

**DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION
MARCH 2002**



INSPECTING SCHOOLS

**The Framework for inspecting schools in England
from September 2003**

Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

Comments on this draft should be sent
to Adam Cooper,
Inspection Quality Division

acooper@ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright

This document may be freely photocopied for non-commercial educational purposes,
providing that the source and date are stated.

CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	1
Definition of terms	2
PART 1: INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS	3
PART 2: THE EVALUATION SCHEDULE: STANDARD AND ENHANCED INSPECTIONS	7
1. How good is the school?	8
2. How high are standards?	9
3. How well are pupils taught?	11
4. How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?	12
5. How well does the school care for, support and guide its pupils?	13
6. How well does the school work in partnership with parents?	14
7. How well is the school led and managed?	15
8. What should the school do to improve?	16
9. The standards and quality of teaching in areas of the curriculum, subjects and courses	17
10. Other specified features	18
11. Childcare and other services that the school provides	18
PART 3: THE CONDUCT OF INSPECTIONS	19
The inspection process	20
Inspection outcomes	23
Inspectors and inspection teams	25
What inspectors and inspection contractors must do	26
The part OFSTED plays in inspection	32
Complaining about an inspection	35
PART 4: PARTICIPATION IN INSPECTIONS	36
Governors and inspection	37
Pupils, parents and inspection	39
Teachers, support staff and inspection	41
Headteachers and inspection	43

INTRODUCTION

This new edition of the *Framework* sets out the requirements for school inspections in England. It applies to inspections from September 2003. *Inspecting Schools* incorporates significant developments in the policy for school inspections. Inspections will:

- take greater account of school self-evaluation to inform inspection;
- place greater emphasis on leadership at all levels in the school, and on the effectiveness of performance management, linked with continuing professional development, in promoting school improvement;
- evaluate curriculum areas, recognising increased diversification of the curriculum in secondary schools;
- focus more on how well the needs of individual pupils are met;
- take greater account of the views of stakeholders, including pupils, and how the school responds to them;
- recognise that an increasing number of schools offer wider services for families and communities, including child care;
- evaluate educational and social inclusion in schools, including race equality;
- ensure that inspection reports reflect the distinctive features of schools and their circumstances;
- identify factors that impede the work of the school, such as undue bureaucratic demands or staff shortages; and
- keep inspection requirements on schools to a minimum.

Inspection has improved significantly in recent years. Most schools find inspection a positive, though challenging, experience and one that is helpful in stimulating and steering school improvement. Inspection provides a valuable opportunity for individual teachers and for schools to receive a clear, impartial evaluation of the quality of their work, identifying strengths and areas needing improvement. The new requirements build on these good foundations.

Part 1 of this *Framework* sets out the basis for inspections and describes two inspection models.

Part 2 is the **evaluation schedule**, which specifies what inspectors must consider in order to judge how well the school is doing and to explain why.

Part 3 describes how inspections are conducted.

Part 4 explains the role of pupils, parents, governors and teachers in relation to the inspection of their school.

Guidance on the application of the *Framework* is provided in the *OFSTED Inspection Handbooks*.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

School

In this document the term **school** includes **pupil referral unit**.

Appropriate authority

Appropriate authority for a school means the **governing body** except:

- a) in the case of a maintained school whose governing body does not have a delegated budget, or a pupil referral unit for which the appropriate authority is the **local education authority**;
- b) in the case of a city technology college or a city college for the technology of the arts, where the appropriate authority is the **proprietor** of the college;
- c) in the case of an independent school approved by the Secretary of State as suitable for admitting children with statements, where the appropriate authority is the **proprietor** of the school.

Parents and carers

The law on inspections refers to parents, but carers are included where they have parental responsibility. In this document the term **parent** always includes **parents and carers**.

Pupils and students

References to pupils in the text apply equally to students and to young children.

The School Inspections Act

The School Inspections Act 1996 replaces earlier legislation about school inspections. It has been amended by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, and further amendments are proposed in the Education Bill 2002. A number of regulations have also been issued under the School Inspections Act 1996. All references to the Act in this document are to be taken to mean the School Inspections Act 1996, as amended by subsequent legislation, and the regulations issued under this Act.

HMCI

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools in England

HMI

Her Majesty's Inspector(s) of Schools in England

PANDA reports

OFSTED produces Performance and Assessment (PANDA) reports each year, which are made available to schools and provided to inspectors prior to inspection.

PART 1: INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS

This part of the *Framework* describes the school inspection system that applies from September 2003.

Why we have inspections

An inspection provides an independent, external view of the quality of the school. Inspectors tell the school what it does well and what it needs to improve, and explain how and why they have come to their conclusions. They also look at whether or not the school has improved since the last inspection.

The published inspection report and summary tell the school, parents and wider community about the quality of education at the school and whether standards are high enough. The inspection team's findings are intended to help the school to plan for improvement.

Inspections also provide evidence for the national evaluation of schools. The findings of all inspections are collected together and analysed to help prepare the annual report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools in England (HMCI) and to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills.

The background to the inspection system

In 1992, the Government announced arrangements for all schools to be inspected regularly. OFSTED was set up as a non-ministerial government department to manage the inspection system and to make sure that inspections are of high quality. The first inspections of secondary schools took place in September 1993; primary and special school inspections began in September 1994. Almost all schools will have been inspected at least twice by July 2003.

What the law says

School inspections are governed by the School Inspections Act 1996 (the Act), as amended by more recent legislation. All schools must be inspected at least once within six years of the end of the school year in which they were last inspected. Inspections must be conducted by teams of inspectors, each normally led by a registered inspector, and must result in a written report.

What is inspected?

Section 10 of the Act, amended by the Education Bill 2002, says that registered inspectors must report on:

- **the educational standards** achieved in the school;
- **the quality of the education** provided by the school;
- **the quality of leadership and management**, including whether the financial resources made available to the school are managed efficiently;
- **the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils** at the school.

The *Evaluation Schedule* in Part 3 of the *Framework* covers these four areas. Inspectors must use the *Schedule* when they make their judgements. Some schools have a religious

character and teach denominational religious education. Under section 23 of the Act, religious education and the content of collective worship are not included in section 10 inspections, but are inspected separately. Often, these inspections coincide.

Where the school makes community or care provision that is subject to inspection under Part XA of the Children Act, such provision will, if possible, be inspected at the same time as the section 10 inspection, and included in the report.

Which schools are inspected?

All maintained schools are covered by the legislation on inspection. Certain other schools and units are also included. The following categories of schools are inspected under section 10 of the Act:

- community, foundation and voluntary schools
- maintained nursery schools
- city technology colleges
- city colleges for the technology of the arts
- community and foundation special schools
- pupil referral units
- some non-maintained special schools
- some independent special schools (*)
- city academies (**)

(*) Subject to the passage of legislation, these will not be subject to section 10 inspections in future.

(**) Subject to the passage of legislation, these will be known as 'academies'

Types of inspection

There are two types of inspection:

- a **standard** inspection; and
- an **enhanced** inspection.

