

# Conducting inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools

Guidance for inspecting boarding and residential provision in schools in England

---

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

---

**Published:** January 2013

---

**Reference no:** 100180



Corporate member of  
Plain English Campaign  
Committed to clearer communication

361

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100180](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100180).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our website for news, information and updates at [www.ofsted.gov.uk/user](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/user)

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)

No. 100180

© Crown copyright 2013



# Contents

---

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Inspecting boarding/residential provision as a single activity</b>	<b>5</b>
The inspectors	5
Length of inspection	5
Pre-inspection activity	5
Notice of inspection and pre-inspection contact with schools	7
If a school cannot be contacted by the lead inspector	8
The indicative timetable	9
Using the pre-inspection information	9
Inspection activity	11
Inspection feedback	16
Sending in the evidence from the inspection	16
Writing the inspection report	17
Inadequate schools	30
Finalising and quality assurance of the welfare report	30
Post-inspection survey	32
Inspecting boarding/residential provision in independent association boarding and residential special schools	32
<b>Integrated inspections</b>	<b>35</b>
Independent and maintained children’s homes	36
The inspectors	36
Pre-inspection activity	37
Notification of inspection	38
If a school cannot be contacted by the lead inspector	39
Gathering views of registered parents, carers and other stakeholders	40
Pre-inspection contact with schools	41
The indicative timetable	42
Using the pre-inspection information	43
Inspection activity	44
Inspection feedback	54
Sending in the evidence from the inspection	55
Writing the report for an integrated inspection	55
Inadequate schools	61
Post-inspection survey	62
<b>Concerns</b>	<b>62</b>
Complaints	63
<b>Annex A. Types of school – options for welfare-only reports</b>	<b>64</b>

## Introduction

1. This guidance came 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

---

<sup>1</sup> *The framework for inspecting boarding and residential provision in schools* (110095), Ofsted, 2013; [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, 2013; [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, 2012; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100195](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100195).

- 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 planning time in advance of the inspection to cover 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, staff, and the local authorities who place residential pupils at a school inform lines of enquiry for each inspection and are an important part of inspection evidence.
10. Ofsted's online service Parent View is available for the parents of children in non-association independent schools and maintained schools to give their opinion of the school, including its boarding/residential provision. The lead inspector should check the returns for the school from the Parent View website as part of their preparation.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> A summary of responses to Parent View is available online: [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/parent-view-results](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/parent-view-results).

11. Ofsted also conducts annual online point-in-time surveys of the views of day pupils, and in the case of boarding and residential special schools, boarders/residential pupils and boarding staff. There is one survey for day pupils and a separate one for boarders/residential pupils. A point-in-time survey is also used to gather the views of local authorities who place and fund children in independent schools.
12. Ofsted's inspection management and support teams will provide each school with the instructions for accessing and completing the online point-in-time surveys. The school is asked to distribute these to all day pupils, and as appropriate, all boarders/residential pupils, boarding staff and the local authorities which place children at the school. The online surveys will normally be open for a period of 6 weeks during the academic year.
13. All of the point-in-time surveys are available on the Ofsted website as Word documents, and Ofsted will provide a copy of them to schools which do not have access to the internet.<sup>6</sup> Widgit, Makaton and Picture Communication System versions of the point-in-time surveys for day pupils and for boarders/residential pupils are published on the Ofsted website, and British Sign Language versions are available on YouTube.<sup>7,8</sup> Links to these adapted versions are included in the request sent to the school about the distribution and completion of the surveys.
14. Alternatively, schools may adapt the surveys for day pupils and 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.
15. Ofsted's inspection management and 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>9</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.

---

<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> [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>8</sup> [www.youtube.com/watch?v=KX-fvO3qmrI&feature=relmfu](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KX-fvO3qmrI&feature=relmfu).

<sup>9</sup> The inspection management and 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.

16. The responses to all surveys are sent directly to Ofsted where they are collated and analysed. The analyses will form part of the pre-inspection information for the relevant school's next inspection, to inform inspection trails.<sup>10</sup>
17. During inspection, the lead inspector may share the quantitative data with the school, but any comments from users that are recorded in analyses remain confidential to the inspection team.<sup>11</sup> In the case of boarding schools, there may be sets of analyses for up to three years' annual point-in-time surveys available to the lead inspector, by the time an inspection of the boarding provision is due. All sets will be taken into account, and the lead inspector will explore with the school any particular 'themes' arising from the analyses.
18. If any of the returned surveys appear to raise safeguarding concerns, the inspection management and support team will send them immediately to the HMI remit lead for inspections of independent schools, in the case of surveys completed by day pupils or placing authorities responding about independent day schools. If safeguarding concerns are raised on surveys completed by boarders/residential pupils, boarding staff or placing authorities responding about boarding or residential special schools, the inspection management and support team will send them immediately to the relevant HMI manager. This may have an impact on the timing of the next inspection. Such concerns should be discussed with the Inspection manager and a recommendation about the timing of the next inspection should be sent to the Managing Inspector, Operational Lead for the Welfare Inspection of Boarding Schools who will advise the DfE.
19. Inspectors use all this information intelligently to set up lines of enquiry which they must record on an evidence form and pursue during the inspection.

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

20. 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 at the beginning of the school day to announce their arrival later that day, at around 12 o'clock.
21. The lead inspector will confirm the call by emailing a formal notification of inspection letter to the school (as an attachment to an email), using the

---

<sup>10</sup> The social care inspector can access the analyses of responses to the point-in-time surveys from the on the boarding and residential provision pages of the Ofsted intranet site.

<sup>11</sup> Inspectors should note that the point-in-time surveys states the following: 'When we write our inspection report, we may refer to the issues you have raised. We may also use the data in our other publications such as the Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. We keep the information from all of the questionnaires in our database, and the inspector might refer to some of it during inspection with the independent school, boarding school or residential special school to help them improve their service. We make sure no information identifies you whenever we use what you have told us.'

template available on the boarding and residential provision pages of the Ofsted intranet site.<sup>12</sup> Also attached to the email will be a copy of *The indicative timetable* and a letter for the school to send to the parents and carers of all pupils inviting them to fill-in Parent View.<sup>13</sup> If email contact is impractical, the social care inspector must ask the inspection management and support team to email the letter on their behalf.<sup>14</sup>

22. 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 the emailed formal notification letter 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.
23. 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.

### **If a school cannot be contacted by the lead inspector**

24. In exceptional circumstances, it may prove difficult for the lead inspector to make contact with the school. In cases where the school has a telephone

---

<sup>12</sup> The letter template is called 'Formal notification of inspection letter template'.

