities now are; see whether these have changed since the last inspection; and consider how the school views its own quality and standards. You will have an initial impression of the school which will form the basis for discussion when you meet the headteacher.

41 You are now in a position to begin to write the *Pre-Inspection Commentary*, which you will add to significantly and complete after the preliminary visit to the school. You should include views about:

- standards attained in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, highlighting any patterns of strengths or weaknesses;
- any trends in attainment over time, where appropriate;
- whether or not, according to quantitative indicators, the school has improved since its last inspection;
- areas that might need further exploration during the inspection;
- the quality of management.

STEP 8: VISITING THE SCHOOL

42 The visit to the school is a very important part of the inspection process and is likely to last for a day. It has five main purposes:

- i. to establish a good and trusting working relationship between you (the registered inspector) and the school, particularly the headteacher;
- ii. to gain a better understanding of the school, its nature, what it is aiming to do and how it goes about its work;
- iii. to consider aspects of the school on which inspectors might focus, some of which may be identified by the school;
- iv. to brief the staff and any governors who are able to meet you on how the inspection will work;
- v. to agree the necessary arrangements for the inspection.

43 To achieve these intentions you will need to plan the visit carefully, in consultation with the headteacher. Where the headteacher has charge of a class, or has a nursery school, her/his availability may be limited to after school hours, unless cover can be arranged. There is no imperative, however, for the school to arrange cover, nor should you expect it.

44 Ideally, you will need to do the following during the initial visit:

- have an extensive discussion with the headteacher to find out more about the school and the way it is run, and to test your initial perceptions; and tour the school, to become acquainted with its geography, if possible meeting some pupils and staff;
- meet the staff of the school, to brief them on how the inspection will be organised and respond to any queries they may have;
- meet any representatives of the governing body, again to discuss the inspection with them, but also to learn how the governing body has been involved with developments since the last inspection, and how it perceives its current role and priorities. You should arrange to meet governors during the inspection as well.

45 Your meetings with the headteacher, staff and governors should put them at their ease by explaining how the inspection will be run, and give them confidence in the process. They should be helped to see how they can gain value from it. You should explain:

For a SHORT INSPECTION

- how the SHORT INSPECTION can only be a light 'health check' of the school, not an intensive subject-by-subject inspection;
- the basis for sampling lessons, with the possibility that some teachers or subjects will not be seen;
- that inspectors will discuss work with teachers as they go, giving whatever feedback they can;
- that the report will focus on the main strengths of the school and areas needing improvement.

For a FULL INSPECTION

- that a significant amount of every teacher's work will be seen, including, in a primary school, their teaching of the

literacy hour and numeracy sessions;

- how all teachers will be offered feedback on their work and receive their profile of lesson grades.

46 Discuss with the headteacher the arrangements for the parents' meeting. Discuss whether the school can provide a room for the inspection team to work in during the inspection. If the school is unable to do this without disturbing its own work, the inspectors will have to make their own arrangements for a base.

47 During the preliminary visit, you should request from the school any additional documents which will be needed in advance of the inspection. These must be those which the school already has, or can easily supply. You should not ask the headteacher to prepare additional documents specifically for the inspection. To make the inspection run smoothly, you will need:

- a programme, or timetable, of the school's work in the period of the inspection;
- a staff handbook, if one is available, or list of staff responsibilities and/or objectives;
- a plan of the school.

48 In a FULL INSPECTION, you will need to take away, or see at a later stage, further documents such as:

- the governors' annual report to parents;
- minutes of the meetings of the governing body, or the equivalent where the 'appropriate authority' is not the governing body;
- evidence of progress towards the targets set by governors;
- curriculum plans, policies, guidelines or schemes of work already in existence;
- the outcomes of self-evaluations carried out recently by the school;
- the outcomes of any external monitoring and evaluations carried out since the last inspection;
- any other documentation the school wishes you to consider, subject to your agreement.

You should return all of these to the school after the inspection.

49 In a SHORT INSPECTION, you should avoid taking further documentation away from the school. You should not ask the school to collect together curriculum plans, policies, guidelines or schemes of work, no matter how important the school feels they are. Only if specific issues arise during the inspection, where the reasons for a particular strength or weakness need be explored, should you ask to see any related material.

50 There is a lot of ground to cover on the preliminary visit; therefore it is not ideal to hold the parents' meeting on the same day.

STEP 9: PLANNING THE INSPECTION

51 The registered inspector should:

- ensure responsibilities are assigned for all subjects and aspects, special educational needs, equal opportunities; and, where relevant, children under 5 and English as an additional language;
- decide the deployment of the team on the basis of a clear strategy for sampling the work of the school, taking account of the areas of expertise of team members;
- plan the deployment of inspectors, particularly on the first day, and ensure that each inspector has an appropriate schedule of inspection activities to cover in addition to his/her responsibilities;
- plan to collect evidence relating to particular aspects identified as focal points in the *Pre-Inspection Commentary*;
- plan, in conjunction with the school, when discussions with staff will take place and, on FULL INSPECTIONS, agree when the feedback to subject co-ordinators and classroom teachers will be held;
- in SHORT INSPECTIONS, decide whether or not *Inspection Notebooks* will be used;
- set deadlines for team inspectors to complete *Inspection Notebooks* (remember that, apart from the draft sections for the report, these must be completed before the final team meeting);
- in FULL INSPECTIONS, set deadlines for team inspectors to submit draft sections for the report.

STEP 10: MEETING WITH PARENTS

52 The pre-inspection meeting with parents is a legal requirement. The meeting must take place before the inspection begins so that the registered inspector can fully consider the parents' views as important pre-inspection evidence. Parents should have as much notice of the meeting as possible. The 'appropriate authority' (usually the governing body) is responsible for organising the meeting. Only parents or carers of pupils registered at the school should be invited. The headteacher or one of

the governors, usually the chair, may introduce you to the parents at the meeting. Any member of staff, or governor, who is also a parent or carer of a pupil at the school may attend the meeting. OFSTED provides a sample letter of invitation and the suggested agenda for the meeting (available on the CD-ROM attached to this *Handbook*).

53 The registered inspector should invite the governing body to distribute the standard questionnaire to parents (available on the CD-ROM). Individual responses are confidential to the inspection team and there should be arrangements to ensure that this is the case. Inspection contractors have translations of the questionnaire in the more commonly used home languages and at an early stage you should check with the school whether these are needed. If forms in other languages are used, you will need to plan to have comments translated.

54 The school should distribute the questionnaire on the basis of one per pupil. However, its normal procedures should be used where information is sent separately to more than one person with responsibility for the child, making sure that sufficient questionnaires are sent so that parents can respond separately for each child.

55 You should base the meeting on the standard agenda for parents' meetings (available on the CD-ROM) and give parents the opportunity to express their views on:

- the standards the school achieves;
- how the school helps pupils, whatever their ability, to learn and make progress;
- the attitudes and values the school promotes;
- behaviour and attendance;
- the work the school expects pupils to do at home; and the school's links with parents, including information on how pupils are getting on;
- how the school responds to parents' suggestions and concerns;
- how the school has improved in recent years.

56 You should also invite views on any other matters which the parents may wish to raise. You should ask parents not to name individual pupils and teachers at any stage during the meeting. You should explain in general terms the forthcoming inspection and its purpose. You may need to explain why the school has been selected for a particular type of inspection.

57 As soon as possible after the meeting is over, and you have received the returned questionnaires and analysed them, you should discuss with the headteacher the significant issues and concerns raised by parents. You should give the headteacher the opportunity to offer you other evidence of parents' views about the school. You should explain that the inspectors' views on what parents say about the school will form part of the feedback at the end of the inspection, and also will be contained in the written report.

STEP 11: COMPLETION OF THE *PRE-INSPECTION COMMENTARY*

58 After the visit to the school, you should be in a position to prepare a detailed, well-informed and penetrating *Pre-Inspection Commentary* on the school. This commentary should be completed for as many sections of the schedule as possible.

59 You should give preliminary views about:

- the characteristics of the school;
- standards, trends in attainment, and improvement since the last inspection, adding to your existing commentary on these areas;
- attendance and exclusions, with potential views on attitudes and behaviour;
- the match of staff expertise to subjects taught and any implications for attainment shown in the data;
- the range and quality of the school's educational provision and other aspects of the school, making full use of the school's documents provided.

60 You should present initial hypotheses about why the standards achieved are as they are and any significant variation over time and between subjects or groups of pupils. You should highlight in particular those features of the school that appear to impact on standards, such as:

- possible changes in the quality of teaching caused by staff turnover, monitoring and evaluation strategies, or in-service training;
- features of the school's context and organisation such as mixed-aged classes;
- the impact of the school's context and its leadership and management;
- changes in curriculum provision, such as the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies;

- the use of resources to promote standards.