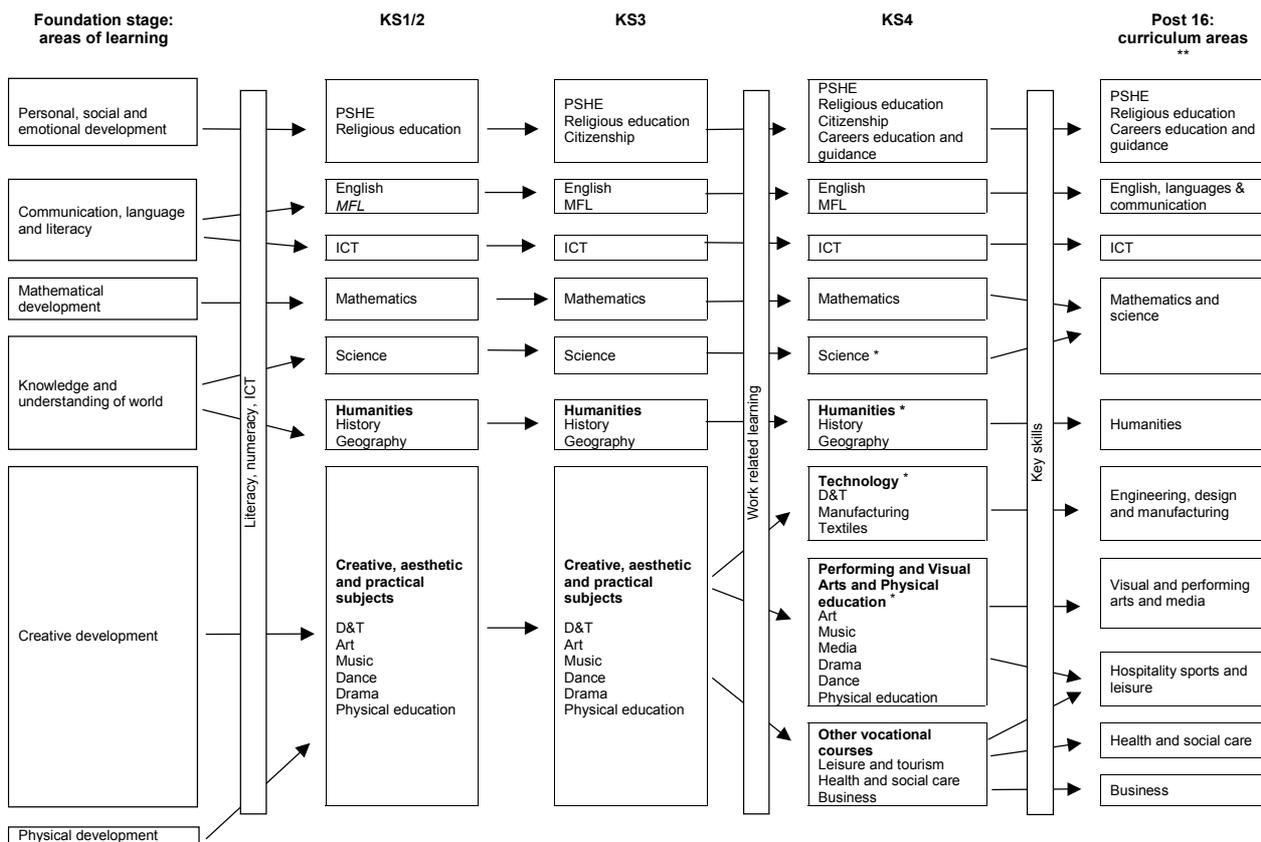
In **standard** and **enhanced** inspections:

- a common evaluation schedule applies to aspects of the school such as: standards achieved; teaching; the curriculum; the care, support and guidance of pupils; and leadership and management;
- the quality and standards of work seen in curriculum areas are evaluated; the areas, shown on page 5, are the areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage, and subjects - or clusters of subjects or courses - in other stages;
- standards and quality are always evaluated in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology in Key Stages 1-4; and
- a sample of sixth form subjects or courses is inspected in detail.

In **enhanced** inspections, the quality and standards in additional subjects or courses are evaluated and reported.

In enhanced inspections and the inspection of sixth forms, the numbers of subjects inspected in detail depend on the number of pupils in the school or in the sixth form respectively. OFSTED will publish rules on selecting subjects that inspectors must follow.

The arrangements for inspecting denominational religious education and collective worship under section 23 of the Act apply to both types of inspection.



* Includes applied subjects with a vocational bias.
 ** See distribution of subjects / course as in Sixth Form Supplement to the Handbook

The application of standard and enhanced inspection to different types of school

A **standard** inspection applies to:

- nursery schools;
- most primary and special schools, and to
- those secondary schools that previous inspection and more recent evidence suggest are more effective.

An **enhanced** inspection applies to:

- the majority of secondary schools, and to
- a minority of primary and special schools, usually the less effective.

Standard inspections are appropriate for all **nursery schools**. Here, the curriculum is based on the areas of learning of the foundation stage curriculum guidance.

In most **primary schools**, a standard inspection is sufficient to sample the whole curriculum, report in greater depth on the core subjects, and see a representative amount of teaching in all classes. An enhanced inspection is needed in some schools where the data

indicate that a more detailed diagnosis and assessment of teaching and learning across subjects of the curriculum would be helpful to the school.

In **secondary schools**, enhanced inspection will encompass the detailed evaluation of standards and quality in individual subjects and courses. Teachers are observed teaching less frequently than in primary schools; enhanced inspections allow the strengths and areas for improvement to be diagnosed in greater depth. In a minority of secondary schools, the previous inspection and other evidence will indicate that a standard inspection will be sufficient.

How schools are selected

OFSTED decides the timing of each school's inspection and the type of inspection (standard or enhanced) using the following factors, as appropriate:

- the findings of the last inspection;
- trends in performance over time;
- achievements in relation to similar schools; and
- performance in relation to national averages.

The selection criteria are expected to evolve over time as improved national data, including value-added measures, become available. All schools are inspected at least once in a six-year period.

The place of self-evaluation in inspection

Self-evaluation plays a significant part in informing the inspection about areas of strength and weakness in the school and about the effectiveness of leadership and management. The school's self-evaluation provides an important element of pre-inspection evidence.

In both **standard** and **enhanced** inspections, schools may, if they wish, nominate an area of work, a subject or an aspect, for more detailed inspection beyond the normal coverage. This should normally stem from the school's self-evaluation.

This element should be specified before the inspection when information about the school is collected, and will be discussed and, where possible, agreed with the registered inspector at the pre-inspection meeting with the school. More detailed guidance on this aspect of inspection will be provided.

In **enhanced** inspections, and for all inspections of sixth forms, the sample of subjects to be inspected in detail will be discussed with the school and will be informed by the school's self-evaluation.

Further information about the legal requirements for inspection

More detailed information about the legal basis for inspections can be found in the OFSTED publication '*School Inspection: A Guide to the Law*', which can be obtained from OFSTED Publications Centre, The Stationery Office, St Crispin's, Duke Street, Norwich NR3 1ED (Telephone: 07002 737833; Fax: 07002 693274)

PART 2: EVALUATION SCHEDULE: standard and enhanced inspections

This schedule applies in full to both standard and enhanced inspections, except for aspects enclosed in boxes, which should be included in enhanced inspections.

