

# Conducting inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools

Guidance for inspecting boarding and residential provision in schools in England

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This guidance is designed to assist inspectors when conducting inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools. It should be read in conjunction with *The framework for inspecting boarding and residential provision in schools* and the *Evaluation schedule for the inspection of boarding and residential provision in schools*.

It informs maintained, non-maintained and independent boarding and residential special schools about how we inspect the residential provision they make for children and young people in their care.

**Age group:** 5–18

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**Published:** April 2012

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**Reference no:** 100180



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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

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## Introduction

1. This guidance comes into effect from September 2011 and is designed to assist inspectors when conducting inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools in England. Schools can also use the guidance to see how inspections are conducted.
2. This document should be read in conjunction with *The framework for inspecting boarding and residential provision in schools* and the *Evaluation schedule for the inspection of boarding and residential provision in schools*.<sup>1,2</sup> It covers the inspection of residential provision when conducted as a single inspection activity or when it is part of an integrated inspection of the school.
3. This guidance applies to maintained and independent residential special schools, non-maintained residential special schools, maintained boarding schools and to those independent boarding schools which are inspected by Ofsted.<sup>3</sup> It does not apply to children's homes or to schools which are dually registered as children's homes, where children are resident for more than 295 days per year. The welfare of children in children's homes is inspected according to the framework for inspecting children's homes.<sup>4</sup>
4. More detailed guidance regarding the legal basis for inspection and the frequency of inspection is available on Ofsted's website in the linked document: *The framework for inspecting boarding and residential provision in schools*.
5. An inspection of residential provision is conducted annually in all residential special schools, and once every three years in maintained boarding schools and non-association independent boarding schools. In a year in which the school inspection also falls due, both boarding and education are inspected together in an integrated inspection. At all other times the inspection of boarding or residential provision is undertaken as a single activity. This guidance is divided into two sections:
  - inspecting boarding/residential provision as a single activity

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<sup>1</sup> *The framework for inspecting boarding and residential provision in schools* (110095), Ofsted, 2011; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110095](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110095).

<sup>2</sup> *Evaluation schedule for the inspection of boarding and residential provision in schools* (110096), Ofsted, 2011; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110096](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110096).

<sup>3</sup> Ofsted inspects the boarding and residential provision in non-association independent boarding schools including those boarding schools which belong to the Association of Muslim Schools UK, the Christian Schools Trust or the Steiner Waldorf Fellowship of Schools. The education provision in these schools is inspected by the Bridge Schools Inspectorate and the School Inspection Service, respectively. Both the education and boarding/residential provision in schools which are members of associations affiliated to the Independent Schools Council are inspected by the Independent Schools Inspectorate.

<sup>4</sup> *Inspections of children's homes, Framework for inspection* (100195), Ofsted, 2011; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/framework-for-inspection-of-childrens-homes](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/framework-for-inspection-of-childrens-homes)

- inspecting boarding/residential provision as part of an integrated inspection.

## **Inspecting boarding/residential provision as a single activity**

### **The inspectors**

6. The inspection of boarding/residential provision is led either by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors or by a social care inspector from Ofsted. All inspectors are suitably experienced and trained to inspect the welfare of boarders and residential pupils in schools. They have particular expertise in safeguarding children. The size and composition of the inspection team are determined by the size and location of the boarding provision. The timing of the inspection takes account of the date and outcome of the previous inspection and any relevant risk assessment.
7. In maintained boarding schools with more than fifty boarders on roll, the inspection team may be augmented by a boarding school additional inspector. This person is a professional with experience of boarding who is drawn from the sector and has received relevant training for their role on inspection.

### **Length of inspection**

8. Inspections will last no longer than three days on site and include two evenings spent in the boarding environment. In smaller schools this time may be reduced. As a general guide, the lead inspector has two planning days, which covers time for preparatory work, pre-inspection contact and travel to the school. One day after the end of the inspection is allocated to the lead inspector for report writing.

### **Pre-inspection activity**

#### **Gathering views of interested parties**

9. The views of boarders/residential pupils, their parents/carers and staff inform lines of enquiry for each inspection and are an important part of inspection evidence.
10. Ofsted's inspection support team will undertake a survey of the views of boarders/residential pupils, their parents/carers and staff in the boarding/residential provision by sending point in time surveys by email to the school at a specific point of time during the inspection year, with instructions for distribution and completion.<sup>5</sup> The school is asked to distribute the point in time surveys.

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<sup>5</sup> [www.ofsted.gov.uk/schools/for-schools/inspecting-schools/inspecting-boarding-and-residential-special-schools/boarding-or-residential-special-school](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/schools/for-schools/inspecting-schools/inspecting-boarding-and-residential-special-schools/boarding-or-residential-special-school).

11. Widget, Makaton, Picture Communication System and British Sign Language versions of the point in time survey for boarders/residential pupils are available. A link to these adapted versions will be included in the request sent to the school about the distribution and completion of the boarder/pupil survey.<sup>6</sup>
12. Alternatively, schools may adapt the survey for boarders/residential pupils to suit any other needs of their pupils, for example by translating it into Braille or other symbol versions, such as photo symbols. However, it is important that any such translations ensure that the questions remain the same in essence. Schools may also make other reasonable adjustments such as providing additional support with completing the point in time survey for pupils who have low literacy skills or learning difficulties. It is important, however, that pupils are able to express their views privately if they so wish.
13. Ofsted's inspection support team will also send a standard letter to the local authority designated officer for child protection to enquire about any information they have regarding the school.<sup>7</sup> The letter requests information about child protection enquiries relating to the school that are ongoing, or have been undertaken in the last 12 months. The local authority designated officer is asked to send any information by secure email directly to the lead inspector.
14. Responses to the annual point in time surveys are sent directly to Ofsted where they are collated and analysed by the inspection support team. The analysis will be shared with the school as soon as it has been prepared. The analysis will be shared whether or not the school is scheduled to be inspected in the period up until the next annual point in time survey is sent to the school. Where a school is due to be inspected in the months prior to when the next annual point in time survey will be sent to the school, the analysis will form part of the pre-inspection evidence.<sup>8</sup> Where the survey results and inspection are some time apart, inspectors will explore during the inspection the actions the school has taken to secure improvement. If any of the returned surveys appear to raise safeguarding concerns, the inspection support team will send them immediately to the relevant HMI manager.

## **Notice of inspection and pre-inspection contact with schools**

15. When arranging an inspection of the boarding/residential provision, the only pre-inspection contact with the school will be a brief telephone call from the lead inspector to the school in the morning to announce their arrival later that day, at around 12 o'clock. The lead inspector will confirm the call by emailing a formal notification of inspection letter to the school, using the template

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<sup>6</sup> [www.ofsted.gov.uk/schools/for-schools/inspecting-schools/inspecting-boarding-and-residential-special-schools/boarding-or-residential-special-school](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/schools/for-schools/inspecting-schools/inspecting-boarding-and-residential-special-schools/boarding-or-residential-special-school).

<sup>7</sup> The inspection support team will record a note in 'Registration comments' within RSA to confirm the date that the letter was sent to the local authority designated officer.

<sup>8</sup> The inspection support team will record a note in 'Registration comments' within RSA to confirm the date that the analysis was sent to the school.

available on the boarding and residential provision pages of the Ofsted intranet site.<sup>9</sup> If email contact is impractical, the social care inspector must ask the inspection support team to email the letter on their behalf.<sup>10</sup>

16. At the initial telephone call the lead inspector should speak to the headteacher or, if this is not possible, the member of staff in charge of boarding/care. The telephone call and email confirmation will inform the school of:
  - the start and end dates of the inspection and the approximate time of the inspector's arrival
  - the names of the lead and other inspectors (if applicable)
  - brief information about the inspection process and how to obtain key documents from our website, including links to the national minimum standards, the indicative timetable for inspection and Ofsted's complaints procedure.
17. The initial telephone call may also draw the school's attention to the information it would be helpful to have readily available during the inspection. This will only ever include information the school already has and in the form it keeps it. The lead inspector will remind the school about the documents listed in the appendices to the national minimum standards which will be required during the inspection. Schools must not be asked to send details of policies or procedures which are already available on the school's website. Schools are **not** expected to prepare additional documentation for inspectors. Requests will be kept to a minimum to reduce the requirements of inspection from the school, but will include any evaluation of its boarding provision which the school has made and wishes to share with inspectors. Inspectors should accept any evaluation the school has made of its boarding provision in whatever format it is presented.

## The indicative timetable

18. The indicative timetable is a document intended to help both schools and inspectors make best use of inspection time.<sup>11</sup> It indicates the interviews/discussions that the inspector(s) will need to hold, the intended outcomes, which national minimum standard/s will be covered and the relevant records, policies and documents which inspectors will need to see.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> The letter template is called 'Formal notification of inspection letter template'.

<sup>10</sup> The social care inspector (or inspection support team, if necessary) should record a note in 'Registration comments' within RSA to confirm that the formal notification letter has been sent to the school.

<sup>11</sup> *The indicative timetable* (110105), Ofsted, 2012; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/indicative-timetable](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/indicative-timetable).

<sup>12</sup> The national minimum standards for residential special schools and for boarding schools: [www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/a00192112/boarding-schools](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/a00192112/boarding-schools).

19. The school is asked to fill in the name(s) of the relevant members of boarding staff and the time when it is convenient to meet them. There is no set order for interviews, although it is very helpful to inspectors if interviews concerning safeguarding matters can be arranged for the first afternoon or early on the second day.

## Using the pre-inspection information

20. Inspectors will be allocated a planning day in order to prepare for an inspection. The inspector(s) will look at the information that Ofsted already holds or is publicly available about the school or its boarding provision which includes:
- previous inspection reports
  - any concerns and complaints received
  - the school's own website, which may already contain boarding policies and procedures and may also provide dates when the boarders/residential pupils may be away from school, for example, on a school trip
  - the analysis of views of boarders/residential pupils, parents/carers and staff from the point in time surveys<sup>13</sup>
  - any information on referrals, notifications or child protection concerns
  - the information the school supplied on its most recent census return to the Department for Education.<sup>14</sup>
21. The lead inspector will carry out an analysis of the available evidence and information and record the evidence and analysis in the RSA toolkit.<sup>15</sup> They should also record their planning notes within the planning section of the RSA toolkit. The plan for the inspection will identify lines of enquiry, any areas of apparent weakness or significant strength, or areas where further evidence needs to be gathered. The focus of the inspection may change during its course as further evidence emerges.
22. In addition, the lead inspector may use the available pre-inspection information to raise issues with the headteacher or the member of staff in charge of boarding/care, or to ask questions. An open dialogue between the school and inspectors is essential during inspection, and good communication is encouraged at all times.

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<sup>13</sup> The inspection support team will let the social care inspector know by email how to access the analysis, in advance of the inspection.

<sup>14</sup> Instructions for social care inspectors on accessing school census information are available in the guidance *PROTECT – Guidance on accessing school census information*, which is available on the boarding and residential provision pages of the Ofsted intranet site.

<sup>15</sup> Guidance for social care inspectors is provided in *RSA toolkits for inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools*, which is available on the boarding and residential provision pages of the Ofsted intranet site.



## Inspection activity

23. At the start of the inspection the inspector will confirm their identity by producing Ofsted proof of identity. It is not necessary to carry paper copies of Criminal Records Bureau checks, as Ofsted ensures that all its inspectors have been checked to have contact with young people.
24. The lead inspector will meet the headteacher and/or the member of staff in charge of boarding/care at the start of the inspection. The purpose of this meeting is to confirm the practical arrangements for the inspection, to ensure that it is planned effectively and makes best use of time. The meeting should last no longer than an hour and should cover the inspection plan and timetable, and any relevant information that inspectors need to be aware of while they are on site as discussed in the notification of inspection telephone call. This may include any health and safety issues or sensitive personnel issues. The headteacher will be asked to confirm that the school has the records set out in appendix two of the national minimum standards, by completing a form, during day one, supplied by the lead inspector.<sup>16,17</sup> The meeting should also be used to explore with senior staff the school's aims and reasons for offering boarding provision and how they are achieved. The lead inspector should also ensure that the headteacher is clear about the changes Ofsted has made to its practice with regard to the inspection of residential provision.