<sup>13</sup> The *Letter for parents and carers about welfare-only inspections schools* is available on the boarding and residential provision pages of the Ofsted intranet site, and also on the Ofsted website: [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>14</sup> The social care inspector (or inspection management and 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.

answering machine, the lead inspector should leave a message and state the time at which this message was left, keeping a note that they have done so on an evidence form. Where the telephone remains unanswered, the lead inspector should persevere, keeping a note of the times at which they tried to make contact with the school.

25. If the lead inspector has not managed to make contact by **10am** of the first day of the inspection, they will contact Ofsted's helpdesk to discuss the situation. The helpdesk must seek a steer from the Managing Inspector, Operational Lead for the Welfare Inspection of Boarding Schools. Normally, the managing inspector will advise that the inspection will continue and that the inspection management and support team (IMST) should continue to try and make contact with the school, while the lead inspector travels to the school. If there continues to be no answer, the inspection will be undertaken as an unannounced inspection.
26. If a secure email address for the school is available from the last inspection report, the RSA or the school's website, IMST will email the formal notification of inspection letter and accompanying documents to it (see paragraph 21) whether or not they are able to make telephone contact with the school. Where one is not available, the lead inspector will seek confirmation of the school's email address on arrival at the school, and provide it to IMST so that the documents can be supplied as soon as possible. The lead inspector will also give a paper copy of the letter for parents and carers to the school on arrival.

## The indicative timetable

27. The indicative timetable is a document intended to help both schools and inspectors make best use of inspection time.<sup>15</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>16</sup>
28. 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

29. 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

---

<sup>15</sup> *The indicative timetable* (110105), Ofsted, 2013; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/indicative-timetable](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/indicative-timetable).

<sup>16</sup> The national minimum standards for both residential special schools and for boarding schools are available on the Department for Education's website: [www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/a00192112/boarding-schools](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/a00192112/boarding-schools).

holds or is publicly available about the school or its boarding provision which includes:

- previous inspection reports for **both** the boarding/residential provision and the education provision<sup>17</sup>
- 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, boarding staff and, where relevant placing authorities, from the point-in-time surveys<sup>18</sup>
- the responses from Parent View<sup>19</sup>
- any information on referrals, notifications or child protection concerns – this information can be accessed through Ofsted's provider information portal (PIP), and there is guidance on the Ofsted intranet site to help access PIP
- the information the school supplied on its most recent census return to the Department for Education.<sup>20</sup>

30. 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>21</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.

31. 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.

---

<sup>17</sup> Social care inspectors must check the most recent inspection on the school's education provision in advance of welfare-only inspections.

<sup>18</sup> The social care inspector can access the analyses of responses to the point-in-time surveys in Ofsted's SharePoint site.

<sup>19</sup> A summary of responses to Parent View is available online: [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/parent-view-results](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/parent-view-results).

<sup>20</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>21</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

32. 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.
33. 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>22,23</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

34. 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
  - analysing the feedback from Parent View, and the responses from boarders/residential pupils, boarding staff and placing authorities to the completed online point-in-time surveys
  - 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

---

<sup>22</sup> *Boarding school national minimum standards – appendix two records* (110155), Ofsted, 2013; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110155](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110155).

<sup>23</sup> *Residential special school national minimum standards – appendix two records* (110156), Ofsted, 2013; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110156](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110156).

- examining records, for example concerning health care and recruitment
- 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**

35. 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.
36. 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.
37. 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.
38. 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.
39. 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.
40. 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 through the point-in-time survey or their parents or carers through Parent View. 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**

41. 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.
42. Any key welfare issues that arise from examining boarders'/residential pupils' records should be raised with senior staff in the school.
43. 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**

44. 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).
45. 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.

46. 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

47. 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

48. 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>24</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

49. 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>25,26</sup>

---

<sup>24</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>25</sup> *Boarding school national minimum standards check sheet and evidence form* (110103), Ofsted, 2013; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110103](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110103).

Evidence forms must be used to record pre-inspection trails raised from the views of parents, residential pupils and local authorities, as appropriate, the key outcomes of team meetings, and all feedback given throughout the inspection, including any significant response from the school.

50. 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>27</sup>
51. 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.
52. It is the responsibility of the lead inspector to assure the quality of the inspection, and where there is more than one inspector, the work of the inspection team. The lead inspector should plan some time during the inspection to undertake this task.

### Inspection findings

53. 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.
54. 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 the descriptors to find a 'best fit' judgement for their inspection findings.

---

<sup>26</sup> *Residential special school national minimum standards check sheet and evidence form* (110104), Ofsted, 2013; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110104](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110104).

<sup>27</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.

## Inspection feedback

55. 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.
56. 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 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

57. The social care inspector/s must not retain any handwritten notes, evidence forms or analyses from the point-in-time surveys 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 management and support team within five days of the end of the inspection, where it will be retained in accordance with

Ofsted's retention policy, unless required for handling a complaint.<sup>28</sup> The lead inspector must ensure that the analysis of views of boarders/residential pupils, staff and, where relevant, placing authorities, from the point-in-time surveys, and any printed copies of responses made to Parent View are 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.

## Writing the inspection report

### General principles

58. 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>29</sup>
59. 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.
60. 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>30</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.
61. 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

---

<sup>28</sup> Social care inspectors can ask the inspection management and support team for a supply of pre-addressed envelopes. Evidence bases must be sent by 'Recorded Signed For' post: [www.postoffice.co.uk/recorded-signed-for](http://www.postoffice.co.uk/recorded-signed-for). Inspectors must record a note in 'Registration comments' within RSA to confirm the date that the evidence base was posted. The inspection management and support team will record a note in 'Registration comments' to confirm the date that the evidence base was received and securely stored.

<sup>29</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>30</sup> *Guide to Ofsted's house style* (080230), Ofsted, 2010; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/080230](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/080230).

- '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.
62. 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 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.
  63. 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.
  64. Throughout the report inspectors should make reference to the views of parents/ carers, boarders/residential pupils, staff and placing authorities, 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.
  65. Similarly, inspectors should ensure that references are made to equality and diversity throughout the text of the report, and that examples are given where appropriate 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'.
  66. 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.
  67. 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.