61 These are matters that you must pursue in the inspection. You should also form hypotheses about:

- the extent, and adequacy, of the school's improvement since the last inspection;
- whether the school might be underachieving, have serious weaknesses, or require special measures.

62 In considering the pre-inspection information, do not lose sight of the wood for the trees. Ensure that the *Pre-Inspection Commentary* paints the 'big picture' of the school, and that the central hypotheses about the school stand out clearly. Effective *Pre-Inspection Commentaries* for both short and FULL INSPECTIONS:

- draw on the full range of pre-inspection evidence, including the school's self-evaluation, views formed during the pre-inspection visit, parents' views and returned questionnaires;
- make full use of the *PICSI* data and the comparative figures in the *PICSI* annexes;
- build substantially on the issues raised in the previous inspection report; and the school's actions in response to them;
- provide an accurate historical analysis of the school's achievements and trends;
- identify hypotheses for further exploration or confirmation: issues for inspection.

STEP 12: TEAM BRIEFING AND MEETING

63 The team should meet for a final briefing before starting the inspection. You should note that:

- this is more than a short gathering before the first morning's inspection begins. A thorough briefing is required;
- it could be a morning meeting prior to beginning the inspection in the afternoon, or a separate meeting before the first day of the inspection;
- the meeting must not encroach on inspection time;
- the meeting should be for the whole inspection team, and where any team member begins the inspection at a later stage, arrangements must be made for a thorough briefing at that stage.

64 As the registered inspector, you will check the background and strengths of the team, if you do not already know them, and then:

- brief the team about the school and the *Pre-Inspection Commentary*;
- alert the team to any concerns or anxieties felt by the school or staff;
- ensure that all members of the team gather evidence against all the schedule headings;
- ensure that all members of the team know exactly what their first day's programme is to be;
- on FULL INSPECTIONS, ensure they have completed their subject *Pre-Inspection Commentaries*;
- clarify organisation and administrative arrangements;
- ensure that all are clear about their expected conduct.

65 You should make sure that the team is aware of all the issues and how these are to be tracked through. But above all, inspectors need to be aware of the 'big issues'. For example, if there is a strong boy/girl difference in test results, this should be clearly stated so that inspectors reflect their relative performance in each *Evidence Form* they write. The team should understand the school almost as well as you do by the end of the briefing.

DURING THE INSPECTION

THE ROLE OF THE REGISTERED INSPECTOR

66 As the registered inspector, you are the manager of the inspection team and the whole inspection process, and the first point of reference for everyone involved in the inspection. Effective management and organisation of the team on a day-to-day basis are crucial to the success of the inspection. It is your responsibility to ensure that judgements about the school are fair and accurate, are based on secure and representative evidence, comprehensively cover the schedule and contract requirements, and are corporately agreed. You are responsible for drawing key judgements together in the *Record of Corporate Judgements*.

67 You should:

- ensure that inspectors are consistent in their approaches to collecting and recording evidence and in how they conduct themselves and provide feedback to teachers;
- be prepared to adjust the patterns of work of individual inspectors as circumstances dictate;
- monitor and, if necessary, intervene in the work of the team to ensure compliance with the Framework and secure the necessary quality of evidence and judgements;
- undertake direct inspection such as observing work in classrooms, sampling pupils' written work, and holding discussions with staff, governors and pupils;
- keep a careful check on the sampling of the school's work and the extent of observation of individual teachers.

TEAM INSPECTORS' ASSIGNMENTS

68 Inspectors need to plan and use their time carefully and efficiently to achieve the coverage required, but they should be sensitive to the impact of the inspection on teachers and other staff in the school. Inspecting and evaluating the following aspects of the school's work will require contributions from the whole team but will need to be co-ordinated by one inspector:

- the quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs and the standards achieved by them;
- equality of opportunity for different groups of pupils;
- pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

69 In FULL INSPECTIONS, inspectors need to draw evidence relating to their subject from across the curriculum. So, for example, the inspector co-ordinating the inspection of English will need to take account of pupils' competence in reading, writing, speaking and listening, and of opportunities for developing these competencies in subjects other than English. This will require other inspectors to contribute. The same is true for mathematics, in relation to numeracy skills, and information technology. In these cases, the inspector taking the lead will need evidence from across the curriculum.

70 Team meetings are an essential part of any inspection. They allow contributions from all inspectors and generate a sense of common purpose based on good working relationships, and a clear understanding of everyone's responsibilities within the team. As the registered inspector, you should structure and manage these meetings to provide opportunities for:

- the proper consideration and exchange of inspection evidence and inspectors' views;
- discussion of emerging issues which require the attention of the whole team;
- the resolution of issues for inspection identified in the *Pre-Inspection Commentary*;
- discussion of any gaps or weaknesses in the evidence base and how to fill them;
- debate about evidence, views and judgements to ensure consistency and to resolve any conflicts where they arise.

71 It is good practice to establish a programme of team meetings with clear agendas before the inspection begins. You will need to build in some flexibility to take account of any emerging issues during the inspection. Team meetings must not encroach on inspection time.

GATHERING THE INSPECTION EVIDENCE

72 Within their assignments on FULL INSPECTIONS, individual inspectors must be allocated time to collect the range of evidence on which the judgements of the team must be based. They must also ensure they have enough evidence to form judgements in their own subjects. The evidence includes:

- the inspection of teaching and of pupils at work in classrooms and other areas; and work off-site where the inspection priorities allow, where there is agreement with the 'appropriate authority', and where it is practicable and manageable;
- discussions with pupils, for example, to assess their understanding and knowledge of different subjects and their attitudes to work and their life at school;
- the analysis of samples of pupils' work within individual subjects and across the curriculum;
- discussions with staff, especially those with management responsibilities, such as subject or Key Stage co-ordinators;
- documentary analysis of schemes of work and teachers' plans, together with records of National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments, any assessment undertaken of attainment on entry, and other measures or indicators of attainment and progress used by the school;
- the analysis of statements of special educational needs, annual and transitional reviews and individual education plans.

73 The evidence should be recorded on *Evidence Forms* and summarised in *Inspection Notebooks* as the inspection proceeds.

74 In **SHORT INSPECTIONS**, **all** inspectors will collect evidence, mainly from observation of lessons, across all relevant parts of the *Evaluation Schedule*. Individual inspectors will be assigned during the inspection to follow up particular issues, often through discussions, and will need to report these back to the rest of the team at team meetings. You should try to avoid undertaking too much documentary analysis in a **SHORT INSPECTION**. Confine this to those areas where there are particular strengths or weaknesses, to follow up why things are the way they are. The evidence should be recorded on *Evidence Forms*. If you choose to do so, you can use *Inspection Notebooks* to help you record your views and judgements and to structure your contribution to team meetings.

OBSERVATION OF LESSONS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

75 While the school is in session the inspection team should aim to spend at least 60 per cent of its time observing lessons and sampling pupils' work. The time spent in lessons will vary, but some whole lessons must be observed, particularly literacy hours and numeracy sessions, if the school operates these. Lessons or sessions observed should be from the school's normal programme of work. Inspectors should not require changes to that programme.

76 In **SHORT INSPECTIONS** the sample of lessons should provide a cross-section of the work of the school. You should focus on the beginnings and ends of Key Stages, in particular Years 2/3 and 6, and the oldest children under 5. You should select the sample to include observation of the teaching of those teachers who hold management and/or curricular responsibility, for example:

- the headteacher if he/she is in charge of a class or has a significant teaching load;
- the deputy headteacher;
- English and mathematics co-ordinators teaching their subject (or a literacy hour, for example);
- those responsible for the early years and Key Stages.

77 In **FULL INSPECTIONS** lesson observations should include sufficient work in each Key Stage. Inspectors should spend enough time in lessons to enable them to make valid and reliable judgements on standards, teaching and learning. There should be a particular focus on the attainment of the oldest pupils. You must ensure that each teacher present in the school during the inspection is observed at least once and should aim to observe every class teacher teaching at least one whole or part lesson of English and mathematics.

78 In nursery schools, classes or units, you should observe the oldest and youngest children, recording your evidence for these groups on separate *Evidence Forms*. In mixed-age classes you should, as far as possible, also record the evidence for different age groups on separate forms.