## During the inspection

25. Inspection activities will include:
  - listening and talking to boarders/residential pupils
  - observing interactions between staff and boarders/residential pupils
  - discussions with key staff including those with responsibility for leading, managing and organising boarding/ residential provision or key elements of it
  - checking on progress in response to the outcome of any 'point in time' surveys undertaken
  - follow up on progress in response to national minimum standards which were previously unmet
  - sampling meals and observing mealtime routines
  - examining relevant policies and procedures and observing how they are implemented
  - examining records, for example concerning health care and recruitment

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<sup>16</sup> *Boarding school national minimum standards – appendix two records* (110155), Ofsted, 2011; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110155](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110155).

<sup>17</sup> *Residential special school national minimum standards – appendix two records* (110156), Ofsted, 2011; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110156](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110156).

- looking at boarders'/residential pupils' records, case files and other relevant documents
- liaising by telephone with social workers from relevant local authorities that may have placed boarders'/residential pupils' in the school
- inspecting the premises, accommodation, facilities and procedures for ensuring health and safety arrangements.

### **Listening and talking to boarders/residential pupils**

26. The views and experiences of boarders/residential pupils are at the centre of the inspection and provide key evidence in assessing outcomes against the evaluation schedule.
27. Inspectors must take into account the specific communication needs of the residential pupils. For some, the inspectors may request the assistance of staff who know and understand the young person's preferred means of communication. It will also be appropriate for inspectors to spend time observing boarders and how they interact with staff and respond to their environment.
28. Much of the boarders'/residential pupils' experience of boarding takes place after the school day, and it is therefore essential that inspectors are present at this time. Inspectors should involve the young people in inspection activity wherever they can.
29. Inspectors will demonstrate safe and sensitive practice through:
  - being sensitive to the fact that some young people may not want to be involved in the inspection
  - explaining to them that they will not include comments that will identify them in the inspection report or in the feedback given to the school unless they are of a safeguarding nature
  - ensuring staff are aware of any arranged meetings with boarders/residential pupils and that the participation of the young people in meetings is voluntary.
30. Where appropriate, inspectors must explain to boarders that information suggesting that they or another child or young person is at risk of harm will be passed by the inspector to an appropriate person able to take necessary action about that concern.
31. It is important that the boarders/residential pupils are selected by the inspector rather than the school. Inspectors may therefore ask the school to arrange for them to meet a group of boarders/residential pupils, but they should also take care to engage others in conversation during 'boarding time'. It is important that every child or young person who wishes to speak to an inspector has the chance to do so. Inspectors should ensure that they are alert to the different

groups of children or young people who make up the residential community, and explore thoroughly with them any concerns they may have. Inspectors will always ask the young people about bullying in the school and will explore these issues with them, particularly where it has been raised by the boarders/residential pupils or their parents or carers through the point in time survey. Inspectors will discuss all types of bullying with the young people, including cyber-bullying, homophobic language, racism, harassment, name-calling or isolation of particular children or groups of children. They will observe how boarders/residential pupils interact with one another. Inspectors will be alert to issues of equality and diversity, ensuring that all boarders/residential pupils have equal access to the opportunities and support that the residential experience affords, and that each child's individual needs are looked after.

### **'Tracking' individual welfare arrangements**

32. The purpose of this activity is to look at the welfare records from a range of different information sources relating to a small number of boarders/residential pupils, in order to build up a more rounded picture of the quality of support and provision for individuals' needs. The records of individual boarders should be selected at random by the inspector from school's lists.
33. Any key welfare issues that arise from examining boarders'/residential pupils' records should be raised with senior staff in the school.
34. The school's response to any welfare issues identified should be considered in the light of the relevant school policies and the national minimum standards.

### **Inspecting the residential/boarding accommodation and facilities**

35. The inspectors are required to judge the suitability of the school's premises and residential/boarding accommodation. During the course of the inspection, inspectors will visit all the boarding houses/residential units. However, the amount of time spent in each will vary. Boarders/residential pupils may be selected by the inspector to accompany inspector/s on the tour of the boarding accommodation. When touring premises or grounds, inspectors may take the opportunity to speak to staff or pupils they meet (but they should avoid interviewing individual boarders/residential pupils alone and away from others).
36. Where the school arranges and accommodates pupils in lodgings during term-time instead of on-site boarding accommodation, the suitability of this should be assessed during the course of the inspection. Inspectors will: spend time with the school's member of staff responsible for lodgings; examine the school's written guidance to host families; sample written agreements between the school and adults providing lodgings; discuss with the school their arrangements for monitoring their lodgings; and look at any records of monitoring. With the consent of the person accommodating the pupil, visits to a sample of lodgings may also be conducted where it is practical and safe to do so.

37. Inspectors may see a number of extra-curricular or leisure activities and spend time in talking to boarders/residential pupils about their experiences, including, where relevant, what happens at weekends. It is important to establish the quality of those areas used for study or recreation and how the boarding/residential experience helps the young people to learn, grow and develop.

### Meals taken with pupils

38. Inspectors should take a selection of meals with boarders/residential pupils at their tables, and observe the serving arrangements. This enables direct evidence of catering provision and arrangements, and provides an opportunity to observe general behaviour and to speak informally to individuals in a communal setting. Note should be taken of how dietary needs such as vegetarian or other specialist requirements are met. Inspectors should also speak to the catering manager and ask to see a sample of menus.

### Safeguarding concerns

39. If serious issues of concern arise, for example in relation to the failure to follow child protection procedures and/or where a child/young person is discovered to be at immediate risk of harm, the headteacher will be notified as soon as possible unless this compromises the child/young person's safety. Inspectors should always follow *Ofsted Safeguarding Policy and Procedures* and contact Ofsted's Compliance, Investigation and Enforcement team on 0300 123 1231 should they be in need of advice.<sup>18</sup> Where required, a referral will be made to the Compliance, Investigation and Enforcement team and the Department for Education or, for a maintained school, the relevant local authority's children's services.

### Recording evidence

40. All inspection findings must be rooted in evidence. Throughout the inspection, inspectors will maintain a record of their evidence. Inspectors need to record interview notes on evidence forms in black ink so that it can be photocopied if necessary. All handwritten evidence must be legible, and must **only** be recorded on copies of the *Evidence form for use on inspections of boarding and residential special schools*, the *Boarding school national minimum standards check sheet and evidence form*, the *Residential special school national minimum standards check sheet and evidence form* or in the RSA toolkit.<sup>19,20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> *Ofsted Safeguarding Policy and Procedures* (100183), Ofsted September 2010; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/ofsted-safeguarding-policy-and-procedures](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/ofsted-safeguarding-policy-and-procedures).

<sup>19</sup> *Boarding school national minimum standards check sheet and evidence form* (110103), Ofsted, 2011; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110103](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110103).

<sup>20</sup> *Residential special school national minimum standards check sheet and evidence form* (110104), Ofsted, 2011; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110104](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110104).

41. In addition to recording notes from interviews, inspectors must ensure that they record any national minimal standards which the school has not met in the RSA toolkit, with evidence to support this.<sup>21</sup>
42. Evidence should be clear, evaluative and sufficient for the purpose of supporting the judgements. Evidence should not include anything that could identify individual staff, individual children, young people or family members, unless necessary for the protection of a child. Inspectors can record direct quotes from children and young people, parents/carers and stakeholders in evidence to support judgements, although evidence should never use individual's names or initials.

### **Inspection findings**

43. Inspection has the strongest impact on school improvement when the school understands the evidence and findings that have led to the judgements. The lead inspector therefore ensures that the headteacher and senior care staff:
  - are kept up to date with how the inspection is proceeding
  - understand how inspectors reach judgements
  - have opportunities to clarify how evidence is used to reach judgements
  - are given the opportunity to present additional evidence relevant to the inspection.
44. The *Evaluation schedule for the inspection of boarding and residential provision in schools* sets out grade descriptors for outstanding, good, satisfactory and inadequate outcomes and provision. Inspectors must use this to find a 'best fit' judgement for their inspection findings.

### **Inspection feedback**

45. During the inspection, inspectors will share emerging findings about the school's key strengths and weaknesses on a regular planned basis with senior staff from the school. Shortfalls that could have an immediate impact on the safety of children and young people will be brought to the attention of the headteacher or the member of staff in charge of boarding/care as soon as the inspector has identified the problem. The inspector should ask the school for an immediate action plan to remedy the shortfall.
46. At the end of the inspection, the inspectors meet the headteacher to give verbal feedback of the main inspection findings and provisional judgements. The headteacher may wish to invite the proprietor, governors, member of staff in charge of boarding/care or other senior staff, as appropriate, to attend this

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<sup>21</sup> Inspectors may choose to use the *National minimum standards check sheet and evidence form* Word template while on site during inspection. If so, the evidence may be pasted into the RSA toolkit. Any national minimum standards not met must also be recorded in the toolkit.

meeting. In exceptional circumstances, an inspector may need additional time after the inspection fieldwork to take advice before giving feedback. The date of feedback is counted as the final day of the onsite part of the inspection. The feedback should:

- cover the main findings of the inspection against the evaluation schedule, including both strengths and weaknesses
- detail any national minimum standards which have not been met and explain why
- indicate the likely points for improvement
- be balanced and include positive comments as well as highlighting any areas for development
- use the grade descriptors as detailed in the evaluation schedule to indicate how inspectors have arrived at the judgements
- make clear that the grades awarded are provisional and may be subject to change through the quality assurance process
- confirm that the report will be sent to the school in draft for comments on factual accuracy and indicate the procedures and time line leading to the publication of the report
- confirm that a letter for boarders will be provided within the report
- remind the school of the post-inspection survey which is emailed after the inspection inviting them to give feedback on the inspection process.

## **Sending in the evidence from the inspection**

47. The social care inspector/s must not retain any handwritten notes, evidence forms or completed questionnaires after the inspection. These documents form part of the evidence base, and must be passed to the lead inspector at the end of the inspection. The lead inspector will send the evidence base by post to Ofsted's inspection support team immediately after the inspection, where it will be retained in accordance with Ofsted's retention policy, unless required for handling a complaint.<sup>22</sup> The lead inspector must ensure that the analysis of views of boarders/residential pupils, parents/carers and staff from the point in time surveys is included in the evidence base. The evidence that has been entered into the RSA toolkit will also be retained in accordance with Ofsted's retention policy.

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<sup>22</sup> Social care inspectors can ask the inspection support team for a supply of pre-addressed envelopes. Evidence bases must be posted by recorded delivery. Inspectors must record a note in 'Registration comments' within RSA to confirm the date that the evidence base was posted. The inspection support team will record a note in 'Registration comments' to confirm the date that the evidence base was received and securely stored.