68. 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.
69. 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)**

70. 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>Inspection judgements</b>	A table summarising the inspection grades
<b>Summary of key findings</b>	A brief bullet pointed summary of the inspection findings for parents and pupils, substantiating the overall effectiveness judgement
<b>Compliance with the national minimum standards</b>	Standard text stating whether or not the school meets the national minimum standards for boarding/residential special schools
<b>Information about this inspection</b>	Brief summary about the notice period and inspection activities carried out
<b>Inspection team</b>	The names of all inspectors on the inspection team
<b>Information about this school</b>	Brief factual information about the boarding/residential provision at the school
<b>What does the school need to do to improve further?</b>	Points for improvement and a list of any national minimum standards not met by the school, in a bullet pointed list
<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 (the residential provision)</b>	Evaluative judgement and text
<b>What inspection judgements mean</b>	Standard text giving a definition of the judgements outstanding, good, adequate and inadequate
<b>School details</b>	Factual information about the school, for example the name of the headteacher, and the standard information about the legal basis for the inspection

71. Guidance on using the RSA to produce the report is available for social care inspectors on the boarding and residential provision pages of the Ofsted intranet site.<sup>31</sup>

### Front page of the report

72. The front page of the report template provides a brief summary for parents and pupils. It sets out the inspection judgements and a summary of key findings including a statement about the school's compliance with the national minimum standards for boarding or residential special schools.

### Inspection judgements

73. 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.

### Summary of key findings

74. The summary of key findings summarises the overall effectiveness judgement and should be written in plain, easy to read language without jargon. This part of the report is written in bullet points and **must not extend beyond the front page**, so inspectors are asked to choose no more than five (and could be fewer) of the most important points only for inclusion in the main findings to substantiate the overall effectiveness judgement.
75. 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. 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

---

<sup>31</sup> The guidance *RSA toolkits for inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools* is available on the boarding and residential provision pages of the Ofsted intranet site.

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.

76. 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. In all reports, inspectors must ensure that they have included in the main findings 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.
77. Inspectors must ensure that issues of **equality and diversity** have been fully considered in reaching a judgement. 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.

### **Compliance with the national minimum standards**

78. The final section on the front cover of the report will contain one of the following standard lines of text populated by the RSA.
  - The school does not meet the national minimum standards for boarding (residential special) schools. The details are listed in the full report.
  - The school meets the national minimum standards for boarding (residential special) schools.

### **Information about this inspection**

79. This section should be written in no more than four sentences and a maximum of 100 words. It must include brief information about the notice period given and a summary of the inspection activities carried out: the number of boarding houses/residential units inspected (all must be visited); the meetings that took place with boarders/residential pupils and with key staff including those with responsibility for leading, managing and organising boarding/ residential provision or key elements of it; information gathered from Parent View and online surveys from boarders and placing authorities, where relevant; and reference to other main inspection activities such as scrutiny of school policies, records and boarding routines.

## Inspection team

80. The table in this section will be populated with the name of the lead inspector and, where applicable, the name of one team inspector. In inspections of larger schools, or schools on multiple sites, the name of the second team inspector will need to be added by the lead inspector, following the guidance on the Ofsted intranet site.

## Information about this school

81. The report will be pre-populated with information about the school which is called forward from the RSA provider and setting screen. Inspectors must review this text (in RSA, not the toolkit) to check that it is still relevant and fit for purpose, and amend as outlined below. Instructions on updating the text on the RSA provider and setting screen are available on the Ofsted intranet site.<sup>32</sup>
82. 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:
- number of boarding houses/residential units and their location
  - the characteristics of the school (for example if it is a faith school) and its boarders/residential pupils, including, where relevant their disabilities or special educational needs; 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.
83. Inspectors should note that this section must not contain any sensitive information, for example about why the children are placed in the boarding provision.
84. 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.
85. 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

---

<sup>32</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.

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 behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

86. This section is structured as a bullet-pointed list which must contain points for improvement and list any national minimum standards which are not met by the school.<sup>33</sup>
87. Where the school has **met** all the national minimum standards, inspectors should 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 should offer a point for improvement even to a school which has been judged outstanding.
88. In a school where the national minimum standards have not all been met, the inspector may list up to three additional good practice recommendations.
89. Any national minimum standards not met by the school must be reported. The inspector records the standards not met using a drop-down menu in the toolkit. Using this function automatically populates a bullet point in this section of the inspection report with the statement 'The school must meet the following national minimum standards for boarding (residential special) schools'. The standards selected by the inspector then appear in a bullet-pointed list under this standard line of text.<sup>34</sup>

### Outcomes for boarders/residential pupils

90. 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.
91. 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. There are no national minimum standards attached to this section and inspectors must **not** refer to the quality of the school's boarding provision in this section. The section should cover

---

<sup>33</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).

<sup>34</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.

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.

92. 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.
93. 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 Parent View and the point-in-time survey.
94. Inspectors must ensure that issues of **equality and diversity** have been fully considered both in reaching a judgement of outcomes for boarders and residential pupils. 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**

95. 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.
96. 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.
97. 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.

98. 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 Parent view and the point-in-time survey.
99. Inspectors must ensure that issues of **equality and diversity** have been fully considered both in reaching a judgement and reporting on the quality of residential provision care. 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**

100. 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.
101. 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.
102. 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.
103. 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.
104. Inspectors must ensure that issues of **equality and diversity** have been fully considered both in reaching a judgement and reporting on boarders'/residential pupils' safety. 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.

### **Serious incidents that should be referred to in a published inspection report**

105. 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 the Boarders'/residential pupils' safety section. Such references are confined to the most serious incidents, such as the death of a child or a serious safeguarding failure, or allegations of serious fraud, and should avoid going into such detail that it would risk prejudicing the outcome of the investigation or identifying individuals who may be wholly innocent of the alleged wrongdoing.
106. Information about investigations is available to Ofsted inspectors through searching the provider information portal (PIP) or to additional inspectors via the relevant inspection service providers' secure inspection portal.
107. Inspectors should avoid making any reference to a serious incident if there is any possibility that doing so would prejudice such an investigation or prejudice the outcomes, breach confidentiality or where the reference could risk identifying individuals subject to or related to the investigation.
108. Inspectors should note that the restrictions in this guidance apply to what may be reported in the published inspection report about active, external investigations, not to what may be included as lines of enquiry in the inspection. Inspectors are required and remain free to comment upon any matter they think is relevant to the quality of the care provided as long as it is based on the inspection evidence.
109. Depending on the nature of the serious incident, the legal powers under which Ofsted inspects and reports on schools may provide the basis for such references to be included in an inspection report. In cases in which the serious incident does not fall within Ofsted's express inspection and regulatory powers, Ofsted may rely upon its ancillary power to do whatever is necessary or expedient for the purposes of its functions in referring to these incidents (paragraph 13 of schedule 11 and paragraph 6 of schedule 12 to Education and Inspections Act 2006). It is to be noted that Ofsted has an overarching obligation to have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the rights and welfare of children in performing its functions (sections 117 and 119 of Education and Inspections Act 2006).