Inspectors must answer the question '**How well is the school doing and why?**' The evaluation schedule asks the key questions which inspectors must consider.

- 1. HOW GOOD IS THE SCHOOL?**
- 2. HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**
 - a) The school's results and pupils' achievements**
 - b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**
- 3. HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**
- 4. HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?**
- 5. HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR, SUPPORT AND GUIDE ITS PUPILS?**
- 6. HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**
- 7. HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**
- 8. WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE?**
- 9. THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**
- 10. OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES**
- 11. CHILDCARE AND OTHER SERVICES THAT THE SCHOOL PROVIDES**

1. HOW GOOD IS THE SCHOOL?

Inspectors must report on:

- the characteristics of the school**, highlighting distinctive features of the school, the pupils it serves and the local community;
- any particular issues for the inspection;**

and evaluate:

- the overall effectiveness of the school, and the value for money it provides;**
- the main strengths and areas for improvement of the school;**
- the extent to which the school has improved, declined or remained static since the last inspection;**
- parents' and pupils' views of the school;**
- compliance with care standards, if appropriate, and the quality of other services provided by the school.**

2. HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

2.1 The school's results and pupils' achievements

Inspectors must interpret:

the school's results and other performance data, highlighting any variations among different groups of pupils and in different subjects;

trends in results over time,

considering, as appropriate:

- *how results compare with national averages or expectations;*
- *how results compare with those of similar schools;*
- *whether the school's standards are rising, staying at the same level or falling;*
- *how challenging are the targets the school sets;*
- *how well the school is doing in hitting the targets.*

Inspectors must evaluate:

standards of work seen, highlighting strengths and weaknesses in what pupils know, understand and can do, in:

- the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage;
- curriculum areas in Key Stages 1-4, particularly English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT);

and other subjects inspected in detail
--

- subjects and courses inspected in the sixth form.

how well pupils achieve, taking account of the progress pupils make, the level of demands made of them and other relevant factors,

considering, as appropriate:

- *how far pupils meet National Curriculum standards, the local agreed syllabus for religious education, any examination or assessment objectives;*
- *whether children in the Foundation Stage are likely to reach the expected goals in each area of learning by the end of the stage;*
- *how much progress pupils make between stages;*
- *standards in different courses, subjects or areas of the curriculum;*
- *the achievement of different groups and individuals (including those of different ethnic groups or with special educational needs, and differences by gender).*

2.2 Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

Inspectors must evaluate pupils':

□ attitudes to school, their attendance and behaviour,

considering, as appropriate, the extent to which pupils:

- *are keen and eager to come to school;*
- *show interest in school life, and are involved in the range of activities the school provides;*
- *behave well in lessons and around the school and are courteous, trustworthy and show respect for property;*
- *have high levels of attendance.*

□ relationships with others, their personal development and the values they demonstrate,

considering, as appropriate, the extent to which pupils:

- *form constructive and harmonious relationships with one another, with teachers and other adults;*
- *resist and reject oppressive behaviour, such as bullying, sexism and racism;*
- *reflect on what they do and understand its impact on others;*
- *understand and respect other people's feelings, values and beliefs;*
- *develop the attitudes and skills, including responsibility and independence, that will set them in good stead in later life.*

3. HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

Inspectors must evaluate:

□ **the quality of teaching and learning**, highlighting how teaching helps or hinders effective learning and how well it meets the needs of all pupils, in:

- the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage;
- curriculum areas in Key Stages 1-4, particularly English, mathematics, science and ICT;

other subjects inspected in detail;

- the work sampled in curriculum areas and specific subjects and courses inspected in the sixth form;

considering the extent to which teachers:

- *show good subject knowledge and understanding in the way they present and discuss their subject;*
- *plan effectively, setting clear objectives that pupils understand;*
- *stimulate, interest and engage pupils;*
- *challenge and inspire pupils, expecting the most of them;*
- *use methods and resources which enable all pupils to learn effectively;*
- *use books, information and communication technology and other resources, effectively;*
- *have a good relationships with pupils, manage them well and insist on high standards of behaviour;*
- *use assistants and other support staff well;*
- *assess pupils' work thoroughly and constructively so that, as individuals, they understand how well they are doing and how they can improve;*
- *use homework effectively to reinforce and extend what is learned in school;*
- *teach in a way that promotes equality of opportunity.*

and pupils:

- *acquire new knowledge or skills in their work, develop ideas and increase their understanding;*
- *apply intellectual, physical or creative effort, show interest in their work, are able to sustain concentration and think and learn for themselves;*
- *are productive and work at a good pace;*
- *understand what they are doing, how well they have done and how they can improve.*

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

Inspectors must evaluate:

☐ the quality, breadth and balance of opportunities for learning,

considering, as appropriate, the extent to which the school:

- *has a curriculum that meets statutory requirements, including provision for religious education;*
- *provides a broad range of worthwhile opportunities which meet the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of pupils, including those having special educational needs;*
- *effectively provides for personal and social education, including health education, sex education and attention to drug misuse;*
- *provides enrichment through its extra-curricular provision, including support for learning outside the school day;*
- *is inclusive, by ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all pupils;*
- *has constructive curricular links with the community, other schools and colleges;*
- *prepares pupils effectively for subsequent stages of education, employment or further study beyond school.*

☐ how well the school cultivates pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development,

considering, as appropriate, the extent to which the school:

- *provides pupils with knowledge of and insights into values and beliefs, and enables them to reflect on their experiences so as to develop their spiritual awareness and self-knowledge;*
- *promotes principles which distinguish right from wrong;*
- *encourages pupils to take responsibility, show initiative and develop an understanding of living in a community;*
- *teaches pupils to appreciate their cultural traditions and the diversity and richness of other cultures.*

☐ how well the provision of resources meets the needs of the curriculum,

considering, as appropriate, the extent to which:

- *has sufficient teachers and support staff with qualifications and experience to match the demands of the curriculum;*
- *has accommodation that allows the curriculum to be taught effectively;*
- *the resources available to meet the needs of the school's pupils and the curriculum.*

5. HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR, SUPPORT AND GUIDE ITS PUPILS?

Inspectors must evaluate:

☐ the steps taken to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety,

considering, as appropriate, the extent to which the school:

- *has effective procedures for the protection of pupils that are in line with locally agreed arrangements;*
- *ensures pupils work in a healthy and safe environment;*
- *takes effective steps to promote good behaviour, and to eliminate oppressive behaviour including all forms of harassment and bullying.*

☐ the monitoring and evaluation of pupils' academic and personal development, and their support and guidance,

considering, as appropriate, the extent to which the school:

- *has effective arrangements for monitoring and evaluating pupils' achievements;*
- *provides effective support, advice and guidance informed by the monitoring of pupils' achievements;*
- *uses its assessment information to guide planning;*
- *has effective induction arrangements for pupils;*
- *provides effective careers education and guidance for pupils in secondary schools.*

☐ the attendance of pupils and the effectiveness with which the school promotes good attendance.