79 In the smallest schools, the team may consist only of the registered inspector and the lay inspector, spending one day in the school. Small schools face particular challenges and you will need to evaluate how well they are met. For example:

- the class, or classes, cater for a wide age range
- raises questions about the match of work to pupils' needs and providing appropriate challenges and resources for all, particularly if there are nursery-aged children as well
- pupils may remain in one class for three, four or
- raises questions about whether the curriculum is

more years

planned to cover several years, avoiding repetition and retaining freshness, breadth and progression

- teaching staff may lack expertise in one or more curriculum areas
- pupils, particularly at the ends of Key Stages, may have few peers of the same age or capability
- there may only be a few nursery-aged children for certain days of the week
- raises questions about how the school redresses this
- raises questions about whether the school makes any arrangements to compensate for social and intellectual isolation
- raises the question of how appropriate are the school's curriculum, equipment and spaces for young children

80 Effective inspection involves joining individual pupils to look at their work and to discuss it with them. It also entails careful observation of teaching, including the organisation of work for pupils as a class, in groups or individually. Both need to be done so as not to disrupt either teaching or learning, and the taking of notes should be as unobtrusive as possible.

81 The load on teachers should be spread as evenly as possible. Wherever possible, teachers should not be kept waiting for their first visit from an inspector until near the end of the inspection. Inspectors should visit classes taught by supply teachers who are in the school for more than one day, and trainee teachers.

82 There should not normally be more than one inspector in a class at any time unless the class teacher agrees and there is a particular reason for it. An example would be to track the progress of a pupil with special educational needs, or where the registered inspector monitors the work of team members.

83 Inspection should include assemblies, extra-curricular activities, including sport if offered, and registration periods. It may also include fieldwork and educational visits where justifiable and practicable.

TALKING WITH PUPILS

84 Talking to pupils is a good source of evidence about what they know, can do and understand. It is particularly helpful in judging the extent of their understanding of current and recent work, and their ability to apply knowledge in different contexts. These discussions should take place as inspectors join individual pupils or groups of pupils at work in lessons. You should also use every opportunity to talk to pupils outside lessons, to find out their views of the school, their attitudes, their interests and the extent to which these are supported or fulfilled.

85 In all observation, it is important to listen to pupils':

- incidental talk and comments;
- contributions in class;
- responses to questions;
- questions, initiated by them;
- views, feelings and comments expressed in discussions.

THE ANALYSIS OF PUPILS' WORK

86 Pupils' earlier and current work provides an essential source of evidence of their attainment and progress. It also offers an insight into the curriculum, teaching and pupils' attitudes to work. You will need to look at samples of work. The nature of the samples should be agreed with the headteacher during the preliminary visit.

87 It is helpful if the analysis takes place near the beginning of the inspection. Importantly, it will help the team to form an early view of the standards achieved. In English, mathematics and science, the review and analysis of pupils' work need to establish whether the standards of the oldest pupils in each Key Stage mirror what the performance data show. This will help you to see what pupils do well and not so well.

88 In SHORT INSPECTIONS the sample should include:

- a sample of individual pieces of work in English and mathematics, selected by the school and drawn from across year groups to illustrate the standards achieved by the school and how pupils' work develops over time;
- a representative sample of the work of all pupils with statements of special educational needs.

89 In FULL INSPECTIONS, the sample should include:

- the work of pupils in all year groups in all subjects. The sample in each year should include two pupils from each group of pupils of above-average, average and below-average attainment;
- the work of all pupils with statements of special educational needs.

90 For each pupil, examples of past and present work should be available in order to establish the range of work covered over time and to evaluate evidence of progress. Inspectors will find it helpful to have pupils' records available alongside their written work, including individual education plans or statements of special educational needs.

91 The evidence from analysing samples of work provides substantial confirmation of attainment and the breadth, depth and consolidation of learning. Other examples of pupils' work in classrooms, in exercise books or on display help to establish how representative the sample is.

DISCUSSION WITH STAFF, THE 'APPROPRIATE AUTHORITY' AND OTHERS INVOLVED IN THE WORK OF THE SCHOOL

92 Headteachers and registered inspectors alike value a daily meeting to agree administrative details, discuss any matters of concern, clarify inspection issues and obtain further information. These meetings contribute a great deal to the smooth running of an inspection and the maintenance of good relationships by sharing emerging hypotheses, providing the opportunity for the school to offer further evidence, and preparing the way for some of the judgements made at the end of the inspection.

93 Discussions with the headteacher, representatives of the 'appropriate authority', staff with particular management responsibilities and class teachers provide important sources of evidence relating to roles and responsibilities, procedures and policies. They are essential to the professional dialogue between staff and inspectors, which contributes to the usefulness of inspection to schools. These discussions also help inspectors to establish the context for their observations.

94 Discussion with teachers, especially at the end of lessons or sessions, is desirable, but it may not always be possible to have more than a brief exchange. However, the work of teachers should be acknowledged and as many opportunities as possible found for professional dialogue. Such dialogue might involve clarifying the context of the lesson or session, and of future work, as well as providing a brief evaluation of the quality of work seen, where this is possible. In SHORT INSPECTIONS the discussion at the end of, or shortly after, the lesson should provide brief feedback whenever possible on the quality of the teaching observed and any significant strengths and weaknesses.

95 You should arrange to meet staff and representatives of the 'appropriate authority' to discuss their areas of responsibility at mutually convenient times. This is best arranged by negotiation before the inspection starts. Where possible you should indicate the points you wish to raise in the discussion, giving those concerned time to think about those issues. You should not offer a pro forma which teachers may feel under extra pressure to prepare for and complete. Take care that meetings do not make unreasonable demands on teachers' time, for instance their break times. To ensure efficient use of both teachers' and inspectors' time, you should plan and co-ordinate carefully the meetings with staff who have several responsibilities. Discussions with support staff, voluntary helpers and any visiting specialists, for example speech therapists, are also a valuable source of information and contribute to involving all staff in a FULL INSPECTION. It will not be possible to do this to the same extent on a SHORT INSPECTION.

THE PLACE OF DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

96 Schools should be judged primarily by their achievements, and on the effectiveness of their teaching, leadership and management in contributing to pupils' progress. Where a school is very effective, there is little need to trawl through all its procedural documents.

97 In the past, schools have spent an inordinate amount of time in preparing policies and revising curriculum plans or schemes, largely because of a forthcoming inspection. We wish to discourage this practice. Primary schools are required by regulations to have a number of procedures and policies in place; other policies are simply recommended or encouraged by the DfEE or other national organisations. The presence or absence of non-statutory policies or documents is not intrinsically material to the quality and standards of the school. For example, a school is unremarkable if it achieves good attendance in a situation where you would expect attendance to be good. Where attendance is surprisingly good or is unsatisfactory, then you

should investigate either why the school has achieved such unusually high attendance or, conversely, the reasons for attendance being poor and what the school is doing or has done about it. In either of these cases, it is appropriate to look into the school's policy and procedures in respect of attendance, the way it handles absence, the dealings it has with parents over the question of attendance, and so on. A school should not be marked down simply for not having an attendance policy, unless the absence of such a policy, for example in a school with poor attendance, indicates a measure of complacency in dealing with the issue.

98 In all inspections, schools are asked to complete a school self-audit (*Form S3*). The school is not expected to undertake extensive audit activities in order to do this; it would normally be sufficiently well informed about what is required and how it meets those requirements. The form illustrates a range of areas in which statutory requirements apply to all or some schools. You should know what these requirements are.

99 In a **SHORT INSPECTION**, the small scale of the inspection means that only if a concern is raised during the inspection will the inspection team explore the school's compliance with the detail of statutory requirements. In a **FULL INSPECTION**, however, one or more inspectors from the team should follow up the school's compliance in a range of areas as part of, and relevant to, their responsibilities.

100 In a **SHORT INSPECTION**, inspectors should sample the planning which underpins some of the lessons they see, but should not *unless there is a significant concern* call for and inspect all the school's plans or schemes of work for different subjects. Nor should they ask for policy or operational documents unless they are material to the investigation of particular strengths and weaknesses.

101 In a **FULL INSPECTION**, inspectors should not require a school to produce voluminous documentation in advance of the inspection. They should look at the plans or schemes for the subjects they are inspecting as they exist in the school, either before or at an early stage in the inspection. The burden on schools of writing or photocopying must be kept to an *absolute* minimum, and schools should be reimbursed for any copying costs.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

on this site.

ANNEX 2

SCHOOLS REQUIRING SPECIAL MEASURES, SCHOOLS WITH SERIOUS WEAKNESSES, AND UNDERACHIEVING SCHOOLS

On every inspection, as a team, you must consider whether the school is failing, or likely to fail, to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education, and therefore requires special measures.

If you judge that the school is providing an acceptable standard of education, the next step is to consider whether it nevertheless has serious weaknesses.

You also need to consider whether the school, though not identified as having serious weaknesses, is judged to be underachieving.

These judgements must be reported using the prescribed wording, and specific procedures must be followed.

BACKGROUND

The School Inspections Act 1996 (the 1996 Act) states that: 'Special measures are required to be taken in relation to a school if the school is failing or likely to fail to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education'(section 13(9)).