## Qualifying concerns/incidents and the sentence to include in the report

110. Where relevant and appropriate, given the particular circumstances, the lead inspector should give careful consideration to and seek advice about the insertion of specific text in the 'welfare, health and safety' section of the report.

111. Inspectors must use one of the following lines of standard text, appropriate to the incident. The text should be separated from the main body of the text to ensure that it is clear to the reader.

- A serious case review that involves the school.

'Inspectors were aware during this inspection that a serious incident which occurred at the school since the previous inspection is under investigation by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate incidents of this kind, actions taken by the setting in response to the incident(s) were considered (where appropriate) alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.'

- An investigation into the death or serious injury of a child at the school or elsewhere while in the care of staff employed by the school, for example during an educational visit.

'Inspectors were aware during this inspection that a serious incident which occurred at the school since the previous inspection is under investigation by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate incidents of this kind, actions taken by the setting in response to the incident(s) were considered (where appropriate) alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.'

- An investigation into alleged child protection failings.

'Inspectors were aware during this inspection that serious allegations of a child protection nature were being investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the school in response to the allegations(s) were considered (where appropriate) alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.'

- A police investigation into the use of restraint/restriction of liberty at the setting.

'Inspectors were aware during this inspection of a police investigation into serious allegations about restriction of liberty at the school. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the school in response to the allegation(s) were considered

(where appropriate) alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.'

- An investigation into allegations of other serious offences such as fraud, involving the head, proprietor or registered manager of the school.

'Inspectors were aware during this inspection of an investigation by the appropriate authorities into allegations of wrong-doing that did not concern child protection or safeguarding arrangements'. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the school in response to the allegation(s) were considered (where appropriate) alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.'

### **Reporting on evidence or allegations of child abuse**

112. On a very small number of occasions, inspectors may come across evidence or allegations of child abuse within a school. When such allegations have been made, the lead inspector should report the concerns using the following wording:

'Concerns raised by some pupils/a pupil/some parents/one parent during the inspection are being examined by the appropriate bodies.'

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

113. 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.
114. 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.

115. 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.
116. The following national minimum standards are covered by this section: 1, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20 for boarding and residential special schools; and standards 21 and 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.
117. 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.
118. Inspectors must ensure that issues of **equality and diversity** have been fully considered both in reaching a judgement and reporting on the leadership and management of boarding/residential provision. 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.

### What inspection judgements mean

119. A table of standard text giving a definition of the judgements outstanding, good, adequate and inadequate, which is automatically populated by RSA.

### School details

120. A standard table containing factual information about the school. Some fields are populated by RSA, but inspectors are required to fill in the fields for:
- the type of school – Annex A of this guidance document contains the list of options for use in this field
  - number, gender and age range of boarders/residential pupils.
121. This section of the report will also be pre-populated with a standard section referring to the legislation under which the inspection is conducted and the relevant national minimum standards to which the inspectors have had regard.
122. Inspectors and schools should note that as the format of the report has changed, they will no longer write a letter for boarders/residential pupils.

## Reports where the school's address should not be disclosed

123. There is a small number of residential special schools which cater for extremely vulnerable pupils, where the school's address should not be disclosed because of the risk to the pupils. The lead inspector must discuss this matter with the school during the inspection. If the school requests that its address and other details are not published, the inspector should delete the information from the 'setting' address, email address and telephone number fields on the provider and setting screen of their RSA toolkit. Guidance for social care inspectors on using the toolkits is available on the boarding and residential provision pages of the Ofsted intranet site.<sup>35</sup>

## Inadequate schools

124. 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.

125. 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.

126. 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.

127. Inadequate residential provision in maintained or non-maintained schools may be considered in any risk assessment made about the school.

## Finalising and quality assurance of the welfare report

128. 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

---

<sup>35</sup> The guidance *RSA toolkits for inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools* is available on the boarding and residential provision pages of the Ofsted intranet site.

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.

129. 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.
130. Finally, quality assurance readers will ensure that the report is aligned with the *Guide to Ofsted's house style*.<sup>36</sup>

## Publication

131. Approximately 10 working days after the inspection, the inspection management and support team will email the school a PDF version of the inspection report, which has undergone quality assurance.<sup>37</sup> A cover letter template is provided on the boarding and residential provision pages of the Ofsted intranet site and must be used.<sup>38,39</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 management and support team, who will in turn forward them to the lead inspector.
132. 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 134).<sup>40,41,42</sup> The school is responsible for sending copies of the report to parents

---

<sup>36</sup> *Guide to Ofsted's house style* (080230), Ofsted, 2010; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/080230](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/080230).

<sup>37</sup> The inspection management and 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>38</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>39</sup> The inspection management and support team must record in the registration comments section of RSA the date that the letter was sent to the school.

<sup>40</sup> Any factual errors will need to be amended in the inspection report, by using the concerns process within RSA.

and 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. Although not specifically required to do so, headteachers may like to draw the attention of placing authorities to the published report. Shortly afterwards, the report is published on our website.

133. 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**

134. 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>43</sup> The post-inspection survey is emailed by the inspection management and support team to schools, with a cover letter which is available on the boarding and residential provision pages of the Ofsted intranet site.<sup>44</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>45</sup>

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

135. 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 inspected by the Bridge Schools Inspectorate and the School Inspection Service, respectively.
136. In line with the Protocol between Ofsted and the approved independent inspectorates we try to conduct the inspection of boarding provision of an

<sup>41</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>42</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>43</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>44</sup> The inspection management and support team must record in the registration comments section of RSA the date that the letter was sent to the school.

<sup>45</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).

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.

137. 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*

138. 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*

139. 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*

140. 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.

141. 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 common sense 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*

142. 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*

143. 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*

144. 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>46</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup> As appropriate.

145. 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.
146. 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

147. 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>47</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 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.

---

<sup>47</sup> Independent schools are inspected under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005.