☐ the effectiveness of the school's care arrangements for young children and those who board, where provision is subject to the Care Standards Act;

considering, as appropriate, the extent to which:

- *the arrangements meets the relevant care standards;*
- *provision contributes to pupils' personal development and their learning.*

6. HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

Inspectors must evaluate:

□ parents' views of the school,

considering the extent to which:

- *parents are satisfied with what the school provides and achieves.*

□ the effectiveness of the school's links with parents,

considering, as appropriate, the extent to which:

- *parents are provided with good-quality information about the school, and particularly about pupils' standards and achievement;*
- *links with parents, including the use of home-school agreements, contribute to pupils' learning at school and at home.*

7. HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

Inspectors must evaluate:

- the effectiveness of the leadership provided by the headteacher, governing body and key staff in creating a learning community and promoting high achievement,**

considering, as appropriate, the extent to which:

- *there is clarity of vision and purpose which is communicated throughout the school;*
- *staff and pupils are motivated towards a common goal of effective learning;*
- *leadership is effective at all levels in the school;*
- *governors fulfil their statutory duties in helping to shape the direction of the school and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses;*
- *there is an effective policy for promoting fairness and equality, especially racial equality.*

- how well the school is managed,**

considering, as appropriate, the extent to which:

- *the school monitors and evaluates its effectiveness, and teaching and learning, rigorously;*
- *performance measures, data and management information are used well to support monitoring, evaluation and improvement;*
- *improvement planning is effective, based on clear and accurate identification of priorities for action;*
- *staff performance management is effective and consistent with the school's priorities for improvement;*
- *the school effectively develops the expertise of all staff through induction and training;*
- *the recruitment, retention, deployment and workload of staff are well managed;*
- *sound financial management enables the school to achieve its educational priorities;*
- *specific grants are used effectively for their designated purposes;*
- *the school seeks and acts on the views of those in it and those who rely on it;*
- *the best value principles of comparison, challenge, consultation and competition are applied in the school's management, procurement and use of services and resources.*

8. WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE?

The report must include:

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

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

Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage Curriculum

Where evidence allows, inspectors must evaluate:

- the standards, how well pupils achieve, and the quality of teaching and learning in each area of learning, and any other factors which have a bearing on what is achieved, highlighting any differences in provision or achievement for pupils under five in nursery, reception or mixed-age classes.**
- changes since the previous inspection.**

Areas of the curriculum, subjects and courses in Key Stages 1-4

Where evidence allows, inspectors must evaluate:

- in each curriculum area or subject, the standards seen, how well pupils achieve, and the quality of teaching and learning, highlighting strengths are areas need improvement.**

For English, mathematics, science and ICT, and any other subjects inspected in detail, other factors that have a bearing on what is achieved, especially leadership and management in the subject, and any changes since the previous inspection, should be evaluated.

Curriculum areas, subjects and courses in the sixth form

Inspectors must interpret the examination and accreditation results and evaluate:

- in each curriculum area, the range of provision and take-up of subjects and courses, and the quality of teaching and learning;**
- for each subject or course inspected in detail, the standards of work seen, how well students achieve, the quality of teaching and learning, the effectiveness of leadership and management in the subject, and any other aspects of the quality of education that have a bearing on what is achieved.**

For areas of the curriculum, and each subject or course inspected in detail, inspectors should evaluate the overall quality of provision, judged in terms of its effectiveness.

In determining their judgements, inspectors should use the criteria set out elsewhere in the Evaluation Schedule.

10. OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

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

- overall effectiveness, including, as appropriate:**
 - **the impact on pupils' achievement;**
 - **the quality of what is provided.**

In determining their judgements, inspectors should use criteria set out elsewhere in the Evaluation Schedule, or specific criteria published by OFSTED for evaluating the specified feature.

11. CHILDCARE AND OTHER SERVICES THAT THE SCHOOL PROVIDES

Where the school provides services during or beyond the school day, such as care arrangements that are subject to the Care Standards, and these are inspected at the same time as the inspection of the school, the report will include a summary of:

- compliance with each of the required National Standards for Childcare;**
- a brief evaluation of the quality of the provision.**

PART 3: THE CONDUCT OF INSPECTIONS

This part of the Framework sets out how inspections are carried out, the roles of inspectors, inspection contractors and OFSTED in the inspection process. It covers:

The inspection process
Inspection outcomes
Inspectors and inspection teams
What inspectors and inspection contractors do
The part OFSTED plays in inspection

The main source of information to help schools, inspectors and others to understand what is inspected and how inspections are run is the *Inspection Handbook*. This is published in three versions:

The Handbook for Inspecting Primary and Nursery Schools
The Handbook for Inspecting Secondary Schools
The Handbook for Inspecting Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units

These can be obtained through bookshops or the Stationery Office.

THE INSPECTION PROCESS

How inspections are arranged

OFSTED enters into contracts with inspection providers ('contractors') to undertake inspections. Just before an inspection, OFSTED consults the appropriate authority for the school about the inspection and any specific issue the school wishes to nominate for inspection. As a result, OFSTED prepares a specification for each inspection that includes the number of inspector days to be spent on direct inspection in the school. The contractor for the inspection forms a team of inspectors with a range of expertise and experience to match the specification, and sets the date of the inspection with the school.

The initial consultation with the school will also identify where the school makes provision which requires inspection under Part XA of the Children Act.

What happens before an inspection?

(a) First contacts

The registered inspector, who is responsible for leading the inspection, or the contractor, must contact the appropriate authority and the headteacher of the school to arrange a preliminary visit and to request the documents needed to prepare for the visit. The information and documents required are listed in the *Inspection Handbook*. To keep the demands on schools to a minimum, registered inspectors **must not** request any further information.

As early as possible, the reporting inspector should discuss with the school arrangements for seeking the views of interested groups, such as the governors, parents, pupils and staff, and the Local Education Authority (LEA).

(b) Preliminary visit to the school by the registered inspector

The registered inspector must make an initial visit to help prepare for the inspection. At least one full day should be spent in the school, and the visit(s) may include other inspectors. The registered inspector will take a particular interest in the school's self-evaluation.

During the visit, the registered inspector must finalise any issue nominated by the school for inspection. The registered inspector will also agree with the school any subjects or courses that are to be inspected as part of an **enhanced** inspection, and subjects to be inspected in the sixth form.

The registered inspector must brief the staff, and any members of the appropriate authority available, on the inspection process and their involvement in it. This is also an opportunity to talk with staff and pupils about the school.

The registered inspector must also establish what community/care provision is made that may require co-ordination of the inspection with an inspection of the care arrangements.

(c) The views of parents, pupils and other partners in the school's work

The appropriate authority must arrange a meeting between the registered inspector and those parents of pupils at the school who wish to attend. The appropriate authority should

give parents as much notice as is practicable. This meeting must take place before the date on which the inspection begins. The registered inspector must seek parents' views on the aspects of the school specified in the *Inspection Handbook*.

Where the school regularly surveys its parents, pupils and others, it should be invited to provide evidence of the findings. The school should also be invited to distribute the questionnaires for parents for return, in confidence, to the registered inspector before the meeting with parents. [The views of pupils may be sought in a variety of ways, for example through meeting groups of pupils and issuing questionnaires. We are developing proposals and shall consult further on this.]

The appropriate authority must inform the LEA, the appropriate initial teacher training partner institution, and pyramid schools that the school is due to be inspected, inviting any comments on the school to be sent to the registered inspector before the inspection.