Towards the end of an inspection, as a team, you must consider whether the school is failing, or likely to fail, to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education (Framework, paragraph 33). If you reach this view, and HMCI agrees, then special measures will be required.

If you reach the view that the school is providing its pupils with an acceptable standard of education, you should then and only then consider whether it nevertheless has serious weaknesses.

JUDGING THAT A SCHOOL REQUIRES SPECIAL MEASURES

The possibility that a school may be failing or likely to fail to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education should be considered initially during the pre-inspection analysis of data, indicators and other evidence about the school's performance.

It is uncomfortable coming to a judgement that a school is failing or likely to fail, but it is one which you must not shirk. You must not take the easier course represented by the judgement that the school has serious weaknesses if the evidence points to the conclusion that the school is not providing an acceptable standard of education.

Factors to consider

One feature alone is unlikely to result in a judgement that a school requires special measures, but where you find low standards and poor learning, risk to pupils or the likelihood of a breakdown of discipline, the school will normally require special measures.

The following questions are a guide to the judgement that a school requires special measures.

a. Education standards achieved:

- | | | |
|-----|--|--------|
| i. | Is there low achievement in the subjects of the curriculum by the majority of pupils or consistently among particular groups of pupils? | Yes/No |
| ii. | Is there poor learning and progress in the subjects of the curriculum by the majority of pupils or consistently among particular groups of pupils? | Yes/No |

iii.	Are there poor examination results?	Yes/No
iv.	Are the National Curriculum assessment and other accredited results poor?	Yes/No
v.	Is there regular disruptive behaviour?	Yes/No
vi.	Is there a breakdown of discipline?	Yes/No
vii.	Are there high levels of exclusions?	Yes/No
viii.	Are there significant levels of racial tension or harassment?	Yes/No
ix.	Is there poor attendance by a substantial proportion of pupils?	Yes/No
x.	Is there poor attendance by particular groups of pupils?	Yes/No
xi.	Is there a high level of truancy?	Yes/No
b. Quality of education provided:		
i.	Is there a high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching?	Yes/No
ii.	Are there low expectations of pupils?	Yes/No
iii.	Is there failure to implement the National Curriculum?	Yes/No
iv.	Is there poor provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	Yes/No
v.	Are pupils at physical or emotional risk from other pupils or adults in the school?	Yes/No
vi.	Are there abrasive and confrontational relationships between staff and pupils?	Yes/No
c. The leadership and management of the school:		
i.	Is the headteacher and/or the senior management team and/or the governors ineffective?	Yes/No
ii.	Is there significant loss of confidence in the headteacher by the staff and/or the parents and/or the governors?	Yes/No
iii.	Is there demoralisation and disenchantment amongst staff?	Yes/No
iv.	Are there high levels of staff turnover or absence?	Yes/No
v.	Is there poor management?	Yes/No
vi.	Is inefficient use made of the resources available to the school, including finance?	Yes/No
vii.	Does the school apply principles of best value in its use of resources?	Yes/No

You may also find the following forms useful in arriving at decisions:

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED	serious concern	some concern	no concern
Achievement in:			
English communication - including literacy			
Mathematics - including numeracy			
Science			
Design and technology			
Information technology			
History			
Geography			
Modern foreign languages			
Music			
Art			
PE			

In NC subjects or curriculum overall
 Religious education - special schools only
 Other curricular provision
 National test/examination results
 Behaviour
 Level of exclusions
 Level of racial tension or harassment
 Attendance
 Truancy

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

serious concern	some concern	no concern
----------------------------	-------------------------	-----------------------

Teaching
 Expectations of pupils
 Implementation of the National Curriculum
 Provision for pupils' SMSC development
 Pupils at physical/emotional risk from other pupils
 Pupils at physical/emotional risk from adults
 Relationships between staff and pupils

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SCHOOL

Effectiveness of headteacher
 Effectiveness of other senior managers
 Effectiveness of the governors
 Confidence in the headteacher by staff
 Confidence in the headteacher by parents
 Confidence in the headteacher by governors
 Demoralisation and disenchantment among staff
 Level of staff turnover/absence
 Management/use made of available resources
 Principles of best value applied by the school
 School improvement since last inspection
 Ability to secure necessary improvements

A school will be likely to fail if it:

- is close to the point where it would be judged to be failing;
- is declining rapidly in one or a number of important areas;
- is in decline and this is not being checked by the senior managers and appropriate authority;
- is in a precarious state where the management is ineffective and therefore the quality of education is likely to decline;
- has many weaknesses and had made insufficient progress since the last inspection.

Procedures to be followed

If the accumulating evidence suggests that the school may require special measures, you can get further guidance during office hours from the School Improvement Division in OFSTED (telephone 020 7421 6594). If, as a team, you reach the judgement

that the school is failing or likely to fail, and therefore requires special measures, the registered inspector must:

- **inform the School Improvement Division in OFSTED before the school is told of the judgement;**
- **before leaving the school at the end of the inspection, tell the headteacher orally either that in the view of the inspection team there are serious deficiencies and that the team is considering whether the school is failing, or likely to fail, to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education, or that the inspection team has reached a corporate judgement that the school is failing or likely to fail to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education;**
- **when giving oral reports to the senior management team and the appropriate authority, state that the corporate judgement of the inspection team is that the school is failing, or likely to fail, to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. The following form of words could be used:**

I am of the opinion that special measures are required in relation to this school because it is failing (or likely to fail) to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. In accordance with section 13(2) of the School Inspections Act 1996 I shall send a draft report to HMCI and will await his judgement on whether he agrees or not that the school requires special measures.

- **explain that submission of the draft report to OFSTED may delay the issue of the report to the appropriate authority. The maximum delay is three months from the date when the report was due;**
- **use *Form 1* at the end of this section to inform the School Improvement Division in OFSTED of the team's decision;**
- **submit to OFSTED, but not to the school, the draft report and any other papers that are required as quickly as possible and by the agreed date, and always within five weeks of the end of the inspection.**

What happens next?

HMI will consider the evidence and may visit the school before recommending to HMCI whether or not to agree that the school requires special measures. Whenever possible, if a visit is to take place, it will be within three working weeks of the inspection. The purpose of the visit will be to confirm or otherwise that special measures are required; HMI will not be re-inspecting the school.

If you are the registered inspector, you must ensure that all the evidence collected during the inspection is available for scrutiny by HMCI. It is probable that, on behalf of HMCI, the School Improvement Division will ask you to provide:

- **the school prospectus;**
- **a plan of the school and a map showing its location;**
- **timetables and a copy of any key that is necessary to be able to interpret the timetables;**
- **the draft report and summary;**
- **the completed *Record of Corporate Judgements* (including JRF grades), all completed *Inspection Notebooks* (including subject JRF grades), and *Evidence Forms*;**
- ***Forms S1-S4*;**
- **a note of the main issues raised at the parents' meeting and in the parents' questionnaire responses.**

When HMI have scrutinised the evidence and, in some cases, visited the school, they report to HMCI. He will decide whether or not he agrees with the team's opinion and will tell you of his decision.

If HMCI agrees with the judgement that the school is failing or likely to fail, the following form of words should be used in the summary report:

In accordance with section 13(7) of the School Inspections Act 1996 I am of the opinion, and HMCI agrees, that special measures are required in relation to this school.

If HMCI does not agree, the reasons will be explained and you will be given the opportunity to discuss HMCI's decision. Three options are open to you:

- **accept HMCI's decision and amend the report by removing the opinion that the school requires special measures, and then issue the report;**
- **decide to issue the report without amendment. Special measures will not apply and you must then use the following form of words in the main findings of the report and in the summary:**

In accordance with section 13(7) of the School Inspection Act 1996, I am of the opinion, but HMCI disagrees, that special measures are required in relation to this school.

- prepare further drafts for HMCI to consider, incorporating the opinion that the school is failing, or likely to fail. If HMCI still disagrees after considering subsequent drafts, you may decide to issue the report and summary without further amendment, but must state that HMCI disagrees with you using the form of words above. The report and summary must be substantially the same as the latest drafts sent to HMCI. Special measures will not apply.

JUDGING THAT A SCHOOL HAS SERIOUS WEAKNESSES

Factors to consider

If, as a team, you reach the view that the school is giving an acceptable standard of education, you should then consider whether or not it nevertheless has serious weaknesses in one or more areas of its work. In doing so, you should refer to the same characteristics as those you considered when deciding whether or not the school is giving an acceptable standard of education. You should make your judgements in the light of the findings as a whole, but should normally view the following weaknesses as significant:

- low standards of achievement and/or unsatisfactory learning and progress made, particularly in the core subjects;
- unsatisfactory teaching in about one in eight lessons;
- ineffective leadership and/or management.