## Writing the inspection report

### General principles

48. The report must give a fair and accurate account of the school. It should give a picture of the distinctive features of the school, whether there are strengths or weaknesses. It should be evaluative rather than descriptive, giving clear judgements at the start of each aspect section in the report. The text of the report must support the judgements that have been made. Reports must leave the readers in no doubt about: the school's strengths and areas for development; the extent to which the school meets the national minimum standards for boarding schools or for residential special schools, as appropriate; and any points for improvement. Different sections of the report must be fully consistent with each other, as well as with the evidence and judgements recorded in the RSA toolkit.<sup>23</sup>
49. Inspectors should note that there is no need to write explicitly about each national minimum standard that the school meets. However, when a particular standard is not met, inspectors must explain clearly in the text which standard has been failed and why.
50. Reports must be written in clear, everyday language and be free from jargon. The reporting requirements set out in the following sections of this document should be fully met. The report should comply with the *Guide to Ofsted's house style*.<sup>24</sup> Quality assurance reading will adhere closely to this guidance. Inspectors should refer throughout the report to 'boarders' or 'residential pupils' as appropriate to the school.
51. In a very small school, where there are very few, or even only one boarder/residential pupil on a school's roll, care must be taken to protect their identity in a published report. Inspectors should refer to 'boarders' or 'residential pupils' in the plural and depersonalise the report as much as possible. The provision should be written about in a way that makes the inspection findings applicable to any number of pupils in residence.
52. The headings and judgements within welfare-only and integrated inspection reports for boarding schools use the terms 'boarders' and 'boarding provision'. 'Residential pupils' and 'residential provision' are used in the case of residential special schools. This is to ensure national consistency in published reports. In the case of welfare-only reports, the correct terminology is automatically populated by the RSA; inspectors must not make adjustments to their toolkits

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<sup>23</sup> Guidance for social care inspectors is provided in *RSA toolkits for inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools*, which is available on the boarding and residential provision pages of the Ofsted intranet site.

<sup>24</sup> *Guide to Ofsted's house style* (080230), Ofsted, 2010; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/080230](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/080230). These documents are also available in the 'Guidance for inspectors' section of the inspection handbook.

or reports. For integrated reports of maintained and independent schools, the lead education inspector must manually delete the optional wording for the headings and judgements that are not required.

53. Inspectors should ask the school at the outset of the inspection what terminology they prefer and use this throughout the report. The following are examples, but not an exhaustive list: boarders/residential pupils/students/care staff/residential staff. Inspectors should not mention the names of individuals, including school staff, anywhere in the text of the report or the boarders' letter.
54. Throughout the report there should be references to the views of parents/carers, boarders/residential pupils and staff, where relevant. Inspectors should investigate and comment on how far the school makes use of the views of boarders/residential pupils to improve their boarding/residential experience. Inspectors should refer, where possible, to any evaluation the school has made of the effectiveness of its own boarding/residential provision, and acknowledge where the school is already aware of any deficiencies and what steps the school is taking to improve practice.
55. Similarly, inspectors should ensure that references are made to equality and diversity throughout the text of the report, and that examples are given of good or poor practice to illustrate and support the judgements. 'The quality of boarding/residential provision' should evaluate the special features of the school for the type of pupils it takes, and the impact of this provision should be clear in the text of 'outcomes for boarders/residential pupils'.
56. Inspectors must use the grade descriptors set out in the *Evaluation schedule for the inspection of boarding and residential provision in schools* when reaching their judgements, and should ensure that they choose the judgement where the descriptor best matches the inspection findings. However, they should not repeat verbatim the text from the grade descriptors in their reports. If inspectors judge the school to be outstanding, they must make clear what it is that is exceptional about the school that sets it apart from all others.
57. Inspectors are asked to include some examples from the inspection to support their judgements and to paint a more interesting picture of the residential setting for the reader. Inspectors must choose examples that truly illustrate the judgement made. For example, an evaluation of outstanding provision should be illustrated by exemplary practice. It is important that children are not identified in the examples.
58. Both the start and end dates of the inspection must be included on the front cover of the report. Inspectors must enter the inspection end date into the corresponding field on the 'Provider and setting' screen in the toolkit. RSA automatically generates the inspection start date.
59. Each section of the report may vary in length, but inspectors should aim to write no more than 1800 words overall from the start of 'outcomes for



boarders' to the end of the section on 'leadership and management'. 'Outcomes for boarders' is likely to be a shorter section, whereas 'quality of residential provision and care' may have more detail. Inspectors should note that there is no word counter in the RSA.

### **Writing the report after the inspection of the boarding/residential provision (undertaken as a single activity)**

60. The report following a routine inspection of boarding or residential provision, undertaken as a single activity, in all types of school is organised under the headings below.

<b>Purpose and scope of the inspection</b>	Standard information about the legal basis for the inspection
<b>Information about the school</b>	Brief factual information about the boarding provision at the school
<b>Inspection judgements</b>	A table summarising the inspection grades
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Evaluative judgements summarising the key findings of the inspection presented in the form of bullet points and expressed in clear, straightforward language
<b>Outcomes for boarders (residential pupils)</b>	Evaluative judgement and text
<b>Quality of boarding (residential) provision and care</b>	Evaluative judgement and text
<b>Boarders' (residential pupils') safety</b>	Evaluative judgement and text
<b>Leadership and management of boarding (residential provision)</b>	Evaluative judgement and text
<b>National minimum standards</b>	A statement that the standards are met, or, if not, which ones the school does not meet
<b>What should the school do to improve further?</b>	Points for improvement

### **Purpose and scope of the inspection**

61. The report will be pre-populated with a standard section about the purpose and scope of the inspection, referring to the legislation and relevant national minimum standards.

## Information about the school

62. The report will be pre-populated with information about the school which is called forward from the previous inspection. Inspectors must review this text to check that it is still relevant and fit for purpose, and amend as outlined below.<sup>25</sup>
63. Inspectors must ensure that the *information about the school* is a short, clear, information-rich section. In giving a brief description of the school this section must contain the following details:
- the type of school
  - its status (maintained, non-maintained, independent)
  - number, gender and age range of pupils on roll
  - number, gender and age range of boarders/residential pupils
  - number of boarding houses/residential units and their location
  - any special characteristics about the school (for example if it is a faith school) or its aims, including, where relevant the special educational needs and/or disabilities of the pupils. Where it is significant, inspectors should make reference to the boarders' ethnic heritage.
  - the location of the school, unless there are specific reasons not to do so
  - when the boarding/residential provision was last inspected.<sup>26</sup>
64. Inspectors should note that this section must not contain any sensitive information, for example about why the children are placed in the boarding provision.
65. Inspectors should avoid expressing any evaluations or judgements in the 'Information about the school' section of the report. It is helpful to share this paragraph with the school during the inspection so that the headteacher or member of staff in charge of boarding can agree its factual accuracy. Where relevant, please indicate when the school or boarding provision was last inspected. If it is a new school undergoing its first inspection, please indicate when it was first registered.
66. Example:

XXX School is an independent residential special school for 65 boys aged 8-16 years, 51 of whom reside at the school during the week. The residential accommodation is provided in three houses, two of which are located on the school site; the third is about half a mile away. The school is situated on the outskirts of Oxford and caters for young people with

<sup>25</sup> Instructions for updating the 'Information about the school' section of the report are provided in *RSA toolkits for inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools*, which is available on the boarding and residential provision pages of the Ofsted intranet site.

<sup>26</sup> This may have been part of the last school inspection.

behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The residential provision was last inspected in October 2010

## Inspection judgement record

67. This table shows the grades awarded for each of the report sections. It is automatically populated from the judgements inspectors enter into the RSA toolkit.

## Overall effectiveness

68. This section is intended as a summary of key findings for parents/carers which brings out the main strengths and weaknesses of the residential provision. It should be written in clear, straightforward language, and presented as a list of bullet points. It should start with a clear evaluative judgement summarising the overall effectiveness of the boarding/residential provision and its impact on the experience for boarders/residential pupils. Inspectors should refer to the grade descriptors from the *Evaluation schedule for the inspection of boarding and residential provision in schools*, decide which of the descriptors fits best with their inspection evidence, and choose that judgement. However, in writing the section, there is no need to refer to each of the aspects covered by the grade descriptors, and inspectors **must not** list the grade descriptors as the main findings of the inspection. Inspectors should note that an outstanding grade for overall effectiveness is most likely to fit where the school is exceptional and has been judged outstanding in all other aspects.
69. Inspectors must reflect the main strengths and weaknesses of the boarding/residential provision and, importantly, what impact the boarding/residential experience adds to the personal and social development, welfare, overall enjoyment and achievement of the young people. The section should be written in clear, concise and accessible language.
70. Inspectors must include in this section a summary judgement about the school's safeguarding arrangements, since ensuring that schools keep boarders/residential pupils safe is a vitally important purpose of any inspection in any school with residential provision.
71. Inspectors must state whether the national minimum standards have been met or not. They should also include a statement about how the school has progressed since the last inspection.
72. As with all the evaluative sections of the report, inspectors must make sure that the text supports the grade awarded.
73. Inspectors must ensure that issues of **equality and diversity** have been fully considered both in reaching a judgement and reporting on it. Reference should be made to particular groups of boarders/residential pupils if appropriate, or it should be made clear that the judgement applies to all the young people where this is the case. Evidence of the school's practice with regard to matters of

equality and diversity should be threaded through each section of the report and should be summarised in the overall effectiveness of the boarding/residential experience section.

### **Outcomes for boarders/residential pupils**

74. There should be a clear opening judgement on the outcomes for the boarders or residential pupils. Inspectors should refer to the grade descriptors from the evaluation schedule, to reach a 'best fit' between the descriptors and the findings of the inspection.
75. This section is all about the boarders/residential pupils themselves. The text should focus on what the young people are like and how they develop as a result of their residential experience in school. The quality of the provision should **not** be reported in this section. The section should cover relationships in the boarding house; how the young people get on with one another; their personal and social development; behaviour; happiness and enjoyment of their time at school; their contribution to their boarding, school or wider communities; how well they learn to become independent and are prepared for life when they leave the school.
76. Inspectors must consider the starting points of the boarders/residential pupils, particularly in residential special schools, and should explain their judgement of the young people's progress as a result of their residential experience in school. Inspectors should provide illustrations in support of their judgements, where it is possible to do so.
77. Examples drawn from observation and discussion should enliven the text and support the judgements. Where appropriate, inspectors should consider including what the young people themselves or their parents/carers say about the impact of their experience of boarding at school, either from discussions in the course of the inspection or through an analysis of their responses to questionnaires.
78. Inspectors must ensure that issues of **equality and diversity** have been fully considered both in reaching a judgement and reporting on it. Reference should be made to particular groups of boarders or residential pupils if appropriate, or it should be made clear that the judgement applies equally to all the young people where this is the case. Evidence of the school's practice with regard to matters of equality and diversity should be threaded through this section of the report.

### **Quality of boarding/residential provision and care**

79. There should be a clear opening judgement on the quality of the boarding/residential provision and care for the boarders or residential pupils. Inspectors should refer to the grade descriptors from the evaluation schedule, to reach a 'best fit' between the descriptors and the findings of the inspection.

80. This section should focus on the quality of the school's provision for boarders/residential pupils and include the quality of the residential accommodation, premises and facilities; the quality of care for their health and physical, mental and emotional well-being, including the quality of food and catering arrangements; the range and suitability of extra-curricular and/or leisure activities; the quality and impact of the guidance and pastoral support provided for them; and the arrangements for them to contact family and friends. Inspectors may also wish to comment on the links between education and boarding staff and how the 24 hour curriculum provision contributes to outcomes for residential pupils.
81. The following national minimum standards are covered by this section: **2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10** for **boarding and residential special schools** and **21** for **residential special schools**. Inspectors need not report on compliance with each standard individually, but they must make clear in this section where a standard is not met and give reasons in support of their judgement.
82. Examples drawn from observation and discussion should enliven the text and support the judgements. Where appropriate, inspectors should consider including what the boarders themselves or their parents/carers say about the quality of care they receive, either from discussions in the course of the inspection or through an analysis of their responses to questionnaires.
83. Inspectors must ensure that issues of **equality and diversity** have been fully considered both in reaching a judgement and reporting on it. Reference should be made to particular groups of boarders if appropriate, or it should be made clear that the judgement applies equally to all the young people where this is the case. Evidence of the school's practice with regard to matters of equality and diversity should be threaded through this section of the report.