(d) The pre-inspection commentary

From the pre-inspection evidence, the registered inspector will prepare a pre-inspection commentary on the school including hypotheses to be tested. This must be shared with the school before the inspection. This gives the school an opportunity to contribute evidence relevant to the issues for inspection and to become fully involved in constructive dialogue about the inspection and its findings.

What happens during an inspection?

(a) Gathering evidence

Inspectors must gather an adequate sample of evidence from observations of lessons and from other sources to make the necessary judgements. Detailed guidance on how to sample the work of the school is included in the *Inspection Handbook*.

The time allocated for inspection must be used by inspectors for gathering first-hand evidence. Time must not be taken from inspection for team meetings. Most of the inspection team's time on site will be spent observing lessons, sampling pupils' work and teachers' records, and talking to pupils. In addition, inspectors will talk with staff and others involved with the school's work, and study documentary evidence. Policies, procedures and systems are important, but inspectors must focus on their effectiveness. Some parents may request to see the registered or other inspectors during the inspection.

(b) Feedback to teachers

Inspectors must discuss with teachers the work they see and offer oral feedback, as described in the *Inspection Handbook*.

(c) Access to information in the school

Information held by the school must be freely available for inspectors to see. Teachers' appraisal records and their individual objectives are confidential.

(d) Inspection in other schools

Where significant provision is made for pupils elsewhere, for example through link courses or shared teaching arrangements with other schools or colleges, inspectors will need to

sample this work. Inspectors have right of access to other schools in these circumstances. [Proposals in the Education Bill 2002 widen the right of access to other establishments where provision is made for 11-16 year-old pupils. The protocols that should be followed are included in the *Inspection Handbooks*.]

What happens after an inspection?

(a) Corporate judgements

The overall findings of the inspection must reflect the balance of evidence considered by the inspection team. The team should reach its final judgements only when all first-hand evidence has been collected and considered. The registered inspector must hold a team meeting after the inspection to reach these corporate judgements. This meeting must only take place after the inspectors individually have had time to reflect on their findings. The contents of the summary report must represent the corporate view of the whole inspection team including any members who were not present at the team meeting.

(b) Feedback to the school and the appropriate authority

Once the inspection team has formed its judgements about the school, the registered inspector must offer to discuss the findings of the inspection with the headteacher, who may invite any staff of the school to be present. The appropriate authority must be offered a similar discussion.

The purpose of these discussions is to share with those most concerned the outcomes of the inspection and to provide an opportunity for clarification of the judgements and of what the school should do to improve. It is customary to offer the headteacher brief interim feedback in advance of these more formal meetings, which take place some days after the inspection.

(c) Written report

A written report and a summary of the report must be sent to the appropriate authority within six weeks of the end of the inspection, as required by regulation. The school has one week to comment on this draft. Copies must also be sent to all those specified by law.

(d) Action plans

When the appropriate authority receives the inspection report, it has 40 working days to prepare an action plan in response to the report. This period excludes holiday periods of more than one week. The action plan must show what action the school will take to bring about improvements in response to the inspection report under the heading *What must the school do to improve?*

Except for schools requiring special measures, or those having serious weaknesses or an inadequate sixth form, the action plan may be accommodated within a revised school development plan provided that matters for improvement arising from the inspection are identified clearly.

The appropriate authority must send a copy of the action plan or the revised development plan, or a summary, to the parents of all pupils registered at the school. A copy must also be sent to OFSTED where the school is judged to require special measures, have serious weaknesses or to have an inadequate sixth form.

(e) Discussion of the inspection findings with parents

The appropriate authority for the school is encouraged to arrange a meeting to explain the inspection findings to parents and what the school proposes to do in response to the findings.

INSPECTION OUTCOMES

All inspection teams must reach an overall judgement about the quality, standards and effectiveness of the school. The full range of judgements should be used, from *excellent* to *requiring special measures*. Outstanding schools will have consistent strengths across the school. Many schools will have a number of strong features, but also some definite areas for improvement. A minority, at present, is not achieving well enough.

The inspection report and summary

(a) The style and content of written reports

The inspection report and the summary should answer the main questions in the evaluation *Schedule*. They must be presented in the format set out by OFSTED and issued to inspection contractors.

The text, balance and tone of the report must reflect the school as it is. The report must follow the prescribed structure, but its content and wording should not follow any pre-determined formula. Reports should be well argued, written in plain English and based convincingly on the evidence gathered before and during the inspection. They should provide the school with a clear basis for action. They should focus on what the school achieves and seek to explain why the standards achieved are as they are and what could be improved.

The summary must be readable and informative so that parents gain a fair and accurate assessment of the school.

(b) Checking the report for accuracy

The report must be factually accurate. To ensure this, the final pre-publication text of the written report must be sent to the school to check its factual accuracy. This should be done after the oral feedback meetings have been held with the headteacher and the governing body. The school must be given five working days to comment on the draft. Factual errors must be corrected. Only if factual errors have a direct bearing on particular inspection judgements should the inspection team consider revising their judgements. Otherwise, there must be no modification of the judgements in the report.

Schools that are not achieving well enough

If inspectors have significant concerns about the quality of a school, it will be necessary for the registered inspector, with the team, to consider:

- whether or not the school is failing, or likely to fail, to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and thus to require special measures;
- whether or not the school, although providing an acceptable standard of education, nevertheless has serious weaknesses in one or more areas of its work;
- whether or not the school, although not identified as requiring special measures or

having serious weaknesses, is judged to be underachieving.

Where the school has a sixth form, inspectors must consider and report where, even if overall the school is providing an acceptable standard of education, it has an inadequate sixth form.

A school has an inadequate sixth form where it:

- is failing, or likely to fail, to provide an acceptable standard of education for pupils over compulsory school age; or
- provides an acceptable standard of education but has significant weaknesses in one or more of its activities for pupils over compulsory school age.

Where inspectors judge that a school requires **special measures**, or has an **inadequate sixth form**, and HMCI agrees, further legislation applies. In the case of a maintained school, the LEA is required to support the school and prepare its own commentary on the school's action plan and a statement of the action the LEA itself intends to take.

These schools, and those judged to have **serious weaknesses** or to be **underachieving**, are also subject to monitoring by HMI. Schools with serious weaknesses that make too little progress are likely to be declared in need of special measures following an inspection by HMI.

Schools with **inadequate sixth forms** will have their sixth form re-inspected within two years by HMI.

The procedures to be adopted in such cases, and the criteria on which to base a conclusion that a school falls into these categories, are set out in the Inspection Handbook.

INSPECTORS AND INSPECTION TEAMS

Inspectors

Inspections are led by registered inspectors, who lead teams of one or more enrolled inspectors.

The inspection team must include at least one inspector, a lay inspector, without personal experience in the management of a school or the provision of education in a school (other than as a governor or voluntary helper). All inspectors, including the lay inspector, can take part in all aspects of the inspection. The lay inspector may not, however, take lead responsibility for reporting on a subject.

The registered inspector must make sure that no member of the team has a connection with the school that might reasonably be taken to raise doubts about the ability of that inspector to act impartially.