148. 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

149. *The framework for inspecting boarding and residential provision in schools*, to which this guidance document relates, does not apply to the care provision of children's homes or to schools which are dually registered as children's homes.<sup>48</sup> Children's homes which are also registered to provide education receive two inspections of their care provision each year by Ofsted.<sup>49</sup> When the school (education) inspection is due, it is normally timed to occur alongside a full inspection of the care provision. The inspections of education and care will be 'aligned' and inspectors work closely together, but two separate reports are produced, one for the DfE which covers the education provision and one for Ofsted which reports the findings from the care inspection. Guidance on conducting aligned inspections of independent schools with dual registration as children's homes is available in the document *Conducting inspections of non-association independent schools*.<sup>50</sup>

## The inspectors

150. An integrated inspection of a maintained or independent 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 a social care inspector who is trained and experienced in judging the quality of the boarding provision. Additional social care inspectors will be added to the team where there are more than 50 boarders on roll, or where there are more than two boarding houses which are not located in close proximity. The staffing of the boarding team will be recommended by the Managing Inspector, Operational Lead for the Welfare Inspection of Boarding Schools to the appropriate Ofsted senior manager who has the ultimate decision. The inspectors are trained and experienced in judging the quality of the boarding provision.

---

<sup>48</sup> *Inspections of children's homes, Framework for inspection* (100195), Ofsted, 2012; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100195](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100195).

<sup>49</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.

<sup>50</sup> *Conducting inspections of non-association independent schools* (090048), Ofsted, 2013; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090048](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090048).

151. 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.
152. Small independent schools which have 19 or fewer pupils on roll have an inspection tariff of three days for the lead inspector, which also includes writing time. In these schools the on-site inspection generally takes place on the afternoon of the first day and the second day of the inspection. Where such schools also make residential provision, the inspection of the residential inspection will be integrated with the school inspection and take place over the same time period. However, in exceptional circumstances, the length of inspection and deployment of inspectors may be adjusted if necessary to ensure that there is sufficient time for the residential inspection to take place. This will be discussed and agreed in advance by HMIs with operational lead for independent and for boarding/residential schools. Consideration is given to the number and location of the residential premises and to the needs of the young people.

## **Pre-inspection activity**

### **Liaison between inspectors**

153. Where practicable, 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 their arrival times and areas of joint working.
154. Both the lead inspector and the lead social care inspector have time ahead of the inspection to prepare and plan for it. The inspection service provider must provide all the social care inspectors on the team with access to the inspection portal. The lead social care inspector must have access to any evaluation the school has prepared and any other relevant pre-inspection documents.
155. The inspection service provider must upload the previous education-only and integrated inspection reports to the secure inspection portal. Inspectors should refer to the Ofsted website for the most recent report on inspecting outcomes for children and for social care. The previously completed *Pre-registration regulatory check sheet* will be provided for the first inspection of all newly registered schools.
156. 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.
157. In integrated inspections of maintained schools, the lead education inspector will follow the guidance for undertaking pre-inspection activity in the *School*

*inspection handbook*, and for independent schools, *Conducting inspections of non-association independent schools*.<sup>51, 52</sup>

## Inspection frameworks

158. 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-school-inspection-september-2012-0](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/framework-for-school-inspection-september-2012-0).
  - *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

159. In **maintained schools**, the lead inspector will normally inform the school at around 11am on the working day before the start of the school inspection. The lead inspector will inform the school that although the education team will arrive early the following morning, the boarding inspection will begin after school that day, and that the boarding inspector will be arriving in the afternoon to begin the boarding inspection.
160. Notification of integrated inspections of **independent schools** is normally given by the lead inspector in a telephone call at the start of the day on which the school is to be inspected, usually between 8 and 9am. The lead inspector and lead social care inspector will normally arrive in the early afternoon and start the inspection of education and boarding provision together.
161. In all cases, after the lead inspector has notified the school by telephone, they will advise the inspection service provider to send the school a formal notification of inspection letter electronically (as an attachment to an email), the same day. For independent school inspections, the lead inspector should telephone the inspection service provider from 9am. The letter will confirm the team details, dates and documents needed. Also attached to the email will be: a copy of *The indicative timetable*; a letter for the school to send to the parents and carers of all pupils inviting them to fill-in Parent View; and a copy of the inspection questionnaire for the school's staff. The school is asked to distribute the questionnaire to all staff apart from those in the boarding provision, whose views will have already been sought through the online point-in-time survey.

---

<sup>51</sup> *School inspection handbook* (120101), Ofsted, 2013; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120101](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120101).

<sup>52</sup> *Conducting inspections of non-association independent schools* (090048), Ofsted, 2013; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090048](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090048).

## If a school cannot be contacted by the lead inspector

162. In exceptional circumstances, it may prove difficult for the lead inspector to make contact with the school.

### Independent schools

163. In cases where the school has a telephone answering machine, the lead inspector should leave a message and state the time at which this message was left, keeping a note that they have done so on an evidence form. Where the telephone remains unanswered, the lead inspector should persevere, keeping a note of the times at which they tried to make contact with the school.

164. If the lead inspector has not managed to make contact by **10am** of the first day of the inspection, they will contact Ofsted's helpdesk to discuss the situation. The helpdesk must seek a steer from the Managing Inspector, Operational Lead for the Welfare Inspection of Boarding Schools. Normally, the HMI will advise that the inspection will continue and that the ISP should continue to try and make contact with the school, while the lead inspector travels to the school. If there continues to be no answer, the inspection will be undertaken as an unannounced inspection.

165. If a secure email address for the school is available from the last inspection report or the school's website, the ISP will email the formal notification of inspection letter and accompanying documents to it (see paragraph 161) whether or not they are able to make telephone contact with the school. Where one is not available, the lead inspector will seek confirmation of the school's email address on arrival at the school, and provide it to the ISP so that the documents can be supplied as soon as possible. The lead inspector will also give a paper copy of the inspection questionnaire for school staff and the letter for parents and carers to the school on arrival.

166. Further guidance is available in the document Conducting inspections of non-association independent schools.

### Maintained schools

167. As with independent schools, if the lead inspector is unable to get through to the school to speak to the headteacher at 11am, they will leave a message where the school has a telephone answering machine, and continue to telephone, keeping a log of the calls made and messages left, until they finally make contact with the school. If they are unable to do so by 2pm, the integrated inspection will be cancelled, as set out in the guidance *Inspections where Ofsted is unable to contact the school the day before*.<sup>53</sup>

---

<sup>53</sup> *Inspections where Ofsted is unable to contact the school the day before* (120303), Ofsted, 2012; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120303](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120303).