### **Boarders'/residential pupils' safety**

84. There should be a clear opening judgement on the quality of the school's arrangements for ensuring that boarders/residential pupils in their care are safe and protected from harm. Inspectors should refer to the grade descriptors from the evaluation schedule, to reach a 'best fit' between the descriptors and the findings of the inspection.
85. This section should focus on the effectiveness of the school's arrangements for keeping boarders and residential pupils safe. It includes the effectiveness of arrangements for child protection; countering bullying including homophobia and other prejudice-based bullying and poor behaviour; promoting good behaviour; health and safety; children missing from school; and the procedures for safe recruitment and monitoring of staff and volunteers working with children. It should make reference to the impact of these arrangements on whether boarders feel safe and protected from harm, abuse, exploitation and accident.

86. The following national minimum standards are covered by this section: **6, 7, 11, 12, 14** for **boarding and residential special schools**. Inspectors need not report on compliance with each standard individually, but they must make clear in this section where a standard is not met and give reasons in support of their judgement.
87. Examples drawn from observation and discussion could enliven the text and support the judgements. Where appropriate, inspectors may consider including what the boarders themselves or their parents/carers say about their safety.
88. Inspectors must ensure that issues of **equality and diversity** have been fully considered both in reaching a judgement and reporting on it. Reference should be made to particular groups of boarders or residential pupils if appropriate, or it should be made clear that the judgement applies equally to all the young people where this is the case. Evidence of the school's practice with regard to matters of equality and diversity should be threaded through this section of the report.
89. When a safeguarding issue has been raised during an inspection but has not been resolved through Compliance, Investigation and Enforcement by the end of the inspection – which is likely to be the case – a footnote should be added to this section of the inspection report, using the standard text shown below. This includes referrals to the local authority designated officer which are under investigation. For technical reasons, inspectors should first add the sentence to the main body of the text in the 'Welfare, health and safety of pupils' section of the report, so that it can be transcribed to a footnote later. The sentence should be separated from the main body of the text to ensure that it is clear to the reader:

'Concerns raised by some pupils/a pupil/some parents and/or carers/one parent/one carer/the school\* during the inspection are being examined by the appropriate bodies'.

(\*Delete as applicable.)

90. Where a serious incident concerning the welfare, health and/or safety of pupils has occurred at the school since the last inspection, even if the incident is still under investigation, inspectors should acknowledge this fact in the text of the report in this section. This text should be separated from the main body of the text to ensure that it is clear to the reader:

'A serious incident that occurred at the school since the previous education inspection is under investigation by the appropriate authorities/has been investigated by the appropriate authorities and is now closed.\* Ofsted does not have the power to investigate incidents of this kind. The welfare provision in the school was evaluated against the regulations that are in place and inspection judgements are based on the evidence available at the time of the inspection.'

(\*Delete as applicable.)

### **Leadership and management of boarding/the residential provision**

91. There should be a clear opening judgement on the leadership and management of the boarding/residential provision. Inspectors should refer to the grade descriptors from the evaluation schedule, to reach a 'best fit' between the descriptors and the findings of the inspection.
92. This section of the report should focus on how effectively the boarding environment is organised and managed for the benefit of the boarders/residential pupils in the school's care. It should report on the impact of the leadership and management of boarding provision, and outcomes for young people. For example, the effectiveness of the school's monitoring and evaluation procedures should provide evidence of their impact on improving boarding practice in the school. The section should include the aims for boarding and how they are translated into practice; how effectively the boarding/residential facility is managed and whether policies and procedures are operated consistently to provide an orderly and safe community and appropriate records are kept; the deployment, training, support and supervision of staff; the management of boarders'/residential pupils' views, complaints, communication with parents/carers; and the accuracy and impact of the school's monitoring and evaluation of its residential provision, including the use of independent visitors' reports, in driving forward improvement. In reports on boarding schools which provide lodgings for pupils, there should be an evaluation of the quality of these arrangements.
93. Inspectors must ensure that this section includes an evaluation of the extent to which diversity and individual needs are recognised in planning and caring for boarders and residential pupils, and they are accorded equality of opportunity. Reference should be made to particular groups of boarders or residential pupils if appropriate, or it should be made clear that the judgement about leadership and management of boarding applies equally to all the young people where this is the case.
94. The following national minimum standards are covered by this section: 1, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, for boarding and residential special schools; standards 19, 20, for boarding schools and standards 19, 20, 21, 22 for residential special schools. Inspectors need not report on compliance with each standard individually, but they must make clear in this section where a standard is not met and give reasons in support of their judgement.
95. Examples drawn from observation and discussion could enliven the text and support the judgements. Where appropriate, inspectors may consider including what the boarders/residential pupils themselves or their parents/carers say about their safety.

96. Inspectors must ensure that issues of **equality and diversity** have been fully considered both in reaching a judgement and reporting on it. Reference should be made to particular groups of boarders or residential pupils if appropriate, or it should be made clear that the judgement applies equally to all the young people where this is the case. Evidence of the school's practice with regard to matters of equality and diversity should be threaded through this section of the report.

### National minimum standards

97. Any national minimum standards not met by the school must be reported. The social care inspector records the standards not met using a drop-down menu in the toolkit. Using this function automatically populates the inspection report with the statement 'The school must meet the following national minimum standards for boarding (residential special) schools', which will appear under the report heading 'National minimum standards'. The standards selected by the inspector then appear in a bullet-pointed list under this standard line of text. Where no national minimum standards are selected by the inspector, the report will automatically state: 'The school meets the national minimum standards for boarding (residential special) schools', under the report heading 'National minimum standards'.<sup>27</sup>

### What should the school do to improve further?

98. This section is structured as a bullet pointed list and should contain no reference to the national minimum standards which are dealt with in the previous section.<sup>28</sup>
99. In a school where the national minimum standards have not all been met, the inspector may list up to three additional good practice recommendations.
100. Where the school has **met** all the national minimum standards, inspectors may wish to give some recommendations for further improvement. Each must grow from a reference in the text of the report to a need for improvement. Inspectors should not offer more than four key points for improvement, especially where provision has been judged good or better. Inspectors may offer points for improvement to a school which has been judged outstanding, but they may also leave the section blank if it is relevant to do so.

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<sup>27</sup> Further guidance for social care inspectors is provided in *RSA toolkits for inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools*, which is available on the boarding school pages of the Ofsted intranet site.

<sup>28</sup> Please note that each point for improvement must be a complete sentence that begins with a capitalised initial and ends with a full stop, to align with the *Guide to Ofsted's house style* (080230), Ofsted, 2010; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/080230](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/080230).



## Letter for boarders/residential pupils

101. The lead inspector should also write a letter for the boarders/residential pupils within the RSA toolkit. This should be no more than one side of A4 writing and should be written in a style appropriate for a readership of pupils. Inspectors should open by thanking boarders/residential pupils for their cooperation during the inspection. The letter should include the main findings of the inspection and the things the school needs to improve but, again, should be written in language that is accessible to the pupils. It should also refer to what the pupils told inspectors either through the point in time survey or in discussion, for example: 'you told us you were unhappy with the lack of choice at mealtimes. We agreed, and have asked the canteen to improve on this.' The letter should not refer to national minimum standards or their reference numbers, which may confuse the pupils. The letter appears as the final page of the inspection report.<sup>29</sup>

## Inadequate schools

102. Where the inspection has judged the residential provision of an **independent school** to be inadequate in any or all of the aspects, the lead inspector must ensure that *Form A – Confirmation that an independent boarding or residential special school is causing concern following a welfare inspection* has been completed.
103. The completed Form A should be sent to the Managing Inspector, Operational Lead for the Welfare Inspection of Boarding Schools. The managing inspector will refer to the registering authority, the Department for Education (DfE). The DfE will ask the school for an action plan and will ask Ofsted to monitor the school's progress according to the timescale they lay down. In exceptional cases the DfE may take more formal action.
104. A **maintained or non-maintained school** with inadequate provision may **not** be placed in a category of concern on the grounds of inadequate residential provision alone. This is because categories of concern apply to inspections of the education provision only, which are conducted under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. Therefore, where residential provision is judged inadequate in the context of an inspection of boarders' welfare, social care inspectors will make a monitoring visit to the school within six months of the inspection to report on the school's progress. This report will be published.
105. Inadequate residential provision in maintained or non-maintained schools may be considered in any risk assessment made about the school.

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<sup>29</sup> Please note that the RSA will automatically populate the boarders' letter with a heading 'Inspection report of [name of school]' and 'Yours sincerely [name of inspector]'. Therefore, inspectors should not manually enter this information. Further information is provided in *RSA toolkits for inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools*, which is available on the boarding and residential provision pages of the Ofsted intranet site.

## Finalising and quality assurance of the welfare report

106. Inspectors should check carefully that the paragraphs they have written are fully supported by the evidence that they have recorded in the evidence section of the RSA toolkit; that the text makes clear where there are any unmet national minimum standards and that these are fully explained by the text. The judgements in the aspect sections of the report (for example 'outcomes for residential pupils') should support the judgement for the overall effectiveness of the boarding experience. The RSA toolkit should then be submitted, in order that the report can be checked for quality assurance.
107. The quality assurance colleagues will use the writing guidance in this document to check that all aspect sections contain the appropriate information and judgements and that these are supported by the text of the report. Beyond this, quality assurance colleagues will check for the overall clarity and accessibility of the report, the consistency between the aspect sections and the overall effectiveness section, and that any points for improvement are either substantiated by the text of the report or grow directly out of failures in the national minimum standards. All non-compliance with the national minimum standards must be unequivocal, and critical readers will check that this is so in their assurance of the quality of the report.
108. Finally, quality assurance readers will ensure that the report is aligned with the *Guide to Ofsted's house style*.<sup>30</sup>

## Publication

109. Approximately 10 working days after the inspection, the inspection support team will email the school a PDF version of the inspection report, which has undergone quality assurance.<sup>31</sup> A cover letter template is provided on the boarding and residential provision pages of the Ofsted intranet site and must be used.<sup>32,33</sup> The school is given three working days in which to comment on any factual errors in the report and to reply to the inspection support team, who will in turn forward them to the lead inspector.

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<sup>30</sup> *Guide to Ofsted's house style* (080230), Ofsted, 2010; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/080230](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/080230). These documents are also available in the 'Guidance for inspectors' section of the inspection handbook.

<sup>31</sup> The inspection support team will need to open the report from the RSA toolkit as a Word document, and convert it into PDF. To create a PDF version of the report, open the Word version of the report, click 'File' and select 'Print'. In the print window, select 'Adobe PDF' from the 'Printer Name' drop down menu. Click 'Ok' and save the document as instructed. Adobe will save the document as a PDF, which can be emailed to the school.

<sup>32</sup> Letters that are automatically generated by RSA should **not** be used. The template provided on the boarding and residential provision pages of the Ofsted intranet site is called 'Factual accuracy check report cover letter template'.

<sup>33</sup> The inspection support team must record in the registration comments section of RSA the date that the letter was sent to the school.

110. Once finalised, the report is normally published within four working weeks after the end of the inspection. If the report has been amended to correct any factual errors, a final PDF copy is sent by email to the school (see paragraph 109).<sup>34,35,36</sup> The school is responsible for sending copies of the report to parents/carers, and ensuring that the boarders/residential pupils receive a copy of the letter to boarders/residential pupils, which appears as the last page of the inspection report. Shortly afterwards, the report is published on our website.
111. The Performance Targets and Tracking team in Delivery will inform the Department for Education when the report has been published on the Ofsted website.