The lay inspector must spend at least one day, or ten per cent of the total inspection time (whichever is the greater), on direct inspection. The maximum time allocation for the lay inspector is four days (or five, in schools with sixth forms). In inspections of **very small schools**, the team may consist of the registered inspector and a lay inspector only. A lay inspector who is a registered inspector may not lead a team in the inspection of a school for which fewer than six inspector days have been allocated.

Inspectors must satisfy OFSTED's requirements, and be endorsed, to take the lead responsibility for the inspection and reporting of particular subjects, courses, curriculum areas or some other specific elements of inspection.

Inspection teams

In schools with children in the **Foundation Stage**, at least one member of the team must be endorsed to lead the inspection and reporting of this aspect of the school's work.

In **Key Stages 1 and 2**, the team must include the expertise and experience to inspect across the full age-range present in the school. The team must include inspectors competent to judge all subjects and aspects of the primary curriculum.

In **Key Stages 3 and 4** inspectors' subject knowledge should cover as wide a range of subjects as possible. The team must include inspectors competent to inspect English, mathematics, science and ICT, and the team must include sufficient expertise to cover subjects in other curriculum areas. In these key stages, and **the sixth** form, Inspectors must be endorsed to lead and report on specific subjects and courses.

For the inspection of **special schools**, teams must have a high level of expertise in the main types of need or disability represented in the school, together with a reasonable balance of expertise in subjects.

The inspection team in all schools must include one or more inspectors responsible for co-ordinating the inspection of:

- equal opportunities, and the promotion of race equality;
- the education of pupils with special educational needs;
- where relevant, the education of pupils under five; and

- where relevant, the education of pupils having English as an additional language.

OFSTED employs qualified childcare inspectors who inspect childcare provision that is subject to registration and inspection associated with the Children, and Care Standards, Acts.

WHAT INSPECTORS AND INSPECTION CONTRACTORS MUST DO

Use of the inspection Framework and Handbooks

Registered inspectors and all members of the inspection team must conduct the inspection according to the requirements of this *Framework*, including the *Evaluation Schedule*, and the contract for the inspection. Inspectors must also reflect the guidance provided in the *Inspection Handbooks*.

HMCI requires all inspectors to meet the requirements set out in this *Framework* as a condition of their registration as a registered inspector or enrolment as a team inspector. All inspectors must be familiar with their statutory obligations under the School Inspections Act, regulations and subsequent legislation.

Inspections must be carried out in a way that secures the full co-operation of the school and its staff. Inspectors must inspire confidence in their work and their judgements, and create a climate in which the inspection process makes a valuable contribution to improvement.

Inspectors must:

- be thoroughly prepared for the inspection, and understand the context of the school and its pupils;
- have thorough knowledge and understanding of the *Framework*, the guidance on its use, the subjects and aspects they inspect, and the age-range of the pupils concerned; and
- uphold the highest professional standards required by the Code of Conduct, and fulfil OFSTED's Quality Guarantee to teachers and other staff (see page 41).

The Code of Conduct

The revised **Code of Conduct** which follows sets out the principles which govern the professional work of inspectors. Inspectors must:

- evaluate the work of the school objectively, be impartial and have no previous connection with the school, its staff or governors which could undermine their objectivity;
- report honestly and fairly, ensuring that judgements accurately and reliably reflect what the school achieves and does;
- carry out their work with integrity, treating all those they meet with courtesy and sensitivity;
- do all they can to minimise stress, in particular by ensuring that no teacher is over-inspected and by not asking for documents to be prepared specially for the inspection;
- act with the best interests and the well-being of pupils and staff as priorities;

- maintain purposeful and productive dialogue with staff, and communicate judgements of teachers' and the school's work, clearly and frankly; and
- respect the confidentiality of information, particularly about teachers and the judgements made about their individual teaching.

Registered inspectors and inspection contractors must ensure that their inspection teams abide by this code. This is to ensure that schools and their staff are guaranteed an inspection of high quality.

The evidence base

Before the inspection the registered inspector and other members of the inspection team consider a range of information about the school. Sufficient time must be given for the school to gather the necessary documents together and to complete the school forms. Pre-inspection evidence comes from:

- forms completed by the school before the inspection; these include:
 - information about the school;
 - an audit by the appropriate authority of its compliance with statutory requirements;
 - a self-evaluation form, which includes the school's view of itself and how it came to its view;
- the previous inspection report and action plan;
- the performance and assessment (PANDA) report on the school provided by OFSTED; and
- the views of parents, pupils, staff and other partners in the school's work.

Throughout the inspection, inspectors gather a wide range of first-hand and other evidence. This is recorded on standard forms. They include:

- the *Pre-inspection Commentary*, completed before the inspection begins;
- *Evidence Forms*, on which all first-hand evidence collected during the inspection is recorded; and
- a record of judgements made by the team.

All these documents, together with any briefings, plans or instructions prepared by the registered inspector, form the **evidence base** for the inspection. The registered inspector is responsible for compiling the evidence base.

The standard and quality of inspections

To make sure that the inspection satisfies OFSTED's quality standards, registered inspectors and contractors must ensure that:

- **judgements** about the school and what it needs to do to improve are fair and accurate;
- **communication** of inspection findings is clear and helpful to the school;
- **evidence** is secure and substantiates all inspection judgements; and
- the **conduct of the inspection** is to a high professional standard.

Judgements about the school and what it needs to do to improve are fair and accurate when:

- they evaluate the school's performance and any trends, and are clear about the quality and standards of the school and its strengths and weaknesses;
- they account for the school's effectiveness coherently and convincingly;
- they identify issues that are central to school improvement and provide teachers and the school with a clear basis for action;
- they are fully consistent with the inspection evidence, reflect reliable use of the criteria in the *Framework*, and include main conclusions about the school that are corporately agreed;
- initial hypotheses derive clearly from the pre-inspection evidence and raise important questions about the school's performance; and
- they cover the relevant requirements in the *Framework* and the contract specification.

Communication of inspection findings is clear and helpful to the school when:

- orally and in writing, judgements are conveyed in straightforward language readily understandable by the intended audience, particularly parents and governors in the case of the written report; and
- judgements are expressed unequivocally, explained convincingly and illustrated judiciously.

Evidence is secure and substantiates all inspection judgements when it:

- is sufficient in quantity and range to be representative of the school's work, and includes substantial first-hand observation of pupils' and teachers' work and discussions with them and others;
- involves careful analysis and interpretation of all inspection information, including quantifiable indicators, the previous inspection report and the views of parents, pupils and others; and
- is well documented to provide a record which underpins and secures the inspection.

The conduct of the inspection is to a high professional standard when inspectors:

- are thoroughly prepared for inspection, and understand the context of the school, the requirements of the *Framework*, and the subjects and aspects of the curriculum, and the characteristics of the pupils concerned;
- uphold the Code of Conduct and ensure that the Quality Guarantee for schools is met; and
- through the professional relationships they develop with the school community, especially teachers, contribute to the value of the inspection to the school.