Procedures to be followed

The registered inspector should tell the headteacher at the end of the inspection either that the team's view is that there are deficiencies and that it is considering whether the school has serious weaknesses, or that it has reached the judgement that the school has serious weaknesses. You must tell the School Improvement Division in OFSTED of your decision by telephone (020 7421 6594) before you tell the school, and subsequently send OFSTED the attached *Form 2*.

You should use a very clear form of words in the summary report. The words 'This school has serious weaknesses' must be included.

A copy of the final report should be sent to the School Improvement Division at the same time as it is sent to the school.

For further information and guidance about special measures or serious weaknesses, contact: School Improvement Division
OFSTED

Alexandra House

33 Kingsway

London WC2B 6SE

Telephone: 020 7421 6594

JUDGING THAT A SCHOOL IS UNDERACHIEVING:

A judgement about whether a school is underachieving will be made, in appropriate circumstances, as part of both short and full inspections.

Factors to consider

The judgement should be made by considering:

- the effectiveness of the school;
- improvement since the last inspection;
- the performance of the school in comparison with schools in similar contexts.

It should be made on the basis of **performance data** and **inspection judgements** taken together.

Performance data

The performance data should include the following as applied to the highest Key Stage in the school:

- the school's results, compared with all schools nationally;
- the school's results, compared with schools in similar contexts, using QCA benchmarks;
- whether the school's average NC levels are improving over time, compared to the trend in national average NC levels.

For the majority of schools, the like-school comparison will be based on QCA free school meal bandings, as before.

You should consider the grade codes for national comparison and like-school comparisons, given in the *PICSI report*:

A* - very high in comparison with national average/average for similar schools

A - well above the national average/average for similar schools

B - above the national average/average for similar schools

C - average (in line with) the national average/average for similar schools

D - below the national average/average for similar schools

E - well below the national average/average for similar schools

E* - very low in comparison with the national average/average for similar schools

The performance data could, therefore, indicate elements of underachievement. Possible underachievement would be identified as part of the *Pre-Inspection Commentary* and provide a focus for the inspection. For example, for cases such as:

Grade for national comparison	Grade for comparison with schools in similar contexts	Trends in results
A*, A, B	D	Slower than national trends <i>or</i> no significant change over time
C	D/E	Slower than national trend No significant change over time

Inspection judgements

Evidence for underachievement found during the inspection will focus largely on aspects of teaching, learning, leadership and management, in conjunction with the hypotheses suggested by the data, as above. Significant pointers might be:

Teaching and learning

- where the percentage of good or better teaching is low;
- where the capacity of the teaching to challenge and inspire pupils is judged unsatisfactory, especially for higher-attaining pupils and other specific groups of pupils such as pupils with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language, even if the teaching overall is satisfactory;
- where the methods used to enable all pupils to learn effectively are judged unsatisfactory, although the teaching is judged satisfactory overall;
- where the pupils' application of intellectual, physical or creative effort is judged unsatisfactory, although pupils' learning is judged satisfactory overall;
- where the extent to which pupils show interest in their work, concentrate and think and learn for themselves is judged unsatisfactory, although pupils' learning is judged satisfactory overall.

Leadership and management

- where the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching is judged unsatisfactory;
- where the shared commitment to improvement and the capacity to succeed are judged unsatisfactory;
- where the school's targets are not appropriate and/or progress towards meeting them is unsatisfactory.

School improvement

- where the judgement that the school has improved since the last inspection is barely satisfactory, overall, with specific and identifiable reservations based on the previous report and other sources of evidence.

The overall judgement that a school is underachieving would be based on:

- the performance data, which show the school's results are not as good as they could be;
- evidence that results are not improving sufficiently but not to the extent of being a serious weakness;
- significant concerns about aspects of **teaching, learning, leadership and management**, although these concerns are not acute enough to merit a judgement of serious weaknesses overall.

Procedures to be followed

The registered inspector should tell the headteacher at the end of the inspection either that the team's view is that it is considering whether the school is underachieving, or that it has reached the judgement that the school is underachieving. You must tell the School Improvement Division in OFSTED of your decision by telephone (020 7421 6594) before you tell the school, and subsequently send OFSTED the attached *Form 2*. You should use the words 'This school is underachieving' in the summary report. A copy of the final report should be sent to the School Improvement Division at the same time as it is sent to the school.

For further information and guidance about underachieving schools, contact:

School Improvement Division
OFSTED
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

Telephone: 020 7421 6594

RECOMMENDATION FOR SPECIAL MEASURES This form must be used by **all** lead inspectors to confirm the judgement that the school requires special measures. **Immediately the school has been informed of the decision, this form must be sent to:** Head of the School Improvement Division

OFSTED

Alexandra House

Room 802

33 Kingsway

London WC2B 6SE

Inspection Number

Date of inspection/...../.....

School name

Village/town

Status

Local Education Authority

Name of lead inspector

[RgI] [AI] [HMI] (delete as appropriate)

Date when report and summary are due/...../.....

I am of the opinion that special measures are required in relation to this school, since it is failing/likely to fail to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. The reasons for this opinion are:

1

2

3

4

(Please continue on separate sheet if necessary.)

I will send you drafts of the report and the summary by/...../.....

I confirm that I will report in these terms to the senior management team of the school and to the governors.

Signed

Name (please print)

Date/...../.....

Telephone number

Address.....

CONFIRMATION OF SERIOUS WEAKNESS OR THAT THE SCHOOL IS UNDERACHIEVING

This form must be used by **all** lead inspectors to confirm the judgement that the school has serious weaknesses **or** is underachieving. **Immediately the school has been informed of the decision, this form must be sent to:**

Head of the School Improvement Division

OFSTED

Alexandra House

Room 802

33 Kingsway

London WC2B 6SE

Date of inspection/...../.....

Date when report and summary are due/...../.....

I will send you the final report and the summary by/...../.....

School name

Village/town

Status

Local Education Authority

Name of lead inspector

[RgI] [AI] [HMI] (delete as appropriate)

Delete as appropriate:

I am of the opinion that this school is giving its pupils an acceptable standard of education, but it is a school with serious weaknesses. The reasons for this opinion are:

or

I am of the opinion that this school is underachieving. The reasons for this opinion are:

1

2

3

4

(Please continue on separate sheet if necessary.)

I confirm that I will report in these terms to the senior management team of the school and to the governors.

Signed

Name (please print)

Date/...../.....

Telephone number

Address

ANNEX 3

COMPLETING THE RECORD OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

(A) COMPLETING THE *PRE-INSPECTION COMMENTARY*

What to include

The essential features of the *Pre-Inspection Commentary* are:

- your preliminary views of the school in all areas of the *Evaluation Schedule*;
- initial hypotheses, to be tested during the inspection, in each of these areas.

Using the *Pre-Inspection Commentary*

The evidence on which you base your views and hypotheses will come mainly from three sources, and you might find it helpful to structure your *Pre-Inspection Commentary* using these three areas. They are:

- factual information from the *PICSI report* and other sources, such as *Forms S1* and *S2*;
- the school's previous inspection report;
- qualitative information you gain from *Forms S3* and *S4* and your visit to the school.

You should complete the *Pre-Inspection Commentary* in two stages. You will be able to begin writing the commentary when you have received the *PICSI report* and the completed inspection forms. The data contained in the *PICSI report* and *Forms S1* and *S2* will enable you to analyse the school's achievements in national tests. The headteacher's responses on *Forms S3* and *S4* will give you a picture of the school's own view of itself. You will then have sufficient knowledge of the school to put together a set of questions to ask the headteacher on the preliminary visit.

The information you obtain from the preliminary visit will enable you to complete the *Pre-Inspection Commentary* so that all team members have a clear picture of the school, in all areas of the *Evaluation Schedule*, before the inspection begins.

At the end of each section of the commentary you should include one or two key hypotheses for the inspection team to test out. Try to avoid long lists of hypotheses and focus on the 'big issues'. There is no need to include the reporting requirements or the criteria from the *Evaluation Schedule* because you will use these as a matter of course to evaluate the evidence in all inspections. What is needed is a small number of issues, which are drawn clearly from the evidence so far available and which relate specifically to the school being inspected.

In most cases these hypotheses will need to be followed up by all inspectors, and in a **SHORT INSPECTION** this will certainly be the case. In a **FULL INSPECTION**, individual team members may need to focus on particular issues and report back to the team at a suitable team meeting. You may find it helpful to indicate in the *Pre-Inspection Commentary* how an issue will be followed up, and by whom.