### **Post-inspection survey**

112. All schools are invited to take part in a post-inspection survey so that the views of headteachers, governors, proprietors, staff and others are obtained and contribute to the development of inspection.<sup>37</sup> The post-inspection survey is emailed by the inspection support team to schools, with a cover letter which is available on the boarding and residential provision pages of the Ofsted intranet site.<sup>38</sup> The post-inspection survey will be emailed alongside the final copy of the inspection report, if the report has been amended as a result of the factual accuracy check. Completed surveys should be returned to Ofsted by email to [post.inspection.surveys@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:post.inspection.surveys@ofsted.gov.uk). Ofsted takes these responses seriously and uses the feedback it receives from schools to improve inspection and reporting practice.<sup>39</sup>

### **Inspecting boarding/residential provision in independent association boarding and residential special schools**

113. Ofsted conducts a routine inspection once every three years of the boarding and residential provision in independent schools which belong to the Association of Muslim Schools UK, the Christian Schools Trust or the Steiner Waldorf Fellowship of Schools. The education provision in these schools is

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<sup>34</sup> Any factual errors will need to be amended in the inspection report, by using the concerns process within RSA.

<sup>35</sup> Letters that are automatically generated by RSA should **not** be used. The template 'Final report cover and post-inspection letter template' provided on the boarding and residential provision pages of the Ofsted intranet site should be used instead.

<sup>36</sup> If no factual revisions were made to the report, the final version is the one sent to the school for the factual accuracy check.

<sup>37</sup> *Post-welfare inspection survey for boarding schools* (100188) Ofsted, 2010; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100188](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100188).

<sup>38</sup> The inspection support team must record in the registration comments section of RSA the date that the letter was sent to the school.

<sup>39</sup> *Post-welfare inspection survey for residential special schools* (100189) Ofsted, 2010; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100189](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100189).

inspected by the Bridge Schools Inspectorate and the School Inspection Service, respectively.

114. In line with the Protocol between Ofsted and the approved independent inspectorates we try to conduct the inspection of boarding provision of an association school at the same time as the education inspection conducted by the Bridge Schools Inspectorate or the School Inspection Service, wherever possible. This is referred to as an aligned inspection. Aligning inspections in a boarding school is likely to add value to the inspection process by increasing the coherence of inspection and the consistency of judgements, and reducing the pressure of two separate inspections for a boarding school.
115. Where this is not possible to align inspections, Ofsted conducts the inspection of boarding provision as a single activity following the guidance in the first section of this document. We will not be able to align inspections where:
- inspection cycles between the independent inspectorate and Ofsted are more than a year apart and Ofsted’s boarding inspection must be completed within a three-year period in order to meet HMCI’s statutory obligations
  - we have been requested by the DfE to bring forward an inspection of boarders’ welfare because of specific concerns at the school
  - we have received insufficient notice of the independent inspectorate’s programme of inspection, or of a change within it, in accordance with the Protocol between Ofsted and the approved independent inspectorates.

### **Conducting aligned inspections of boarding where education is being inspected by an independent inspectorate**

#### *Initial contact between lead/reporting inspectors*

116. The lead inspector from the independent inspectorate is responsible for making contact with the Ofsted lead social care inspector by email initially, after which inspectors may make arrangements to speak. At an early stage, inspectors are encouraged to discuss the planning of the inspection, including how any pre-inspection documentation might be shared; drawing up an inspection timetable and reducing any areas of overlap for the school by planning joint interviews, for example to cover safeguarding matters; the timing of meetings and feedback. The Ofsted lead inspector should be familiar with the independent inspectorates’ inspection frameworks.

#### *Notice of inspection*

117. Where inspections are aligned, Ofsted will still give the school the same notification of the boarding inspection: two working days. The independent inspectorate will avoid compromising Ofsted’s notice period by not announcing whether or not the inspections will be aligned. Independent inspectorates give schools five working days notice of inspection.

### *Conducting aligned inspections*

118. Ofsted inspectors should follow the processes set out in this guidance in the section 'Inspecting boarding/residential provision as a single activity' from paragraph 6.
119. Although Ofsted's inspectors and the independent inspectorates' inspectors will follow their own frameworks and procedures during aligned inspections, they will work together as far as possible. Information provided by the school will be shared, in order to keep demands on the school to a minimum and make efficient use of resources. Wherever practical and commonsense to do so, inspectors will work together to minimise overlaps and improve coherence, and holding joint interviews where this is appropriate. Inspectors are asked to use their discretion and to be guided at all times by the principle of reducing bureaucracy for the school.

### *Ensuring consistent judgements*

120. The lead/reporting inspectors must set aside time throughout the inspection to talk to one another. These conversations are of paramount importance for ensuring that each is aware of emerging issues where they affect each other's work and that judgements are coherent and consistent. It is, of course, entirely reasonable that a school with good teaching may have only 'satisfactory' boarding provision, as long as judgements are explained clearly. However, judgements about areas which overlap, such as pastoral care, welfare, health, safety and safeguarding, or the quality of boarding as it contributes to a child's development should be agreed by both inspection teams in order to give a consistent and clear message to the school.

### *Feedback to the school*

121. Both inspections will end at the same time. At this point, inspectors from both teams are available to meet the headteacher to feedback the main inspection findings. The headteacher may wish to invite the governors, senior staff or boarding staff to attend this meeting, as appropriate. The lead/reporting inspectors will make arrangements with the school for feeding back jointly, if this is appropriate and is what the school wants. In this way both lead/reporting inspectors will be aware of the judgements at the end of the inspection.

### *Writing the inspection reports*

122. After the inspection Ofsted will follow its normal writing and quality assurance procedures as set out in this guidance. However, the Ofsted report should include the following sentence, which should appear at the start of the 'summary' section.

'This inspection of the boarding provision took place at the same time as an inspection of the school was conducted by the Bridge Schools Inspectorate/School Inspection Service'.<sup>40</sup>

123. The Ofsted inspector will alert the independent inspectorate's lead/reporting inspector in the event of a change of judgement through the quality and moderation process.
124. The Ofsted lead inspector may share a pre-publication draft of the inspection report with the independent inspectorate, if the lead/reporting inspector requests that they do so. This must be the draft which has gone through moderation and quality assurance, which will also be shared with the school for a factual accuracy check.

## Integrated inspections

125. An integrated inspection of education and boarding provision takes place when both inspections are due. The frequency with which a school (education) inspection is conducted varies according to the status, type and performance of the school. Therefore, although we acknowledge that boarding and residential special schools may value an inspection which integrates both educational and boarding provision, Ofsted will only be able to conduct an 'integrated inspection' when both inspections are due in the same year.
  - We shall conduct an integrated inspection of an **independent boarding school** whenever the school (education) inspection falls due. School inspections will be conducted in all independent schools every three years or six years, based on risk and performance.<sup>41</sup>
  - We shall conduct an integrated inspection of an **independent residential special school** whenever the school (education) inspection falls due. School inspections will be conducted in all independent special schools every three years. As inspections of residential provision take place annually, it should generally be possible to integrate the inspection of residential provision with the school inspection once every three years.
  - We shall conduct an integrated inspection of a **maintained or non-maintained residential special school** whenever the school inspection falls due. The timing of a school inspection is varied according to performance and risk factors, but as inspections of residential provision take place annually, it should generally be possible to integrate the inspection of residential provision with the school inspection when the latter takes place.
  - We shall only conduct an integrated inspection of a **maintained boarding school** where the school and boarding inspections coincide within an academic year. The timing of a school inspection is varied according to

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<sup>40</sup> As appropriate.

<sup>41</sup> Independent schools are inspected under s162A of the Education Act 2002 as amended.

performance and risk factors; the inspection of boarding provision occurs once in a three year period: and it may be unlikely that school and boarding inspections can be integrated.

126. There are many similarities between inspecting boarding/residential provision as a single activity and as part of an integrated inspection. This ensures that there is coherence and continuity between inspection methodologies, that judgements are consistent and that there is comparability between schools which provide for boarders/residential pupils.

## **Independent and maintained children's homes**

127. Children's homes which are also registered to provide education receive two inspections of their welfare provision each year by Ofsted. When the school (education) inspection is due, it is normally timed to occur alongside a full inspection of the residential provision, and inspectors work closely together.<sup>42</sup> This is conducted as an integrated inspection, but two separate reports are produced, one for the DfE and one for Ofsted.

## **The inspectors**

128. An integrated inspection of a maintained school is always led by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors or an additional inspector from one of the inspection service providers, who is an education expert experienced in boarding or residential special schools and who has received training in conducting integrated inspections. The team includes one or more inspectors who are trained and experienced in judging the quality of the boarding provision. In maintained boarding schools with more than fifty boarders on roll, the inspection team may be augmented by a boarding school additional inspector. This person is a professional with experience of boarding who is drawn from the sector and has received relevant training for their role on inspection.

## **Pre-inspection activity**

### **Liaison between inspectors**

129. Contact between the education and social care inspectors should take place before notification to the school in order to discuss/plan the inspection and to agree areas of joint working.
130. Both the lead inspector and the lead social care inspector have time ahead of the inspection to prepare and plan for it. The lead inspector should check that the lead social care inspector has access to any evaluation the school has

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<sup>42</sup> There are two welfare inspections each year in a children's home. The full inspection is a full evaluation of the children's home and results in graded judgements; the interim inspection focuses on progress and improvements in the quality of care and outcomes for children and young people since the previous full inspection.

prepared and any other relevant pre-inspection documents. If not, the inspection service provider must provide the social care inspector with access to the inspection portal.

131. The lead education inspector is in overall charge of the inspection. The education and boarding inspection timetables will be shared between inspectors and inspectors will not duplicate interviews. Areas such as health and safety, safeguarding and staff recruitment should ideally be undertaken by one inspector.

### **The pre-inspection briefing**

132. For a maintained school, the lead inspector will draw up the pre-inspection briefing. The inspector who is leading the residential part of the inspection is responsible for contributing to the pre-inspection briefing and should send points for inclusion to the lead inspector, so that the pre-inspection briefing which is discussed with the school takes account of issues in the boarding/residential provision. The boarding section of the pre-inspection briefing will include possible issues for follow-up on site, including a check on any national minimum standards not met at the time of the previous inspection.
133. The pre-inspection briefing will be the focus of the pre-inspection telephone call between lead inspector and the headteacher.
134. No pre-inspection briefing is required for the inspection of a non-association independent school, as inspectors note their observations directly onto the *Record of inspection evidence and judgements*.
135. For inspections of maintained and independent schools, the social care inspector should discuss with the lead education inspector whether or not *The indicative timetable* will be used to assist organising the inspection boarding/residential provision.<sup>43</sup> If it will be used, the inspection service provider will upload a copy to the inspection portal – see paragraph 144.

### **Inspection frameworks**

136. Boarding inspectors taking part in an integrated inspection must be familiar with the relevant education framework for the type of school they are inspecting. The frameworks for the inspection of maintained schools and independent schools can be found on the Ofsted website:
- *The framework for school inspection:*  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/framework-for-inspection-of-maintained-schools-england-september-2009](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/framework-for-inspection-of-maintained-schools-england-september-2009).

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<sup>43</sup> *The indicative timetable* (110105), Ofsted, 2012; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110105](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110105).



- *The framework for inspecting education in non-association independent schools:* [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/framework-for-inspecting-education-non-association-independent-schools](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/framework-for-inspecting-education-non-association-independent-schools).

## **Notification of inspection**

137. An integrated inspection is supported by the inspection service provider who has responsibility for notifying the school of the inspection, by telephone. Schools should be given up to two working days' notice of the start of the education part of the inspection. The boarding part of an integrated inspection will begin on the afternoon before the first day of the education inspection. It is structured in this way to enable the social care inspector(s) to use two evenings, if necessary, to gather sufficient evidence while boarders/residential pupils are available.
138. After the inspection service provider has notified the school by telephone, they will send the school a formal notification of inspection letter electronically, the same day. It will confirm the team details, dates and documents needed.