What inspectors must do before the inspection

A considerable amount of work takes place before the inspection. One purpose is for all inspectors to find out as much as they can about the school before they start inspecting it. In all inspections, the following activities are essential in addition to direct inspection of the school. Contractors will be required to show that they have planned and allowed time for this work. The registered inspector must:

- prepare for an initial visit to the school, based on an analysis of the previous inspection report, the *PANDA report*, the inspection forms completed by the school and the school's prospectus and management or development plan. This will enable maximum use to be made of the initial visit and should provide a good foundation to the *Pre-inspection Commentary*;
- visit the school before the inspection to meet the headteacher, staff, a range of pupils and the appropriate authority in order to discuss the school and to brief them about the inspection. This visit provides considerable information about the nature and work of the school and its view of its own performance, and creates an important sense of partnership with the school;
- hold a pre-inspection meeting with parents. This meeting must be completed before the date agreed for the inspection to begin, thus ensuring parents' views are fully considered;
- ensure that the views of pupils and others involved with the school are fully taken into account in evaluating the pre-inspection evidence;
- prepare for the inspection after the initial visit, including a briefing for the team, planning the deployment of the team and completing the pre-inspection commentary. This is to ensure the effective use of time during the inspection;
- hold a pre-inspection team meeting for all or most of the team before the inspection commences;
- brief all members of the team fully, before the inspection starts, on issues raised by parents; and
- liaise, where appropriate, with inspectors undertaking any parallel inspection of childcare provision.

Other members of the inspection team must also be allowed planned time for completion of pre-inspection work agreed with the registered inspector.

What inspectors must do during the inspection

Inspectors must focus on gathering first-hand evidence when they are working in the school. The prime sources of inspection evidence include performance and other data, pupils' work and evidence from observation. Secondary sources, which vary in importance according to issues that emerge during the inspection, include documentary plans, policies, procedures and records.

During their time in school, inspectors will:

- observe lessons in progress and undertake other observations elsewhere;
- analyse samples of pupils' current and recent work;
- hold discussions with pupils, staff (especially those with management responsibilities) and governors;
- analyse documents provided by the school, including teachers' records of pupils and their progress;
- analyse the school's records relating to pupils with special educational needs, including individual education plans, statements, annual reviews and transitional reviews; and
- discuss the work they see and offer oral feedback as described in the *Inspection Handbook*.

The registered inspector or other inspectors should be available to meet parents or others, where any reasonable requests to discuss issues concerning the school may be made.

Preparation for feedback to individual teachers, those responsible for aspects of the school's work such as subject co-ordinators or heads of department, and the feedback itself, must be undertaken within the specified number of inspection days.

What inspectors must do after the inspection

Contractors must also show they have planned and allowed time for the following work. Registered inspectors must:

- hold a final meeting of the inspection team to agree and record the corporate team judgements about the school. In all inspections, final judgements must be agreed only after all first-hand evidence has been gathered. Time must be allowed for inspectors to reflect on their findings before the team meeting;
- attend meetings after the inspection to discuss the inspection findings with the senior management of the school and with the appropriate authority; and
- write the report and its summary, present the final draft of the report to the school, and, in the light of any responses, finalise the report.

Preparation for feedback to those responsible for aspects of the school's work, such as subject co-ordinators or heads of department, and to individual teachers, and the feedback itself, must be undertaken within the specified number of inspection days.

Other members of the inspection team must also be allowed planned time for completion of post-inspection work in support of the tasks listed above.

Competition for inspection work

Inspection contractors form a wide-ranging group of organisations. Some are private companies, partnerships and individuals, while others represent public sector organisations such as local education authorities. The common feature of all contractors is that they must tender for work in advance, in fair competition with other contractors.

The basis for awarding contracts

Contractors submit tenders for a fixed number of inspections over a period of time. OFSTED decides which tenders to accept using a combination of factors that include:

- the quality of the inspection teams the contractor intends to use;
- the contractor's track record in previous inspections;
- the contractor's management plan; and
- the price of the tender.

Employment of inspectors

Inspection contractors employ the inspectors who lead and take part in inspections. Inspectors must be selected so that all the evaluation requirements can be met effectively. Contractors must observe the requirements of equal opportunities legislation in selecting inspectors for employment.

The registered inspector and the contractor are responsible for making sure that inspectors are fit, proper, competent and effective in their work. Both are also responsible for ensuring that inspectors conduct the inspection according to the requirements of this *Framework* and of the contract for the inspection. They must also make sure that inspectors' practice

reflects the guidance provided in the *Inspection Handbooks* and the *Code of Conduct*.

Negotiation with schools

The contractor is responsible for negotiating with the school the arrangements for the inspection, although this may be done through the registered inspector. Before the inspection the contractor must:

- reach agreement with the school about the date of the inspection;
- confirm that no changes have taken place which would affect the inspection specification;
- confirm whether the inspection will include religious education and collective worship or whether these will be the subject of a section 23 inspection; and
- ensure that the school knows before the inspection the composition of the inspection team and the days when each member of the team will be on-site. The contractor must provide the school with details about each inspector as far in advance of the inspection as possible, and take appropriate action in discussion with the school where concerns are raised about the proposed team membership.

Administration of the inspection and the production of the report

Contractors provide administrative support for the registered inspector and the inspection team. This must include the transmission of parts of the *Record of Evidence* to OFSTED, or its agent, in the specified electronic format.

The contractor must make sure that the registered inspector delivers the inspection report to the appropriate authority on time. The contractor must also make sure that the inspection report and summary are sent to OFSTED, or its agent, as specified in the inspection contract.

Contractors are required to retain the complete *Record of Evidence* for 12 months from the date of inspection. OFSTED may call on this record at any time during that period.

Quality assurance

This *Framework* forms the basis for assuring the quality of inspections and it promotes OFSTED's Quality Guarantee to teachers (see page 41). It is reinforced by a Quality Assurance Standard for contractors. This is published separately and comprises a set of broad requirements of contractors for assuring the quality of inspections and reports.

Complaints

The contractor must have procedures to deal with complaints from schools and others about the inspections it carries out. Only if a complaint is unresolved by the contractor should OFSTED become involved (see page 35).

THE PART OFSTED PLAYS IN INSPECTION

OFSTED's functions in relation to inspections are interrelated and cover:

- managing and administering the inspection system;
- training inspectors;
- maintaining the register of inspectors who can lead inspections and the list of enrolled inspectors, including lay inspectors, who can take part in inspections as a member of an inspection team;
- assuring the quality of inspections and the work of inspectors and inspection contractors;
- collating inspection data to provide benchmarks to inform future inspections, HMCI's *Annual Report* and advice to the Secretary of State;
- arrangements for combining inspections with other types of inspection such as those of childcare conducted under Part XA of the Children Act.

Administration of the inspection system

OFSTED administers all contracts for inspections, selects which schools are to be inspected, and decides the five-week period (known as the 'inspection window') during the school year in which the inspection will take place. Once this is determined, OFSTED consults the appropriate authority of the school about the inspection.

Shortly before each inspection, OFSTED makes available to the inspection contractor a copy of the school's latest PANDA report for inspection purposes only. Schools, whether they are being inspected or not, have regular access to their own PANDA report. It contains a range of information held by OFSTED about the performance of the school, including national and similar school comparisons.

Once an inspection has been completed, OFSTED collects all the data from the inspection and uses these for national monitoring, research and the provision of advice.