Style of writing

The *Pre-Inspection Commentary* needs to be concise and to the point. You will most likely write in continuous prose in short paragraphs. You should not rehearse all the evidence you have considered, which is contained in the *PICSI report*, inspection forms and the school's documentation. Your commentary should contain your views, so far, of what you have seen and discussed. The hypotheses should also be brief and to the point.

Extract from Pre-inspection Commentary partially completed before the preliminary visit to the school

Example before the school visit

2 How high are standards?

Interpretation of the school's results

Pre-inspection analysis of attainment:

Evaluation drawing on performance data, indicating Key Stages or groups of pupils, where relevant

Previous report:

- *Attainment on entry is average; attainment for U5s good in all areas of learning*
- *Standards in EN well above average in both Key Stages; in MA and SC above average in both*
- *In all other subjects EXCEPT IT attainment average (in line with national expectations)*
- *Literacy and numeracy skills used effectively across the curriculum*
- *IT skills NOT used effectively in other subjects*
- *Previous key issue to improve standards in IT and increase its use in other subjects*

PICSI report:

- *KS1 results for last year only average in reading and MA, above average in writing*
- *Similar schools comparisons show reading as below average, with writing and MA average*
- *Very low percentage of pupils attaining Level 3 in reading, writing and MA, and large number of Level W in reading*
- *Trends show drop in performance over last three years in reading and writing, with steady results in MA, despite decrease in FSM figure from 20 to 11 per cent*
- *KS2 results show better picture with EN, MA and SC results all well above average when compared with all schools and with similar schools*
- *Over one-third of pupils achieved Level 5 in EN, MA and SC*
- *MA and SC results show steady increase over three years, EN stay steady*
- *No differences between boys' and girls' results either in KS1 or KS2*

(IT and drop in results in KS1 to be followed up in detail in preliminary visit.)

Extract from the same Pre-inspection Commentary, showing the section written after the preliminary visit, and including the main issues for exploration during the inspection

Example after the school visit

2 How high are standards?

Interpretation of the school's results

Pre-inspection analysis of attainment:

Evaluation drawing on performance data, indicating Key Stages or groups of pupils, where relevant

Pre-inspection visit:

School's analysis of performance data good in its analysis by ethnic group, gender and teacher. No indication of value-added data yet, and little exploration of declining performance at end of KS1. HT indicates more pupils than usual with SEN in last year's Y2, now in Y3, but no convincing arguments that indicate school has got to grips with the issue. No monitoring of teaching to look at impact of teaching on learning in KS1, for example. No evaluation of effectiveness of demands made on high-attaining pupils or whether pupils with SEN are well supported.

School concerned that standards in IT still low. ICT network will have been up and running only six weeks before inspection. ICT strategy set up by HT; ICT co-ordinator is very good and staff fully involved at all stages. Its newness means that the impact on standards may be minimal yet.

Initial hypotheses and areas for further exploration:

The explanation of increased numbers of pupils with SEN in Y2 is likely to be only part of the picture of reduced performance at the end of KS1, particularly as there has also been a steady reduction in FSM rate. ALL team inspectors need to explore in

detail what impact teaching has on learning and on standards in every KSI observation, and pay particular attention to both ends of ability range.

Likely that standards in IT are still low, despite the work put in by staff and the new network. ALL team inspectors need to record use of ICT in every observation to give a picture of how well staff understand and have implemented the new policy. Team inspector covering IT needs to see whether improvement in standards are sufficient since last inspection, and whether current input is sufficiently demanding to raise them (or raise them further).

(B) COMPLETING THE EVIDENCE FORM

What to include

The *Evidence Form* is structured so that the same form can be used to record inspection evidence in four areas:

- **lesson observations** (coded **L**), including the observation of small groups or individual tuition;
- **analysis of pupils' work** (coded **A**), which might be undertaken independently of the pupils, or with the pupils present, to gain further insights into standards;
- **discussions** (coded **D**) with pupils, staff, governors and others;
- **any other evidence** (coded **O**), including observations of assemblies, registration periods, breaktimes, lunchtimes, arrival and departure from school and extra-curricular activities, and commentary on the school's documentation.

In writing each *Evidence Form*, you will need to complete the following parts:

- the **context** in which the form has been completed;
- the **evidence** you wish to record;
- when used for lesson observations, and optionally in other cases, **grades** for: teaching; learning; attainment; and attitudes and values;
- the **coding** boxes at the top.

Using the *Evidence Form*

Evidence Forms (EFs) are the key records of first-hand inspection evidence and your judgements on the basis of that evidence. You will need to refer to them when you identify strengths and weaknesses in your *Inspection Notebook*. They are also the source of illustrations for the inspection report.

When OFSTED's Inspection Quality Division monitors an inspection, the monitoring HMI may wish to look at the quality of evidence, judgement and grades recorded on *Evidence Forms*.

The context box

In the **context box**, put enough to describe the situation being recorded. If you are using the *EF* to record a discussion, say whom it is with and what it is about. If the *EF* is for a lesson or other observation, briefly describe what the teacher and pupils are doing, so that someone else could visualise the situation you observed. If you are recording your analysis of pupils' work, include sufficient detail to identify the work with the relevant subject or subjects and year or Key Stage.

Example of a context box for a lesson observation

Context:

Five different MA activities, with children grouped by ability. Objectives: introduce symmetry (with CLA); introduce multiplication (T); reinforce addition and subtraction (sheet and blocks); reinforce money problems (sheet); reinforce number bonds (textbook). T and CLA support all groups following initial focused input.

The evidence box

In the **evidence box** you should record the evidence you have collected and your judgements on the basis of that evidence. Each *EF* should contain:

- sufficient **evidence** to support the judgement(s) you make, in that anyone reading the evidence would be very likely to come to the same judgement;

Example of a lesson observation - recording evidence

Evidence:

Able to recall the terms tributary, source and meander and explain what they mean. Demonstrate a clear understanding of the concept of tributary and apply their knowledge by gathering data from a published map to identify tributaries of the River Severn. Attainment in line with pupils of this age.

Y4 geography observation**Attainment - Grade 4**

- a strong **focus on strengths and weaknesses**, and what makes them strengths and weaknesses, with less emphasis on that which is satisfactory but has no major positive or negative features;

Example of a lesson observation - recording strengths and weaknesses**Evidence:**

Lively relationship and good way of asking children questions about stories to do with journeys. Children respond with wide range of stories they know. Good questioning technique challenges children's understanding, involves individuals checking their own comprehension and keeps them well focused (S). Tendency to focus children's listening on teacher's interpretation of what children have said, rather than on listening to each other (W).

YR English observation**Teaching and learning - Grade 3**

- **illustrations** which can be drawn on by you or other inspector when writing text for the report, particularly of strengths and weaknesses;

Example of a lesson observation - recording illustrations**Evidence:**

Pupils highly motivated when working against the clock as they consolidate their mental arithmetic. Sensible when checking one another, and when using stop-watches. Good concentration throughout, self-set targets for improvement and excitement when targets met.

Y4 mathematics lesson**Attitudes and behaviour - Grade 2**

- **judgements** made on the basis of the evidence and, in the case of lesson observations, summary judgements on teaching and learning, attainment, attitudes and behaviour;

Example of a lesson observation - recording judgements**Evidence:**

Objectives of lesson simple and clear. The music was carefully chosen to emphasise fast playing of instruments. Hand-clapping task ensured that every pupil was able to participate very quickly. Clapping outcomes showed that pupils had no difficulty with this task but the further challenges needed to move their learning on were not there.

Y1 music lesson**Teaching - Grade 4**

- **explanations** that justify why things are as they are.

Example of a lesson observation - recording explanations

Evidence:

Pupils gained much from this session because they knew what they were expected to learn, had a good knowledge of the story's format and gave well thought-out suggestions for missing words which were taken on and developed in discussion with other pupils.

Y4/5/6 literacy class

Learning - Grade 3

You may wish additionally to use part of this space to record, for example, the way pupils with special educational needs learn, or how pupils with English as an additional language are supported by the use of information and communications technology (ICT) in all subjects. This focused approach is most effective when used consistently by all members of the inspection team in every lesson observation.

The grade boxes

When you enter **grades** at the foot of the form, make sure they match the judgements in the text above about teaching and learning, attainment, and pupils' attitudes and behaviour. You should always grade lesson observations. You may find it helpful to grade *EFs* that record your analysis of pupils' work, and any *EFs* coded 0 in which there is an element of teaching, such as in an assembly or in some extra-curricular activities. In **lesson observations** you must always grade **teaching, learning**, and pupils' **attitudes and behaviour**. In most cases you will use Grades 1-7 but you may need to use 0 if there is too little evidence to make a secure judgement. On very rare occasions, you may need to use 8 to indicate that it is not appropriate to enter a grade. Wherever possible, you should enter a grade for attainment. If you feel you do not have the expertise to make a judgement about attainment, for example if you are a lay inspector, it is acceptable to leave the attainment grade blank.