## **Gathering views of interested parties**

139. The views of boarders/residential pupils, day pupils, their parents/carers, staff and placing authorities (where applicable) inform lines of enquiry for each inspection and are an important part of inspection evidence.

## **Point in time survey about boarding or residential provision**

140. Ofsted's inspection support team will undertake a survey of the views of boarders/residential pupils, their parents/carers and staff in the boarding/residential provision by sending point in time surveys by email to the school at a specific point of time during the inspection year, with instructions for distribution and completion, as outlined in paragraphs 9–14.

## **Inspection questionnaires about education provision**

141. When the inspection service provider sends the letter to formally notify an independent or maintained boarding or residential special school that it will receive an integrated inspection, they will enclose point of inspection questionnaires for **all** the pupils (including boarders/residential pupils) and parents/carers, to seek their views on the **education** provision. These questionnaires do not include questions about the boarding/residential provision. The school is asked to disseminate the questionnaires. Pupils and parents/carers return their completed questionnaires in sealed envelopes to the

school. The school is asked to not open the envelopes, but to collate and pass them to the inspection team at the start of the inspection.<sup>44,45</sup>

142. Independent residential special schools, where pupils have been placed by local authorities, are asked to disseminate placing authority point of inspection questionnaires to the relevant local authorities. These questionnaires are completed electronically and returned to the inspection service provider, who in turn provides them to the lead inspector.

### **Pre-inspection contact with schools**

143. Once the inspection service provider has notified the school, the lead inspector is responsible for liaising with the headteacher to make the arrangements for the inspection. The lead inspector's initial telephone call to the school should take place within 24 hours of the announcement of the inspection, providing that the school is in a position to receive a telephone call. After this initial call, and if this has been agreed, the inspector leading on the inspection of residential provision will liaise directly with the member of staff in charge of boarding. The conversation will include the following matters.

- Confirming the start time of the boarding inspection which is usually the afternoon before the start of the education inspection.
- Confirming the names of the lead social care inspector and other inspectors (if applicable).
- Brief information about the inspection process and how to obtain key documents from our website, including Ofsted's complaints procedure.
- Details regarding the timetable for the inspection, and the arrangements for the boarding aspect of the integrated inspection.
- The information it would be helpful to have electronically in advance of the inspection. This will only ever include information the school already has and in the form it keeps it. Schools will not be expected to prepare additional documentation for inspectors. Requests will be kept to a minimum to reduce the burden of inspection on the school, but will include any evaluation of its boarding provision which the school has made and wishes to share with inspectors. Inspectors should accept any evaluation the school has made of its boarding provision in whatever format it is presented.
- The information required during the inspection. Again, this only includes information the school already has and in the form it keeps it. The lead social care inspector will remind the school about the documents listed in

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<sup>44</sup> Point of inspection questionnaires for independent schools are available on the Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/schools/for-schools/inspecting-schools/inspecting-independent-schools/independent-school-inspection/preparing-for-independent-sc](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/schools/for-schools/inspecting-schools/inspecting-independent-schools/independent-school-inspection/preparing-for-independent-sc).

<sup>45</sup> Point of inspection questionnaires for maintained schools are available on the Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/schools/for-schools/inspecting-schools/inspecting-maintained-schools/maintained-school-inspection/preparing-for-maintained-school](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/schools/for-schools/inspecting-schools/inspecting-maintained-schools/maintained-school-inspection/preparing-for-maintained-school).

the appendices to the national minimum standards which will be required during the inspection. Schools must not be asked to send details of policies or procedures which are already available of the school's website.

- The timetable of interviews indicating which national minimum standards will be covered and factoring in where joint interviews with the education inspector where possible to minimise the burden on the school and promote joined up working.
- Arrangements for holding discussions with boarders/residential pupils.

## **The indicative timetable**

144. If the social care inspector has agreed with the lead inspector that an indicative timetable will be used, the inspection service provider will provide it to the school electronically via the inspection service provider's portal.<sup>46</sup> This document details the interviews that the school will need to arrange, including the national minimum standard/s that each interview will cover.<sup>47</sup> It also lists the records and documents which the school will need to make available to inspector/s during inspection. Use of the indicative timetable helps ensure inspections are conducted consistently.
145. The indicative timetable is intended as a guide and can be adapted by schools to accommodate individual circumstances, such as the availability of relevant members of staff. The school is asked to upload their completed timetable to the inspection service provider's portal the lead social care inspector, before the start of the inspection. The lead social care inspector will access the completed timetable from the portal.
146. The lead social care inspector will in turn discuss and agree with the school any necessary adjustments needed prior to the start of the inspection.
147. The lead social care inspector must also shared and agree the inspection timetable for the boarding with the Her Majesty's Inspector or additional inspector who is responsible for leading the integrated inspection.
148. The social care inspector/s must ensure that they maintain effective communication with the inspector leading on the education inspection to ensure an integrated approach to the inspection.

## **Using the pre-inspection information**

149. In preparation for inspection, inspectors will look at the information that Ofsted already holds or is publicly available about the school or its boarding provision which includes:

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<sup>46</sup> *The indicative timetable* (110105), Ofsted, 2012; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110105](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110105).

<sup>47</sup> The national minimum standards for both residential special schools and for boarding schools: [www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/a00192112/boarding-schools](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/a00192112/boarding-schools).

- previous inspection reports
- any concerns and complaints received
- the school's own website, which may already contain boarding policies and procedures and may also provide dates when the boarders/residential pupils may be away from school, for example on a school trip
- the analysis of views of boarders/residential pupils, parents/carers and staff from the point in time surveys
- any information on referrals, notifications or child protection concerns
- in the case of inspections of maintained boarding and residential special schools, information from the Parent View website
- the information the school supplied on its most recent census return to the Department for Education.<sup>48</sup>

150. Inspectors will also take account of the pre-inspection information provided by the school, as outlined in paragraph 143.

151. The lead social care inspector will carry out an analysis of the available evidence and information. They should record their planning notes within the planning section of an RSA toolkit for integrated inspections. The plan for the inspection will identify lines of enquiry, any areas of apparent weakness or significant strength, or areas where further evidence needs to be gathered. The focus of the inspection may change during its course as further evidence emerges.

152. In addition, the lead inspector may use the pre-inspection information to raise issues with the headteacher or the member of staff in charge of boarding. An open dialogue between the school and inspectors is essential before and during inspection, and good communication is encouraged at all times.

## **Inspection activity**

153. The table on the next page summarises the timing of pre-inspection planning and contact between inspectors and the activities of the inspection during the days in school. This table applies to inspections of maintained and independent schools.

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<sup>48</sup> In advance of integrated inspections, the inspection service provider will ensure that information from the relevant school's most recent census return is available on their inspection portal.

Day minus two	Day minus one (first day of residential inspection)	Day one (education)	Day three	Day four
<p>By 10 am: inspection service provider notifies school</p> <p>Lead inspector makes brief contact with school then rings lead social care inspector<sup>49</sup></p> <p>Lead social care inspector reads evaluation information, plans inspection activity and (for maintained school inspections) contributes to the pre-inspection briefing</p>	<p>Lead social care inspector rings the school prior to departure. In maintained school inspections, the lead inspector prepares the pre-inspection briefing</p> <p>Lead inspector holds telephone conversation with headteacher</p> <p>In an independent school the lead inspector may spend their planning day at the school</p> <p>Lead social care inspector(s) start inspection of boarding/residential provision</p>	<p>Lead inspector and education team begin inspection of school provision</p>	<p>Inspection meeting feedback</p> <p>Whole team leaves school</p>	<p>Writing day for lead inspector. Social care inspector available to comment on report</p>

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<sup>49</sup> The lead inspector may telephone the school on day minus 2, if they wish. The call must be made after and within 24 hours of the inspection service provider's notification call to the school.

154. At the start of the inspection the inspectors will confirm their identity by producing their Ofsted proof of identity. It is not necessary to carry paper copies of Criminal Records Bureau checks.
155. The inspectors will confirm with the school's headteacher and other school representatives the plan for the inspection.
156. At the beginning of the inspection, inspectors will ask the headteacher and/or member of staff in charge of boarding for any relevant information that inspectors need to be aware of while they are on site as discussed in the notification of inspection telephone call. This may include sensitive personnel issues or health and safety matters. This meeting should also be used to explore with senior staff the school's aims and reasons for offering boarding provision and how they are achieved. The headteacher will be asked to confirm that the school has the records set out in appendix two of the national minimum standards, by completing a form, during day one, supplied by the lead social care inspector.<sup>50,51</sup> The social care inspector should also ensure that the headteacher and head of care are both clear about the changes Ofsted has made to its practice with regard to the inspection of residential provision.
157. Inspection activities will include:
- listening and talking to boarders and residential pupils
  - observing interactions between staff and boarders/residential pupils
  - discussions with key staff including those with responsibility for leading, managing and organising boarding/residential provision or key elements of it
  - checking on progress in response to the outcome of any point in time surveys undertaken
  - following up on progress in response to national minimum standards which were previously unmet
  - sampling meals and observing mealtime routines
  - examining relevant policies and procedures and observing how they are implemented
  - examining records, for example concerning health care and recruitment
  - looking at boarders'/residential pupil's records, case files and other relevant documents
  - liaising by telephone with social workers from relevant local authorities that may have placed boarders'/residential pupils' in the school

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<sup>50</sup> *Boarding school national minimum standards – appendix two records* (110155), Ofsted, 2011; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110155](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110155).

<sup>51</sup> *Residential special school national minimum standards – appendix two records* (110156), Ofsted, 2011; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/reosurces/110156](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/reosurces/110156).

- inspecting the premises, accommodation, facilities and health and safety arrangements.

### **Listening and talking to boarders and residential pupils**

158. The views and experiences of boarders/residential pupils are at the centre of the inspection and provide key evidence in assessing outcomes against the evaluation schedule.
159. Inspectors must take into account the specific communication needs of the boarders/residential pupils. For some of them, the inspectors may request the assistance of staff who know and understand the young person's preferred means of communication. It will also be appropriate for inspectors to spend time observing boarders and how they interact with staff and respond to their environment.
160. Much of the experience of boarders/residential pupils takes place after the school day, and it is therefore essential that inspectors are present at this time. Inspectors should involve boarders/residential pupils in inspection activity wherever they can.
161. Inspectors will demonstrate safe and sensitive practice through:
- being sensitive to the fact that some boarders may not want to be involved in the inspection
  - explaining to boarders that they will not include comments that will identify them in the inspection report or in the feedback given to the school unless they are of a safeguarding nature
  - ensuring that staff are aware of any arranged meetings with boarders/residential pupils and that boarders'/residential pupils' participation in meetings is voluntary.
162. Where appropriate, inspectors must explain to boarders/residential pupils that information suggesting that they or another child or young person is at risk of harm will be passed by the inspector to an appropriate person able to take necessary action about that concern.
163. It is important that the boarders/residential pupils are selected for interview by the inspector rather than the school. Inspectors may therefore ask the school to arrange for them to meet a group of boarders, but they should also take care to engage other boarders/residential pupils in conversation during 'boarding time'. It is important that every child or young person who wishes to speak to an inspector has the chance to do so. Inspectors should ensure that they are alert to the different groups of children or young people who make up the boarding/residential community and explore thoroughly with them any concerns they may have. Inspectors will always ask the young people about bullying in the school and will explore these issues with them, particularly where it has been raised by the boarders/residential pupils or their parents or carers through

the point in time survey. Inspectors will discuss all types of bullying with the young people, including cyber-bullying, homophobia, racism, harassment, name-calling or isolation of particular children or groups of children. They will observe how boarders/ residential pupils interact with one another. Inspectors will be alert to issues of equality and diversity, ensuring that all boarders/residential pupils have equal access to the opportunities and support that the boarding/residential experience affords, and that boarder's/residential pupils' individual needs are looked after.