## **Gathering views of registered parents, carers and other stakeholders<sup>54</sup>**

168. 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.
169. Ofsted's online service Parent View is available for the parents of children in non-association independent schools and maintained schools to give their opinion of the school, including its boarding/residential provision. The lead education and social care inspectors should check the returns for the school from the Parent View website as part of their preparation.<sup>55</sup>

## **Point-in-time surveys for day pupils, boarders/residential pupils, boarding staff and placing authorities about education and boarding/residential provision**

170. Ofsted will also conduct an annual point-in-time survey of pupils' views, and in the case of boarding and residential special schools, boarding staff. There is an online survey for pupils and a separate one for boarders/residential pupils.
171. Ofsted also conducts annual online point-in-time surveys of the views of day pupils, and in the case of boarding and residential special schools, boarders/residential pupils and boarding staff. There is one survey for day pupils and a separate one for boarders/residential pupils. A point-in-time survey is also used to gather the views of local authorities who place and fund children in independent schools.
172. Please refer to paragraphs 12–15 for more detailed information on the annual point-in-time surveys.
173. The responses to all surveys are sent directly to Ofsted where they are collated and analysed automatically. Ofsted's inspection management and support team will send the analyses to the relevant inspection service provider, in order that they can form part of the pre-inspection information for the relevant school's next inspection, to inform inspection trails.
174. The inspection service provider will make the analyses available on their inspection portal for the lead inspector to use to generate lines of enquiry. It is vitally important that the lead inspector has this information in advance so that the inspection can operate effectively with minimum notification.
175. During inspection, the lead inspector may share the quantitative data with the school, but any comments from users that are recorded in analyses remain

---

<sup>54</sup> 'Parents' refers to mothers, fathers and/or carers.

<sup>55</sup> A summary of responses to Parent View is available online: [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/parent-view-results](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/parent-view-results).

confidential to the inspection team. In the case of boarding schools, there may be sets of analyses for up to three years' annual point-in-time surveys available to the lead inspector, by the time an inspection of the boarding provision is due. All sets will be taken into account, and the lead inspector will explore with the school any particular 'themes' arising from the analyses. If any of the returned surveys appear to raise safeguarding concerns, the inspection management and support team will send them immediately to the relevant HMI manager. This may have an impact on the timing of the next inspection.

176. The views of the staff at schools are gathered through a questionnaire, which the inspection service provider sends to the school by email alongside the formal notification of inspection letter. The school is asked to distribute the questionnaire to all staff apart from those in the boarding provision, whose views will have already been sought through the online point-in-time survey.
177. The questionnaire states that staff should complete and return their questionnaires in a sealed envelope, marked 'Confidential – for the attention of the Ofsted inspection team' by 11am on the first day of inspection, where practicable.
178. Inspectors use all this information intelligently to set up lines of enquiry which they must record on an evidence form and may pursue during the inspection.

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

179. Once the lead inspector has notified the school and then contacted the inspection service provider as set out in paragraph 161, they must briefly telephone the lead social care inspector a second time, to confirm that the inspection is taking place or advise them if it has been deferred. After this call, the lead social care inspector will conduct a short telephone conversation 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 at the start 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 lead social care inspector should 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 provide 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

180. In integrated inspections of both maintained and independent schools, *The indicative timetable* will normally be used.<sup>56</sup> The inspection service provider must always provide it to the school electronically alongside the formal notification letter, as set out in paragraph 161. This document details the interviews that the school will need to arrange, including the national minimum standard/s that each interview will cover.<sup>57</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.
181. 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. Schools are asked to present the completed timetable to the lead social care inspector on their arrival at the school.
182. In all cases, the lead social care inspector will discuss and agree with the school any necessary adjustments needed prior to the start of the inspection.
183. The lead social care inspector must also shared and agree the inspection timetable for the boarding with the lead inspector who is responsible for the conduct and quality of the integrated inspection.
184. 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.

---

<sup>56</sup> *The indicative timetable* (110105), Ofsted, 2013; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110105](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110105).

<sup>57</sup> The national minimum standards for both residential special schools and for boarding schools are available on the Department for Education's website: [www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/a00192112/boarding-schools](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/a00192112/boarding-schools).

## Using the pre-inspection information

185. 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:

- previous inspection reports – all education and social care inspectors should read the previous report on **both** the education provision (available on the relevant ISP's portal) and the boarding/residential provision (available on the Ofsted website)
- 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 and staff from the point-in-time surveys<sup>58</sup>
- the responses from Parent View<sup>59</sup>
- any information on referrals, notifications or child protection concerns – for Ofsted inspectors this information can be accessed through Ofsted's provider information portal (PIP), and there is guidance on the Ofsted intranet site to help access PIP; for the ISPs' additional inspectors, this information is made available through the ISPs' own secure inspection portals. In all cases, the portal provides only high-level information about any matters that have arisen, which can be used with other pre-inspection information to inform inspection trails (which should be recorded in an evidence form)
- 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>60</sup>

186. Inspectors will also take account of the pre-inspection information provided by the school, as outlined in paragraph 179.

187. 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

---

<sup>58</sup> The inspection service provider will make the analyses available on their inspection portal for the lead education inspector and lead social care inspector to use to generate lines of enquiry.

<sup>59</sup> A summary of responses to Parent View is available online: [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/parent-view-results](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/parent-view-results).

<sup>60</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.

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.

188. 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**

189. 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.

## Integrated inspections of maintained schools

Day -1	Day 1	Day 2	Writing day (Day +1)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ By 11 am lead inspector (LI) notifies the headteacher of inspection, holds brief conversation with inspection service provider, then rings lead social care inspector (LSCI)</li> <li>■ LSCI rings the school prior to departure</li> <li>■ LSCI starts inspection of boarding/ residential provision</li> <li>■ LI's preparation day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ LI and education team begin inspection of school provision*</li> <li>■ Boarding inspection continues**</li> </ul> <p><b>Where there are 50 or fewer pupils on roll</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Final meeting of inspection team</li> <li>■ Feedback inspection findings to the school's senior staff and governors</li> </ul>	<p><b>Where there are 51 or more pupils on roll</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Inspection of education provision continues</li> <li>■ Inspection of boarding provision continues</li> <li>■ Final meeting of inspection team</li> <li>■ Feedback inspection findings to the school's senior staff and governors</li> </ul>	<p>LI writing day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ LSCI sends findings from the boarding provision to lead inspector as soon as possible, if this was not practicable at the end of Day 2.</li> <li>■ LSCI is available to comment on report.</li> <li>■ LI sends whole report to inspection service provider by the end of the same day.</li> </ul> <p>LSCI has 15 working days from the date of submission to amend and re-submit the integrated toolkit. After that point, the integrated toolkit cannot be edited.</p>

\* - in integrated inspections of maintained and non-maintained schools additional education inspectors will be added to the team in the case of special schools and pupil referral units or where there are 51 or more pupils on roll,

\*\* - additional social care inspectors will be added to the team where there are more than 50 boarders on roll, or where there are more than two boarding houses which are not located in the same district, as recommended by the Managing Inspector, Operational Lead for the Welfare Inspection of Boarding Schools to the appropriate Ofsted senior manager who has the ultimate decision. 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.