You should try to use the full range of grades. So, for example, if pupils' learning in a lesson is exemplary and you cannot see how it could be improved, award a Grade 1 and make sure that the text on the *EF* supports this grade.

Filling in the coded boxes at the top of the form

Every time you write an *EF* you need to code, where possible, the sections at the top of the form. The diagram shows what is needed. Further details are provided on the CD-ROM accompanying this *Handbook*.



Style of writing

There is no prescribed format for completion of *EF*s. Effective writing could be in continuous prose or in note form; it could list strengths and weaknesses separately or cover the same ground within a single piece of text. What matters is that the *EF* communicates to others the essential features of what has been seen or discussed.

In **lesson observations**, the pieces of evidence you obtain for teaching and learning are often inextricably linked. When you write the *EF* you should integrate these two areas whenever you can. You may wish to note particular points in each area that help you reach the two separate grades needed. If the grades for teaching and learning are different, for example if the teacher did all he or she could but other factors meant that pupils' learning was not graded as highly, you need to explain why they are different.

Example of a lesson observation - recording differences in judgements

Evidence:

Teacher's planning good and objectives explained to pupils. Group supported by teacher worked well because teacher's open questioning gave good lead-in to designing the experiment to test solubility and highlighted safety aspects. Two groups, each supported by a classroom assistant who had not been briefed beforehand, made little progress until they developed their own ideas from observations of other pupils and eventually succeeded with the task.

Y5/6 science observation

Teaching - Grade 5; Learning - Grade 4

In the **analysis of pupils' work** you should primarily use the *EF* to give a clear picture of pupils' attainment. You can use the *EF* to record the attainment of different groups of pupils and your exploration of differences in the standards achieved by pupils of different gender or ethnic background. You should also try, where you can, to bring out any evidence about teaching, pupils' learning and their attitudes.

Example of recording the analysis of pupils' work

Context:

Extract from the analysis of KS2 work in English

Evidence:

The range of written work is impressive and includes poetry, extended narrative, short story, newspaper and letters. A very good progressive development of narrative style. Progress from Y3-Y6 is reflected in the sophistication of vocabulary used, the use of punctuation, the use of dialogue and the development of a strong individual style.

No differences noted between attainment or progress of pupils from different ethnic groups, but those with EAL do not have the breadth of vocabulary or security of sentence structure of their peers in Y3. Boys do not produce the range or quality of work done by girls in Y3 or Y4. Both these differences have been almost eliminated by end of Y6. The stimulus material reflects good teaching and some challenging materials (e.g., Romeo and Juliet).

The annotation sheet used by teachers to assess the work is excellent, with learning intentions, activity details, children's learning outcomes and next steps. Next steps filled in particularly well and targeted at improvement in specific areas (e.g., 'Your stories need more description and less speech where you want to move the story on faster').

Overall: level of work well above that expected for their age

When you write about **discussions** with pupils, staff, governors or others, you should record the key points of the discussion, not try to transcribe all of what was said. This is often easier if the discussion takes place using a set of headings designed specifically for that occasion. At the end of the discussions, if there is time, you might find it helpful to go briefly through what you have written to check you have the main points accurately recorded.

Example of a report of a discussion with ICT co-ordinator

Context:

Extract from a record of a discussion with the ICT co-ordinator about leadership and management role of co-ordinator

Evidence:

Headteacher and governors had listened and had recognised school's needs as presented to them. HT had helped plan the school's ICT strategy. Co-ord felt empowered by the way they had delegated responsibility.

*Co-ord keeps governors informed, and feels secure in relationship with governing body.
Many fruitful discussions with HT.*

Involves staff in decision-making and used skills audit of all staff and governors to identify training needs. Didn't move on with issues until knew staff ready. Staff very responsive and responsible in tackling their own INSET needs.

Cost-effectiveness: investment in ICT has paid off in terms of raised expectations of teachers and dramatic increase in standards. Impact on standards has been across the curriculum, e.g., building bridges in DT in Y3, composing in MU in Y2, presentation of writing in all years and of data in MA in Y3-Y6

Judgement from evidence: co-ord has clear picture of strengths and weaknesses in ICT across the school; HT and governors have given co-ord clear brief to raise standards; co-ord has well-devised plan to bring about improvement; action taken is monitored and evaluated; approach is leading to improvements in standards and is cost-effective; overall, very good.

(C) COMPLETION OF INSPECTION NOTEBOOKS

What to include

On FULL INSPECTIONS and on SHORT INSPECTIONS, where it is used, the *Inspection Notebook* should always include:

- judgements in as many areas of the *Evaluation Schedule* as possible for which you have evidence, expressed as strengths and weaknesses;
- references to the *Evidence Forms* which form the basis for these judgements, and which can be used to illustrate them, if needed, in the inspection report;
- an overall evaluation under each *Evaluation Schedule* heading for which you have evidence.

When you are inspecting a subject or more than one subject during a FULL INSPECTION, your *Notebook* should additionally contain:

- a section on pre-inspection evidence about those subjects, written using the guidance given above for completing the *Pre-Inspection Commentary*;
- a summary of the feedback you intend to give to the co-ordinator for each subject you are inspecting, at or towards the end of the inspection;
- grades for the judgement recording statements in each of the subjects you are responsible for;
- the time you have spent on firsthand inspection in the school.

In a FULL INSPECTION, when you are responsible for writing aspects or subject sections of the report, the *Inspection Notebook* will also contain:

- the draft text of your contributions to the inspection report, usually completed after the final team meeting.

Using the *Inspection Notebook*

Each inspector, including the registered inspector, must complete an *Inspection Notebook* in a FULL INSPECTION, and the completed form will be entered into the inspection software. You may use one in a SHORT INSPECTION if you find it convenient to do so, but its contents will not be entered into the inspection software. It will, however, form part of the evidence base for the inspection.

The *Inspection Notebook* is for you to record your own views and judgements on the evidence you have collected. You should use it after you have reflected on the evidence from a number of sources. For example, after seeing several lessons on the first day of an inspection, you will probably feel you have sufficient evidence about teaching to record your views and make some tentative judgements about the quality of teaching. You should express your views as strengths and weaknesses. There is no need to include extensive commentary on things which are satisfactory. These views would form the basis of your contribution to the inspection team's discussions about teaching at a team meeting. You would be able to illustrate your points by referring back to the evidence on your *Evidence Forms*. For this reason, you will need to include a reference to the source(s) of evidence against each judgement recorded.

You will probably find that, in some areas of the *Evaluation Schedule*, you will be combining evidence from a range of different sources before writing in your *Inspection Notebook*. For example, your views on pupils' behaviour will come from *Evidence Forms* covering lessons, what you have seen outside lessons and discussions with staff and pupils.

In FULL INSPECTIONS, where you are inspecting more than one subject or aspect, you will need to structure your *Notebook* according to the subjects and/or aspects you are responsible for. If you are responsible for more than one subject, you will need to complete a judgement recording form for each. Your evidence should incorporate any observations or other evidence of 'your' subjects accrued by other members of the team. Their evaluations in your focus subjects should therefore be represented in your *Notebook*, together with the JRF for each of those subjects.

Whether you fill in your *Inspection Notebook* by hand or using a computer, you should treat it as a running commentary, which can be modified and added to as the inspection proceeds.

Towards the end of the inspection, you will need to make an overall evaluation of the evidence you have obtained under each heading in the *Evaluation Schedule*. You will also need to make sure that all the strengths and weaknesses recorded represent your final considered judgements, as these will be entered into the inspection software with the other inspection information.

You will also need to record the source(s) from which you derived each judgement. This will be a reference to one or more *Evidence Forms*, possibly from other inspectors on the team. In a FULL INSPECTION you will need copies of these forms if you are writing a subject or aspect, so that you can refer to them after the inspection has finished.

When an inspection is monitored by OFSTED's Inspection Quality Division, the monitoring HMI may wish to look at the quality of evaluations and judgements contained in *Inspection Notebooks*.

The subject judgement recording form

Towards or at the end of each FULL INSPECTION, you will need to enter grades in each subject inspected for the judgement recording statements at the back of the *Inspection Notebook*. The numbering follows that of the school judgement recording statements in the *Record of Corporate Judgements*. The grades should fall naturally into place from the judgements you have recorded in the earlier pages of the *Inspection Notebook*. If assigning a grade is difficult, it probably indicates that you have not already made or not recorded a clear judgement. In these circumstances you are advised to go back to consider the judgement itself, making use of the strengths and weaknesses you have recorded and, if necessary, referring to *Evidence Forms*.