### **'Tracking' individual welfare arrangements**

- 164. The purpose of this activity is to look at the welfare records from a range of different information sources relating to a small number of boarders/residential pupils, in order to build up a more rounded picture of the quality of support and provision for individuals' needs. The records of individual boarders should be selected at random by the inspector from school's lists.
- 165. Any key welfare issues that arise from examining boarders'/residential pupils' records should be raised with senior staff in the school.
- 166. The school's response to any welfare issues identified should be considered in the light of the relevant school policies and the national minimum standards.

### **Inspecting the boarding accommodation and facilities**

- 167. The inspectors are required to judge the suitability of the school's premises and boarding/residential accommodation. During the course of the inspection, inspectors will visit all the boarding/residential houses. However, the amount of time spent in each boarding/residential house will vary. Boarders/residential pupils may be selected to accompany inspector/s on the tour of the boarding/residential accommodation. When touring premises or grounds, inspectors may take the opportunity to speak to staff or boarders/residential pupils they meet (avoiding interviewing individual boarders/residential pupils alone and away from others).
- 168. Where the school arranges and accommodates pupils in lodgings during term-time instead of on-site boarding accommodation, the suitability of this should be assessed during the course of the inspection. Inspectors will: spend time with the school's member of staff responsible for lodgings; examine the school's written guidance to host families; sample written agreements between the school and adults providing lodgings; discuss with the school their arrangements for monitoring their lodgings; and look at any records of monitoring. With the consent of the person accommodating the pupil, visits to a sample of lodgings may also be conducted where it is practical and safe to do so.
- 169. Inspectors may see a number of extra-curricular or leisure activities and spend time in talking to boarders about their experiences, including, where relevant, what happens at weekends. It is important to establish the quality of those



areas used for study or recreation by boarders and how the boarding experience supports the boarders to learn, grow and develop.

### **Meals taken with pupils**

170. Inspectors should take a selection of meals with boarders/residential pupils at their tables, and observe their serving arrangements. This enables direct evidence of catering provision and arrangements, and provides an opportunity to observe general behaviour and to speak informally to individual boarders/residential pupils in a communal setting. Note should be taken of how dietary needs such as vegetarian or other specialist requirements are met. Inspectors should also speak to the catering manager and ask to see a sample of menus.

### **Team meetings**

171. The lead social care inspector is responsible for making sure that the lead education inspector is kept informed about findings and emerging judgements. The lead social care inspector may be invited to attend the education team meeting as a way of sharing relevant information. The purpose of the lead social care inspector being in attendance is to contribute to the emerging evidence and judgements from the boarding team into the full discussion. It is the lead inspector's role to ensure that judgements from the boarding/residential inspection are given due consideration by the team in reaching fair corporate judgements about the school as a whole.

### **Safeguarding concerns**

172. If serious issues of concern arise, for example in relation to the failure to follow child protection procedures and/or where a child/young person is discovered to be at immediate risk of harm, the lead inspector must be alerted and appropriate arrangements made to notify the headteacher as soon as possible unless this compromises the child/young person's safety. Inspectors should always follow *Ofsted Safeguarding Policy and Procedures* and contact Compliance, Investigation and Enforcement team on 0300 123 1231 should they be in need of advice.<sup>52</sup> Where required, a referral will be made to the Compliance, Investigation and Enforcement team and the Department for Education or, for a maintained school, the relevant local authority children's services.

### **Recording evidence**

173. Inspection findings and reporting must be evidence based. Throughout the inspection, inspectors will maintain a record of their evidence. Inspectors need to record interview notes on evidence forms in black ink so that it can be

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<sup>52</sup> *Ofsted safeguarding policy and procedures* (100183), Ofsted September 2010; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/ofsted-safeguarding-policy-and-procedures](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/ofsted-safeguarding-policy-and-procedures).

photocopied if necessary. All handwritten evidence must be legible, and must **only** be recorded on evidence forms provided by the inspection service provider, the *Boarding school national minimum standards check sheet and evidence form*, the *Residential special school national minimum standards check sheet and evidence form* or in the RSA toolkit.<sup>53,54</sup>

174. In addition to recording notes from interviews, social care inspectors must ensure that they record their judgements of the boarding/residential provision and any national minimal standards which the school has not met in the RSA integrated inspection toolkit, with evidence to support this.<sup>55,56</sup>
175. If any of the judgements about the boarding/residential provision are changed, or if there are any changes to the national minimum standards listed as not being met, the lead social care inspector must amend the RSA integrated inspection toolkit accordingly. This is to ensure that the outcomes of the inspection are accurately recorded in Ofsted's published data on inspections.
176. Evidence should be clear, evaluative and sufficient for the purpose of supporting the judgements. Evidence should not include anything that could identify individual staff, individual children, young people or family members, unless necessary for the protection of a child. Inspectors can record direct quotes from children and young people, parents/carers and stakeholders in evidence to support judgements, although evidence should never use individual's names or initials.

### Inspection findings

177. Inspection has the strongest impact on school improvement when the school understands the evidence and findings that have led to the judgements. The social care inspector/s evidence and judgements will feed into aspects of the education inspection.
178. It is important that the headteacher and senior care staff:
  - are kept up to date with how the inspection is proceeding
  - understand how inspectors reach judgements

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<sup>53</sup> *Boarding school national minimum standards check sheet and evidence form* (110103), Ofsted, 2011; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110103](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110103).

<sup>54</sup> *Residential special school national minimum standards check sheet and evidence form* (110104), Ofsted, 2011; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110104](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110104).

<sup>55</sup> Inspectors may choose to use the *National minimum standards check sheet and evidence form* Word template while on site during inspection. If so, the evidence may be pasted into the RSA toolkit. Any national minimum standards not met must also be recorded in the toolkit.

<sup>56</sup> In integrated inspections, the information entered into the toolkit will be extracted into a Word document, which the lead social care inspector will provide to the lead inspector. For integrated independent school inspections, this information will contribute to the record of inspection evidence and judgements.

- have opportunities to clarify how evidence is used to reach judgements
- are given the opportunity to present additional evidence relevant to the inspection.

179. The *Evaluation schedule for the inspection of boarding and residential provision in schools* sets out grade descriptors for outstanding, good, satisfactory and inadequate outcomes and provision. Inspectors must use this to find a 'best fit' judgement for their inspection findings.

## **Inspection feedback**

180. As the social care inspector/s are participating in an integrated rather than a welfare-only inspection, it is important that the lead social care inspector keeps the lead inspector updated on the emerging findings. The lead inspector will also make sure that the social care inspector/s are kept informed of any relevant information as and when it arises.

181. During the inspection social care inspectors will share with the school the emerging findings from the welfare inspection about the school's key strengths and weaknesses on a regular planned basis with senior staff from the school. Shortfalls that could have an immediate impact on the safety of children and young people will be brought to the attention of the lead inspector and the headteacher, or the member of staff in charge of boarding/care as soon as the inspector has identified the problem. The inspector should ask the school for an immediate action plan to remedy the shortfall.

182. At the end of the inspection, the inspectors from the education and boarding inspection teams meet to discuss and reach agreement on the judgements made. In deciding on the judgements, the welfare and education inspection teams will follow the evaluation schedule relevant to their respective inspection frameworks.

183. The lead inspector will discuss and agree with the lead social care inspector the arrangements for feeding back to the school on the outcome of the welfare inspection. This will include agreeing details of which social care inspector/s will be present at the feedback and at what point in the meeting the feedback on the welfare element of the inspection is to be given.

184. The whole inspection finishes with feedback to the school on the final day. The education team and social care inspector/s will together meet the headteacher to give verbal feedback on the main inspection findings and provisional judgements. The headteacher may wish to invite the proprietor, governors, member of staff in charge of boarding or other senior staff, as appropriate, to attend this meeting. The date of feedback is counted as the final day of inspection. The feedback from the social care inspector/s should:

- cover the main findings of the inspection against the evaluation schedule, including both strengths and weaknesses

- detail any national minimum standards which have not been met and explain why
- indicate the likely points for improvement
- be balanced and include positive comments as well as highlighting any areas for development
- use the grade descriptors as detailed in the evaluation schedule to indicate how inspectors have arrived at the judgements
- make clear that the grades awarded are provisional and may be subject to change through the quality assurance process
- confirm that the report will be sent to the school in draft for comments on factual accuracy and indicate the procedures and time line leading to the publication of the report
- confirm that a letter for boarders will be provided within the report
- remind the school of the post-inspection survey, which is sent after the inspection inviting them to give feedback on the inspection process.

## **Sending in the evidence from the inspection**

185. The social care and education inspector/s must not retain any handwritten notes, evidence forms or completed questionnaires after the inspection. These documents form part of the evidence base, and must be passed to the lead inspector at the end of the inspection. The analysis of views of boarders/residential pupils, parents/carers and staff from the point in time surveys must also be included in the evidence base. The lead inspector will send the evidence base by post to the inspection service provider immediately after the inspection, where it will be retained in accordance with Ofsted's retention policy, unless required for handling a complaint. The evidence that the social care inspector has entered into the RSA toolkit will also be retained in accordance with Ofsted's disposal policy.

## **Writing the report for an integrated inspection**

186. The lead inspector and the lead social care inspector both have a day after the inspection in which to write the report. The lead inspector has overall responsibility for the quality of the integrated inspection report. Both inspectors should refer to the section in this guidance concerning general principles for report writing – see paragraphs 48–59.

## **Maintained school reports**

187. In an integrated inspection of a maintained school, the lead education inspector is responsible for writing the whole of the integrated report. The lead education inspector is responsible for incorporating the findings relating to the boarding provision throughout the integrated report. The lead social care inspector should therefore provide the information about the boarding provision to be

included in the whole school report in short paragraphs, bullet points or whatever form has been agreed between the two inspectors.

188. The social care inspector will draft their contribution to the integrated inspection report into an RSA toolkit for integrated inspections.<sup>57</sup> When complete, the text will be automatically extracted into a Word document, known as the 'integrated inspection report document', which the social care inspector will provide to the lead inspector by memory stick at the end of the inspection or as soon as possible thereafter by uploading it to the inspection service provider's portal.<sup>58</sup>
189. The social care inspector may also provide the lead inspector with supplementary evidence to support the inspection findings. This may take the form of a completed *Boarding school national minimum standards check sheet and evidence form*, *Residential special school national minimum standards check sheet and evidence form* or a Word version of the evidence recorded in the RSA toolkit, which is automatically generated. The lead inspector must ensure that any supplementary evidence is included in the evidence base for the inspection.
190. Social care inspectors should ensure that the judgements in their report contribution match the feedback that was given to the school and the evidence recorded in the RSA toolkit, evidence forms and, if it was used, the national minimum standards check sheet and evidence form.
191. The integrated report will be written in the *Section 5 report template with boarding*.<sup>59</sup> It will follow the same format as the education report under s5 of the Education Act 2005, but includes at the end a short section entitled 'Boarding' (in the case of boarding school reports) or 'Residential provision' (in the case of residential special school reports). The social care inspector's findings relating to outcomes for boarders/residential pupils and the quality of the boarding/residential provision should be reported in this section, which should contain about 400 words in total. The inspection findings for the overall effectiveness and leadership and management of boarding, and boarders'/residential pupils' safety, will be woven into key findings and the corresponding sections of the main report at the lead inspector's discretion. The five boarding judgements, and any national minimum standards not met by the school, will also be recorded in the report.

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<sup>57</sup> Guidance for social care inspectors is available in *RSA toolkits for inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools*, which is available on the boarding and residential provision pages of the Ofsted intranet site.

<sup>58</sup> If the lead education inspector was one of Her Majesty's Inspectors, the social care inspector can send the document to them by email.