## Integrated inspections of independent schools

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Writing day (Day +1)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Lead inspector (LI) notifies the headteacher of inspection between 8–9am</li> <li>■ LI holds brief conversation with inspection service provider, then rings lead social care inspector (LSCI)</li> <li>■ LSCI rings the school prior to departure</li> <li>■ LI half a day preparation and travel</li> <li>■ LI half a day on-site evidence gathering</li> <li>■ LSCI half a day preparation and travel</li> <li>■ LSCI half a day on-site evidence gathering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ LI whole day on-site inspection*</li> <li>■ LSCI whole day on-site inspection**</li> </ul> <p><b>Where there are 19 or fewer pupils on roll***</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Completion of evidence records</li> <li>■ Final meeting of inspection team</li> <li>■ Feedback inspection findings to the school's senior staff and governors/trustees/ proprietor</li> </ul>	<p><b>Where there are 20 or more pupils on roll</b></p> <p><b>Morning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ LI half a day on-site evidence gathering</li> <li>■ LSCI half a day on-site evidence gathering</li> <li>■ Social care inspector provides the lead inspector with the findings from the boarding provision</li> </ul> <p><b>Afternoon</b></p> <p>All cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Completion of evidence records</li> <li>■ Final meeting of inspection team</li> <li>■ Feedback inspection findings to the school's senior staff and governors/trustees/ proprietor</li> </ul>	<p>LI writing day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ LSCI sends findings from the boarding provision to lead inspector as soon as possible, if this was not practicable at the end of Day 3 (or Day 2 NOR 1–19)</li> <li>■ LSCI is available to comment on report</li> <li>■ LI sends whole report and ROIEJ to inspection service provider by the end of the same day</li> </ul> <p>LSCI has 15 working days from the date of submission to amend and re-submit the integrated toolkit. After that point, the integrated toolkit cannot be edited</p>

\* – in integrated inspections of independent schools where there are 20 or more pupils on roll, additional education inspectors will be added to the team on Day 2. Please refer to the guidance document *Conducting inspections of non-association independent schools* for more information.

\*\* – additional social care inspectors will be added to the team where there are more than 50 boarders on roll, or where there are more than two boarding houses which are not located in the same district, as recommended by the Managing Inspector, Operational Lead for the Welfare Inspection of Boarding Schools to the appropriate Ofsted senior manager who has the ultimate decision.

\*\*\* – the inspection of boarding or residential provision in schools with 19 or fewer pupils on roll will normally have a tariff of three days for the lead social care inspector, which also includes writing time. In exceptional circumstances, the length of inspection and deployment of inspectors may be adjusted if necessary to ensure that there is sufficient time for the residential inspection to take place. This will be discussed and agreed in advance by HMIs with operational lead for independent and for residential schools. Consideration is given to the number and location of the residential premises and to the needs of the young people.

190. 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.
191. The inspectors will confirm with the school's headteacher and other school representatives the plan for the inspection.
192. At the beginning of the boarding inspection, the lead boarding inspector 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>61,62</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.
193. 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
  - analysing the feedback from Parent View, and the responses from pupils, boarders/residential pupils, boarding staff and placing authorities to the completed online point-in-time surveys, and from all the other school staff to the paper-based inspection questionnaires
  - 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

---

<sup>61</sup> *Boarding school national minimum standards – appendix two records* (110155), Ofsted, 2013; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110155](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110155).

<sup>62</sup> *Residential special school national minimum standards – appendix two records* (110156), Ofsted, 2013; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110156](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110156).

- 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 health and safety arrangements.

194. It is the responsibility of the lead education inspector to quality assure the inspection and the work of their team, including the work of the social care inspector/s. Evidence forms must be used to keep records of all arrangements made with the school for the planning and organising of the inspection, all meetings, and of all feedback given throughout the inspection.

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

195. 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.

196. 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.

197. 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.

198. 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.

199. 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.

200. 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 through the point-in-time survey or their parents or carers through Parent View. 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**

201. 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.
202. Any key welfare issues that arise from examining boarders'/residential pupils' records should be raised with senior staff in the school.
203. 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**

204. 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).
205. 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.

206. 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**

207. 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**

208. 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**

209. 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>63</sup> Where required, a referral will be made to the Compliance, Investigation and Enforcement team and the Department for

---

<sup>63</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).

Education or, for a maintained school, the relevant local authority children's services.

## Recording evidence

210. 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 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>64,65</sup> Evidence forms must also be used to record pre-inspection trails raised from the views of parents, residential pupils and local authorities, as appropriate, the key outcomes of team meetings, and all feedback given throughout the inspection, including any significant response from the school.
211. 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>66,67</sup>
212. 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.
213. 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.

---

<sup>64</sup> *Boarding school national minimum standards check sheet and evidence form* (110103), Ofsted, 2013; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110103](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110103).

<sup>65</sup> *Residential special school national minimum standards check sheet and evidence form* (110104), Ofsted, 2013; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110104](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110104).

<sup>66</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>67</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.

## Inspection findings

214. 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.

215. 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
- have opportunities to clarify how evidence is used to reach judgements
- are given the opportunity to present additional evidence relevant to the inspection.

216. 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 the grade descriptors to find a 'best fit' judgement for their inspection findings.

## Inspection feedback

217. 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.

218. 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.

219. 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.

220. 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.

221. 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**

222. The social care and education inspector/s must not retain any handwritten notes, evidence forms or analysis of point-in-time survey responses 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, staff and, where relevant, placing authorities from the point-in-time surveys, and any printed copies of responses made to Parent View 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**

223. 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 58–69.

## Maintained school reports

224. 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.
225. The social care inspector will draft their contribution to the integrated inspection report into an RSA toolkit for integrated inspections.<sup>68</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>69</sup>
226. 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.
227. 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.
228. The integrated report will be written in the *Section 5 report template*.<sup>70</sup> It will follow the same format as the education report under s5 of the Education Act 2005, and includes at the end of the 'Inspection judgements' section the

---

<sup>68</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>69</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>70</sup> *Section 5 report template* 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).

judgements on boarding/residential provision (apart from overall effectiveness) and a short section in which to report on the outcomes for boarders/residential pupils and the quality of the boarding/residential provision. This is a bulleted list which should contain about 400 words in total. All other findings from the boarding inspection, such as boarders' behaviour and safety, and the effectiveness with which boarding is led and managed, are captured in appropriate sections of the schools report. It is the responsibility of the lead inspector to write the whole of the integrated report, using the key points of evidence and judgements, supplied by the boarding inspector. The judgement on the overall effectiveness of the boarding/residential experience is reported on the front cover of the report, and the four outcome judgements are reported in the main body of the report in the 'Inspection judgements' section. Any national minimum standards not met by the school, are recorded under 'What does the school need to do to improve further?'. The overall effectiveness of the boarding/residential provision should be referred to in the key findings using a separate bullet point if needed.