Style of writing

You use the *Inspection Notebook* to record judgements, summarise your views and point to the evidence on which they are based. It should be written very concisely, therefore. It should consist of:

- single-sentence statements, or the equivalent in note form;
- coded references to *Evidence Forms*, using the code entered in the box at the top of each relevant form.

Example of an extract from a page of an Inspection Notebook

3 How well are pupils and students taught?

Teaching and learning

What is the quality of teaching and what is its impact?

Strengths and weaknesses from the inspection, indicating groups of pupils and Key Stages where relevant, and an overall evaluation

Foundation - strengths:	Sources of evidence:
◦ <i>Questioning well used to check children's understanding</i>	<i>All U5 EFs</i>
◦ <i>Well-planned lessons but flexible approach to match children's needs</i>	<i>All U5 EFs</i>
◦ <i>Very good management of pupils, moves lessons on at good pace without undue pressure on children</i>	<i>EFs JS6, JS8</i>
◦ <i>Very good interaction with children, encouraging less-confident to take part in active discussion</i>	<i>EFs JS6, JS8</i>
◦ <i>Very good development of sound recognition, aural and written. Higher-attainers introduced to more complex words and able to explain their meanings, e.g., myth, lynch</i>	<i>EFs JS12, JS8</i>
Foundation - weaknesses:	
◦ <i>Use of extra adults in classroom unfocused</i>	<i>EFs JS8, JS12</i>
KS1:	
◦ <i>No particular strengths or weaknesses in consistently satisfactory teaching</i>	
KS2 - strengths:	
◦ <i>Well-planned lessons, with objectives clear to pupils. Pupils always clear about the focus for the activity</i>	<i>EFs JS1, JS4</i>
◦ <i>Practical activities provide good opportunities to develop investigative skills</i>	<i>EFs JS1, JS4</i>

Overall evaluation:

Very good teaching in U5s gives them many opportunities to develop skills, through very effective questioning and management of pupils. Sound teaching in KS1. Good teaching in KS2 linked to clarity of objectives.

(D) COMPLETION OF THE *RECORD OF CORPORATE JUDGEMENTS*

What to include

The *Record of Corporate Judgements* for your inspection must include:

- corporate judgements of the inspection team in each area of the *Evaluation Schedule*;
- agreed grades for each of the judgement recording statements required in your inspection;
- agreed grades for each of the additional judgement recording statements *P1-P10*;
- agreed grades and, where necessary, reasons for changes of grade, to the similar school comparisons;
- statements and, where necessary, reasons for your decisions about whether the school requires special measures, has serious weaknesses or is underachieving;
- a summary of the extent and range of the inspection evidence.

Using the *Record of Corporate Judgements*

A single *Record of Corporate Judgements (RCJ)* is used in each inspection. It is completed at team meetings towards the end of an inspection and/or at the final team meeting after the inspection. You should use the *Record of Corporate Judgements* to record the team's agreed judgements and point to the evidence on which they are based. When parts of the *RCJ* are completed at an earlier team meeting, the contents of these parts will need to be confirmed at the final team meeting after the inspection. Because, as the registered inspector, you will be managing these meetings, it will be helpful if the actual recording is carried out by another member of the team, leaving you free to focus on the team's judgements.

The order of the pages in the *Record of Corporate Judgements* is designed to support the final inspection team meeting by moving from the detail of what was known before the inspection, through the evidence base collected during the inspection, to the evaluation of the effectiveness of the school. In short, you are expected to use the *Record of Corporate Judgements* to bring all your judgements together and reach some overall conclusions.

The main strengths and weaknesses are expressed, in draft form, as they will appear in the relevant boxes in the summary of the inspection report, namely **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL** and **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**. The *Record of Corporate Judgements* also gives space to draft the matters that the 'appropriate authority' must include in its post-inspection action plan. These should match exactly the entries in the section **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**.

The final team meeting represents the culmination of the collection of evidence, testing out hypotheses and reaching tentative judgements, which are then confirmed, or otherwise. The *Record of Corporate Judgements* is a way of ensuring that the team's agreed judgements are recorded so that they can be used as the basis for writing the inspection report. Individual inspectors will be able to contribute a range of strengths or weaknesses in each section of the *Evaluation Schedule* and the team needs to weigh these up, making reference to the evidence base where necessary, to reach corporate judgements. Once these judgements have been agreed, it is a relatively easy task for the team to assign grades to the judgement recording statements.

You will also need to record the source from which the judgement stems. This might be a reference to an *Inspection Notebook* or it might be a reference to one or more *Evidence Forms*. If you refer to an *Inspection Notebook*, you will need to ensure that it contains the reference to the *Evidence Forms*.

You should use the *Record of Corporate Judgements* carefully and record only the significant points you wish to include in the inspection report. You should record all the required judgements you will need for the summary report, so that when you come to write it, all the necessary information will be to hand. When you, and in some cases others, come to write the commentary section of the report, you will need to expand these points, drawing on explanatory and illustrative material from *Inspection Notebooks* and *Evidence Forms*.

The school judgement recording form

You will need to end your discussions of each section of the *Evaluation Schedule* by grading the judgement recording statements relevant to your inspection. In SHORT INSPECTIONS, the statements will be those at the top of the list of statements, printed in bold typeface. In FULL INSPECTIONS, you will also need to grade the more detailed statements printed in italic typeface.

If assigning a grade is difficult, it probably indicates that a clear corporate judgement has not been reached and you are advised to go back to consider the judgement itself, making use of the strengths, weaknesses and illustrations contributed by members of the inspection team. Having reconsidered the judgement, and possibly having re-written it in the *Record of Corporate Judgements*, the grade should fall naturally into place.

The ten judgement recording statements in the *Record of Corporate Judgements* not connected directly with an *Evaluation Schedule* heading (*P1-P10*) are pointers to what the report contains, not judgements in themselves. For example, *Statement P1* is not about whether the attainment of boys and girls is different, but about whether the report contains such a judgement. You can, therefore, usually answer these straightforwardly with *Yes* or *No*.

You will also need to consider as a team whether the grades in the *PICSI report* which describe the school's performance in relation to similar schools will be included in the report as they are printed in the *PICSI report* or if they will be modified. If you feel there is substantial and compelling evidence to suggest that a grade different by one grade from that given in the *PICSI report* is more appropriate, then this should be entered and an explanation given. If you feel that, in an exceptional case, a change of two or more grades, or the omission of the grade, is necessary, you must additionally inform the Inspection Quality Division of OFSTED of this, giving the reasons for your decision, and submit the supporting evidence.

Guidance on reaching conclusions about whether the school requires special measures, has serious weaknesses, or is underachieving, is given in Annex 2.

The summary of the extent of inspection evidence at the end of the *Record of Corporate Judgements* is completed by collating the times and evidence bases from each *Inspection Notebook* used. In SHORT INSPECTIONS, you will need to ask the other members of the inspection team to inform you of their contribution as it will not always be recorded in an *Inspection Notebook*.

Style of writing

Because the *Record of Corporate Judgements* is a summary of the team's inspection judgements, it should be written very concisely. It should consist of:

- single-sentence statements, or the equivalent in note form;
- coded references to *Inspection Notebooks* and *Evidence Forms*, using the entries in the bottom centre box at the top of each relevant *Evidence Form*.

Example of a page from a Record of Corporate Judgements

7 How well is the school led and managed?

How effectively do the leadership and management of the school contribute to pupils' achievements?

Main strengths and weaknesses, indicating groups of pupils and Key Stages, where relevant, and sources of evidence, and an overall evaluation

Sources of evidence:

Strengths:

- *Very well led, with some aspects outstanding: exceptional vision and commitment to raising standards; setting clear agenda for senior staff in their development work* EFs JS10, PD6, PD12, JS2, PIC
- *Very well managed, delegation very effective, keeps regular track of development work of senior managers* EFs JS10, PD7, JS2
- *Governors fully involved, knowledgeable; trust head but challenge as appropriate* EFs PD9, JS10
- *In-depth evaluations based on detailed and thorough analysis of data, and school well aware of its own strengths and weaknesses* EFs PD9, JS10, TP3
- *School improvement plan has strengths in identification of professional development needs based on thorough evaluation of need and linking these to evaluation strategies* EFs PD9, JS2

Weaknesses:

- *Firsthand monitoring of teaching not targeted on identification of areas for improvement, and not specifically linked to evaluation of initiative* EF PD7
- *School improvement plan weak on cost-effectiveness, and does not link evaluation of outcomes (i.e., improvement in standards) to costs* EFs PD9, JS2

Overall evaluation:

Leadership of the school is very good, with the vision provided by the headteacher outstanding. It is well managed, with good delegation and evaluation. Some improvements are needed in development planning and the monitoring of teaching.

on this site.