<sup>59</sup> *Section 5 report template with boarding* is available on the 'Main inspection documents for inspectors' page on the Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/schools/for-schools/inspecting-schools/inspecting-maintained-schools/main-inspection-documents-for-inspectors](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/schools/for-schools/inspecting-schools/inspecting-maintained-schools/main-inspection-documents-for-inspectors).

192. The lead social care inspector must ensure that the relevant information is completed in the RSA toolkit, including all the judgements and any national minimum standards that have not been met. Inspection findings and judgements that the social care inspector provides to the lead inspector for inclusion in the inspection report must be fully consistent with the judgements and evidence recorded in the RSA toolkit.
193. The lead inspector is responsible for checking the consistency of messages in the inspection report, and discussing with the social care inspector the presentation of findings about the boarding/residential provision in the integrated inspection report.<sup>60</sup> The lead inspector should ensure that the report as a whole tells a coherent and balanced story.
194. The lead inspector is responsible for sending the completed draft report to the inspection service provider for quality assurance by 5pm on the writing day. The school will have an opportunity to check the report for factual accuracy before publication. The lead inspector will need to review any comments made by the school and incorporate these factual accuracies into the report.
195. After the integrated inspection report has been quality assured, the lead inspector and inspection service provider should arrange for it to be shared with the social care inspector.
196. If any of the judgements about the boarding/residential provision are changed at the quality assurance stage, or if there are any changes to the national minimum standards listed as not being met, these must be amended accordingly in the social care inspector's RSA integrated inspection toolkit. This is to ensure that the outcomes of the inspection are accurately recorded in Ofsted's published data on inspections.

### **Independent school reports**

197. After an integrated inspection of an independent school the lead education inspector is responsible for writing the whole of the integrated report. The lead education inspector is responsible for incorporating the findings relating to the boarding provision throughout the integrated report. The lead social care inspector should therefore provide the information about the boarding provision to be included in the whole school report in short paragraphs, bullet points or whatever form has been agreed between the two inspectors.
198. The social care inspector will draft their contribution to the integrated inspection report into an RSA toolkit for integrated inspections.<sup>61</sup> When

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<sup>60</sup> Where the lead inspector is one of Her Majesty's Inspectors, the draft report may be shared between the lead and social care inspectors using the Office Communication System.

<sup>61</sup> Guidance for social care inspectors is available in *RSA toolkits for inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools*, which is available on the boarding and residential provision pages of the Ofsted intranet site.

complete, the text will be automatically extracted into a Word document, known as the 'integrated inspection report document', which the social care inspector will provide to the lead inspector by email or memory stick at the end of the inspection or as soon as possible thereafter by uploading it to the inspection service provider's portal.<sup>62</sup> The lead inspector must paste the contents of the integrated inspection report document into the *Record of inspection evidence and judgements* and weave the findings into the integrated inspection report.<sup>63</sup> When the lead inspector submits the integrated inspection report for quality assurance, the *Record of inspection evidence and judgements* must also be supplied.

199. The social care inspector may also provide the lead inspector with supplementary evidence to support the inspection findings. This may take the form of a completed *Boarding school national minimum standards check sheet and evidence form*, *Residential special school national minimum standards check sheet and evidence form* or a Word version of the evidence recorded in the RSA toolkit, which is automatically generated. The lead inspector must **not** paste this supplementary evidence into the *Record of inspection evidence and judgements*, but must ensure that it is included in the evidence base for the inspection.
200. Social care inspectors should ensure that the judgements in their report contribution match the feedback that was given to the school and the evidence recorded in the RSA toolkit, evidence forms and, if it was used, the national minimum standards check sheet and evidence form.
201. The integrated report will be written in the *Independent school standard inspection report template*. It will follow the same format as the education report under s162A of the Education Act 2002 as amended, except that there is a short final section on the leadership and management of boarding/residential provision.<sup>64</sup> This section should cover all that needs to be said, but inspectors are advised to aim for no more than 250 words in this section. Information and judgements about the boarding/residential provision, and references to it, will be woven into appropriate and relevant sections throughout the report, at the discretion of the lead inspector. The five key boarding judgements will appear in the judgement recording form at the end of the school report. Any national minimum standards not met by the school will also be recorded in the report.
202. The lead social care inspector must ensure that the relevant information is completed in the RSA toolkit, including all the judgements and any national minimum standards which have not been met. Inspection findings and

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<sup>62</sup> If the lead education inspector was one of Her Majesty's Inspectors, the social care inspector can send the document to them by email.

<sup>63</sup> *Record of inspection evidence and judgements* (090065), Ofsted, 2011; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090065](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090065).

<sup>64</sup> *Independent school standard inspection report template* (090070), Ofsted, 2011; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090070](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090070).

judgements that the social care inspector provides to lead inspector for inclusion in the inspection report must be fully consistent with judgements and evidence recorded in the RSA toolkit.

203. The lead inspector is responsible for checking the consistency of messages in the inspection report, and discussing with the social care inspector the presentation of findings about the boarding/residential provision in the integrated inspection report.<sup>65</sup> The lead inspector should ensure that the report as a whole tells a coherent and balanced story.
204. It is the lead inspector's responsibility to produce the final draft of the integrated report and send it to the inspection service provider. The quality assurance of the integrated report rests with the inspection service provider.
205. The school will have an opportunity to check the report for factual accuracy before publication. The lead inspector will need to review any comments made by the school and incorporate these factual accuracies into the report.
206. After the integrated inspection report has been quality assured, the lead inspector and inspection service provider should arrange for it to be shared with the social care inspector before it is published. The quality assurance team in Delivery sends the *Record of inspection evidence and judgements* and the report to the DfE.
207. If any of the judgements about the boarding/residential provision are changed at the quality assurance stage, or if there are any changes to the national minimum standards listed as not being met, these must be amended accordingly in the social care inspector's RSA integrated inspection toolkit. This is to ensure that the outcomes of the inspection are accurately recorded in Ofsted's published data on inspections.

## Publication

208. All integrated inspection reports will be published on the Ofsted website within 20 working days of the end of the inspection. The school is responsible for sending copies of the report to parents/carers and ensuring that the boarders/residential pupils receive a copy of the letter to boarders/residential pupils, which appears as the last page of the inspection report. In the case of a school which is dually registered as a children's home, although the inspection is integrated the social care inspector writes a separate report on the welfare provision for publication. This is in accordance with the framework for

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<sup>65</sup> Where the lead inspector is one of Her Majesty's Inspectors, the draft report may be shared between the lead and social care inspectors using the Office Communication System.



inspecting children's homes.<sup>66</sup> The report of a registered children's home does not identify its name and location.

## Inadequate schools

209. Ofsted will send the Department for Education **an independent school** report at the same time that it is sent to the school. Where the school has been judged inadequate, the lead inspector must ensure that *Form A – confirmation that an independent day, boarding or residential special school is causing concern* has been completed.<sup>67</sup> Inspectors do not need to wait for the report to be finalised before sending the form A, especially if safeguarding concerns have been uncovered during the inspection.
210. The completed Form A should be sent to the Managing Inspector, Operational Lead for the Welfare Inspection of Boarding Schools. The managing inspector will refer to the registering authority, the Department for Education (DfE). The DfE will ask the school for an action plan and will ask Ofsted to monitor the school's progress according to the timescale they lay down. In exceptional cases the DfE may take more formal action.
211. Following an integrated inspection under section 5, a **maintained or non-maintained school** with inadequate school provision may be placed in a category of concern. The inadequacies may also include any or all aspects of the boarding/residential provision, but a school may not be placed in a category of concern on grounds of inadequate residential provision alone. This is because categories of concern relate specifically to legislation in the Education Act. Where the school is placed in a category of concern, the lead inspector will follow the guidance for conducting monitoring inspections of schools causing concern.<sup>68</sup>
212. In cases where the boarding provision is judged inadequate but the school provision is satisfactory (or better), inspectors should discuss the impact of the boarding/residential judgement on the leadership and management and the overall effectiveness of the school. Inspectors should reach a reasonable judgement, having taken into consideration, for example, the proportion of pupils who board and how serious the weaknesses are (are the boarders at risk?). Inadequacies in boarding/residential provision are highly likely to have a negative impact on the evaluation of leadership and management and/or the overall effectiveness of the school. However, it might be possible in rare circumstances, for the leadership and management of boarding to be

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<sup>66</sup> *Inspections of children's homes, Framework for inspection* (100195), Ofsted, 2011; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100195](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100195).

<sup>67</sup> *Form A – confirmation that an independent day, boarding or residential special school is causing concern* (20090044), Ofsted, 2010; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/form-confirmation-independent-day-boarding-or-residential-special-school-causing-concern](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/form-confirmation-independent-day-boarding-or-residential-special-school-causing-concern).

<sup>68</sup> [www.ofsted.gov.uk/schools/for-schools/inspecting-schools/inspecting-maintained-schools/after-maintained-school-inspection/monitoring-inspections-f](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/schools/for-schools/inspecting-schools/inspecting-maintained-schools/after-maintained-school-inspection/monitoring-inspections-f).

inadequate yet for the overall effectiveness of the school to be satisfactory. Inspectors should reach a professional judgement having weighed up all the evidence.

213. Schools which are placed in a category of concern become part of Ofsted's monitoring programme. In monitoring the school's progress, Ofsted will deploy both inspectors with expertise in both education and welfare, who will undertake a joint monitoring inspection. After the inspection, a post-inspection monitoring letter will be published on the Ofsted website.
214. In the event that boarding is the only inadequate aspect of the school, social care inspectors will make a monitoring visit to the school within six months of the inspection to report on its progress. This report will be published.

### **Post-inspection survey**

215. All schools are invited to take part in a post-inspection survey so that the views of headteachers, governors, proprietors, staff and others are obtained and contribute to the development of inspection. The school inspection survey is handled by the inspection service provider on our behalf and is an online form for schools to complete.<sup>69</sup> Schools are reminded of this when they receive a copy of the report for publication.

### **Concerns**

216. It is anticipated that the great majority of inspections will be carried out without any concerns on the part of the school.
217. Inspections are carried out in accordance with the principles of inspection and code of conduct set out in *The framework for inspecting boarding and residential provision in schools*.
218. During an inspection, those with concerns are strongly encouraged to raise issues with the inspector as soon as they arise, so that they can be resolved as quickly as possible while the inspection is taking place. If concerns do arise during an inspection, the inspector should consider the concern and do all that is possible to remedy the problem.
219. If resolution of the concerns is not possible, or the person expressing the concern does not feel that adequate weight is being given to the concerns, or an independent view is sought then the person raising the concern, or someone acting on her or his behalf, should contact the Ofsted helpline on 0300 123 4666.

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<sup>69</sup> The questions that schools are asked to respond to in the school post-inspection survey are available on the Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/schools/for-schools/inspecting-schools/inspecting-maintained-schools/after-maintained-school-inspection/school-post-inspection-s](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/schools/for-schools/inspecting-schools/inspecting-maintained-schools/after-maintained-school-inspection/school-post-inspection-s).

## Complaints

220. If it has not been possible to resolve concerns then individuals or providers may decide to lodge a formal complaint. Normally, a complaint can be made at any stage during an inspection or up to 30 calendar days from the date of publication of any report. Complaints should normally be made in writing by post or email. However, we will also accept complaints by telephone; where we accept complaints in this way we will not normally take any formal action until we have agreed a written account of the complaint with the complainant.
221. The complaints procedure, which sets out how providers or users can complain about their inspection and what will happen to their complaint, is available at: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/complaints-procedure-raising-concerns-and-making-complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/complaints-procedure-raising-concerns-and-making-complaints-about-ofsted).
222. Lodging a complaint will not normally delay the publication of the final inspection report.
223. Complaints can be made in writing to:

The National Complaints Team  
Ofsted National Business Unit  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

Or emailed to us at: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

Or made by telephone: 0300 123 4666.