229. 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.
230. The lead inspector is responsible for checking the consistency of messages in the inspection report. They must discuss with the social care inspector the presentation of findings about the boarding/residential provision in the integrated inspection report, and share the integrated report with the social care inspector.<sup>71</sup> The lead inspector should ensure that the report as a whole tells a coherent and balanced story. On the rare occasion that the inspectors agree a change to a judgement or findings about the boarding/residential provision, or to the national minimum standards listed as not being met, the social care inspector must revise their RSA integrated inspection toolkit accordingly.
231. 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.

---

<sup>71</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 Microsoft Lync. In the case of inspections led by additional inspectors, the report must be shared through the inspection service provider's secure inspection portal.

232. 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.
233. If any of the judgements or findings 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, the inspection service provider's quality assurance team must provide a copy of the amended document to the social care inspector via their secure inspection portal. If the changes are minor, for example for grammatical accuracy, the revised document should be sent for the social care inspector's information only. However, where the substance of the welfare section of the document has been changed, the inspection service provider's quality assurance team must also liaise with the social care inspector by telephone, and give them the opportunity to comment. If changes are made to the boarding/residential aspects of the report during the sign-off stage, the HMI or the inspection service provider as appropriate must inform the social care inspector. The social care inspector **must** update their RSA integrated inspection toolkit to align with the amendments to the report. This is to ensure that the outcomes of the inspection are accurately recorded in Ofsted's published data on inspections. Social care inspectors have 15 working days from the date of submission to amend and re-submit integrated toolkits. After that point, integrated toolkits cannot be edited.

### Independent school reports

234. 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.
235. The social care inspector will draft their contribution to the integrated inspection report into an RSA toolkit for integrated inspections.<sup>72</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>73</sup> The lead inspector must paste the contents of the integrated inspection report document into the *Record of inspection evidence*

---

<sup>72</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>73</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.

*and judgements* and weave the findings into the integrated inspection report.<sup>74</sup> When the lead inspector submits the integrated inspection report for quality assurance, the *Record of inspection evidence and judgements* must also be supplied.

236. 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.
237. 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.
238. 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.<sup>75</sup> 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 judgement on the overall effectiveness of boarding provision is recorded on the front cover of the report and the key boarding judgements will appear at the end of the 'full report' section. Any national minimum standards not met by the school will also be recorded in the report. For further information, please refer to the guidance *Writing inspection reports*.<sup>76</sup>
239. 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 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.
240. The lead inspector is responsible for checking the consistency of messages in the inspection report. They must discuss with the social care inspector the presentation of findings about the boarding/residential provision in the

---

<sup>74</sup> *Record of inspection evidence and judgements* (090065), Ofsted, 2013; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090065](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090065).

<sup>75</sup> *Independent school standard inspection report template* (090070), Ofsted, 2013; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090070](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090070).

<sup>76</sup> *Writing inspection reports* (090052), Ofsted, 2013; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090052](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090052).

integrated inspection report, and share the integrated report with the social care inspector.<sup>77</sup> The lead inspector should ensure that the report as a whole tells a coherent and balanced story. On the rare occasion that the inspectors agree a change to a judgement or findings about the boarding/residential provision, or to the national minimum standards listed as not being met, the social care inspector must revise their RSA integrated inspection toolkit accordingly.

241. 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.
242. 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.
243. 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.
244. If any of the judgements or findings 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, the inspection service provider's quality assurance team must provide a copy of the amended document to the social care inspector via their secure inspection portal. If the changes are minor, for example for grammatical accuracy, the revised document should be sent for the social care inspector's information only. However, where the substance of the welfare section of the document has been changed, the inspection service provider's quality assurance team must also liaise with the social care inspector by telephone, and give them the opportunity to comment. If changes are made to the boarding/residential aspects of the report during the sign-off stage, the HMI or the inspection service provider as appropriate must inform the social care inspector. The social care inspector **must** update their RSA integrated inspection toolkit to align with the amendments to the report. This is to ensure that the outcomes of the inspection are accurately recorded in Ofsted's published data on inspections. Social care inspectors have 15 working days from the date of submission to amend and re-submit integrated toolkits. After that point, integrated toolkits cannot be edited.

---

<sup>77</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 Microsoft Lync. In the case of inspections led by additional inspectors, the report must be shared through the inspection service provider's secure inspection portal.

## Publication

245. 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. 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 inspecting children's homes.<sup>78</sup> The report of a registered children's home does not identify its name and location.

## Inadequate schools

246. 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>79</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.

247. 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.

248. 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>80</sup>

249. In cases where the boarding provision is judged inadequate but the school provision is satisfactory (or better), inspectors should discuss the impact of the

---

<sup>78</sup> *Inspections of children's homes, Framework for inspection* (100195), Ofsted, 2012; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100195](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100195).

<sup>79</sup> *Form A – confirmation that an independent day, boarding or residential special school is causing concern* (20090044), Ofsted, 2013; [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>80</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).

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

250. 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.
251. 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**

252. 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>81</sup> Schools are reminded of this when they receive a copy of the report for publication.

### **Concerns**

253. It is anticipated that the great majority of inspections will be carried out without any concerns on the part of the school.
254. 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*.
255. 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

---

<sup>81</sup> The questions that schools are asked to respond to in the school post-inspection survey are available on the Ofsted website. Maintained schools; [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). Independent schools; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/schools/for-schools/inspecting-schools/inspecting-independent-schools/after-independent-school-inspection/school-post-inspection](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/schools/for-schools/inspecting-schools/inspecting-independent-schools/after-independent-school-inspection/school-post-inspection).

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.

256. 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.

## Complaints

257. 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.
258. 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).
259. Lodging a complaint will not normally delay the publication of the final inspection report.
260. 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.

## **Annex A. Types of school – options for welfare-only reports**

261. Inspectors must choose one of the options shown below and paste it into the 'Type of school' field on the provider and setting screen of the RSA toolkit. These options are provided for social care inspectors to use to ensure national consistency in published reports.

- Independent schools subject to inspection under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005:
  - Independent boarding school
  - Independent residential special school
- Schools subject to inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005:
  - Maintained boarding school
  - Maintained residential special school
  - Non-maintained special school with residential provision