Training, enrolment and registration

OFSTED is responsible for making sure inspectors are fit and proper persons to carry out inspections and that they are competent in their work. In addition, HMCI must be satisfied that each inspector has satisfactorily completed a course of training provided by, or complying with arrangements approved by, OFSTED. The competence of potential inspectors on such courses is assessed.

OFSTED maintains a list of such inspectors including lay inspectors, known as enrolled inspectors, who can assist in carrying out inspections as a team member. Team members require specific endorsement, in addition to being enrolled, to lead and report on individual subjects and some specific aspects of inspection. OFSTED maintains a record of endorsements where inspectors have met the necessary requirements.

OFSTED also has a register of inspectors who, in addition, have satisfied HMCI that they are fit and proper persons to undertake the role of registered inspector and who are competent and effective in conducting inspections. Inspectors can be registered following the successful completion of an assessment of their ability to lead inspections.

Assuring the quality of inspections

OFSTED has a statutory role in assuring the quality of inspections. It does this by:

- establishing and keeping under review the *Framework*, and the *Inspection Handbooks*;
- setting up quality standards for inspections, the work of contractors and the provision of training;
- providing inspectors with up-to-date guidance on the inspection process and how the quality standards can best be met; and
- monitoring the work of registered and enrolled inspectors and of contractors.

Help and advice

OFSTED provides support to contractors and inspectors. During office hours, OFSTED runs a number of helplines covering contracting, inspection quality and schools where there are serious concerns about the education provided for the pupils or students.

In addition, OFSTED provides regular newsletters for contractors, updates of information for registered and enrolled inspectors and occasional publications to support inspectors and to help improve the quality of inspection.

Monitoring and assessing inspections and inspectors

HMI monitor and assess:

- the quality of inspections and their conduct;
- the competence and effectiveness of registered and enrolled inspectors;
- the quality and standard of inspection reports;
- the contractors' quality assurance arrangements.

Assessment takes place against the criteria for the quality and standard of inspection.

Assessments are confidential to the inspectors and contractors concerned. Where a report is judged to be seriously misleading, or an inspection is seriously flawed, the school will be notified and may be offered a re-inspection.

HMI have access to all elements of an inspection and may visit an inspection, at little or no notice, to monitor the work of the inspection team. The registered inspector and other inspectors must give HMI all necessary co-operation, and allow access to any materials relating to the inspection and the evidence base.

Similar procedures are in place to monitor the quality of the work of contractors. This involves other OFSTED staff in addition to HMI.

Deregistration

Most registered inspectors carry out their role professionally and manage inspections of at least satisfactory quality. Where this is not the case, HMCI may remove the name of that inspector from the register. Conditions for deregistration are given in *School Inspection: a Guide to the Law*, and appeals procedures are in place. Similarly, team inspectors may be removed from the roll.

Use of inspection data

OFSTED holds data from all inspections electronically and it regularly analyses the information to help construct HMCI's *Annual Report to Parliament*. Other analyses are done to provide the basis for surveys by HMI and to contribute to the advice they provide to ministers and the education system. Inspection reports may be accessed through OFSTED's website.

Production and use of PANDA reports

Before an inspection, OFSTED provides the school's PANDA report to the inspection contractor for the inspection. A National Summary Data Report provides a wide range of data about many aspects of the *Evaluation Schedule*. Making use of earlier inspection data, OFSTED provides a range of other benchmarks to help registered inspectors manage good inspections.

School inspection survey

After each inspection, the school is invited to evaluate the quality of its inspection and report. This gives OFSTED a detailed assessment of schools' views of inspection and enables HMI to follow up any problems.

COMPLAINING ABOUT AN INSPECTION

The vast majority of inspections are carried out successfully and without incident. However, some schools, or other interested parties, may feel dissatisfied with some aspect of their inspection or inspection report. OFSTED takes complaints about inspection seriously, and views them as one of its quality assurance measures.

How to complain

Any concerns should be raised with the registered inspector as soon as possible, preferably while the inspection is taking place. The registered inspector must try to resolve the problem.

If this fails, the complaint should be made to the contractor responsible for the inspection. The name and address of the contractor can be obtained from the school or from OFSTED. Every contractor must have a procedure for handling and responding to complaints.

Concerns about any aspect of the inspection can be raised with OFSTED (Telephone: 0207 421 6662 or 6680).

Where a complaint remains unresolved the person making the complaint should write to:

The Complaint Manager
Inspection Quality Division
OFSTED
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

Complaints should be made no later than three months after the school receives its inspection report.

Where a school or other party is dissatisfied with the way a complaint has been handled by OFSTED, the person making the complaint can contact the Independent Complaints Adjudicator (ICA). A request for adjudication on the handling of a complaint must be made within 28 days of OFSTED's final response to a complaint. The ICA is:

Elizabeth Derrington
9 Millfield Terrace
Hexham
Northumberland
NE46 3EH

Tel/Fax: 01434 601978
Mobile: 0781 3084831

For further guidance, refer to the pamphlet: *Making Complaints to OFSTED*.

PART 4: PARTICIPATION IN INSPECTIONS

This part of the *Framework* sets out briefly the roles and responsibilities of those in schools who participate in inspections.

Governors and inspection
Pupils, parents and inspection
Teachers, support staff and inspection
Headteachers and inspection
Complaining about an inspection

The roles of governors are set out in more detail in the DfEE (now DfES) handbook: *School Governors: A Guide to the Law*. This can be obtained from the DfES Publications Centre, by telephoning 0845 6022260, or by fax on 0845 6033360.

OFSTED has produced *School Inspections: a guide for parents*, a leaflet for parents explaining the inspection system and how parents can be involved. This can be obtained from the OFSTED Publications Centre, The Stationery Office, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich NR3 1ED or by telephoning 07002 637833 (Fax 07002 693274).

The *Inspection Handbook* provides much information about the involvement of teachers and headteachers in inspection. OFSTED has also produced a guide to inspection: *Making the Most of Inspection*. This can be obtained from the OFSTED Publications Centre at the address or telephone number above.

GOVERNORS AND INSPECTION

Consultation about the inspection

Once a school has been notified that it will receive an inspection, the appropriate authority for the school, usually the governing body, is consulted through completion of *Form S1*. At this point, the school can nominate an area for more detailed evaluation than might normally be the case. It can also indicate any particular subjects or courses it would like to be **considered** for inspection in Key Stages 1-4 as part of an **enhanced** inspection or for any inspection in the sixth form. Governors may at this time request an enhanced inspection instead of a standard inspection if there are exceptional circumstances.

Governors are encouraged to meet the registered inspector when he or she visits the school before the inspection. This gives them an opportunity to bring any important issues to the attention of the registered inspector. They are also encouraged to talk with inspectors during the inspection and to invite the registered inspector to present and discuss the inspection findings at a meeting of the governing body after the inspection.

Governors' statutory responsibilities

Governors have a number of important statutory duties to do with inspection as well as having the quality of their own work inspected. The governing body must:

- inform the parents and the LEA that the inspection is due to take place;
- arrange the meeting for parents with the registered inspector;
- ensure that the required documentation reaches the inspectors;
- send a copy of the summary report to parents within ten working days of its receipt;
- make a copy of the full report available for parents to see and purchase;
- draw up an action plan based on the inspection findings within 40 working days, and make sure action is taken;
- send a copy of the action plan to those specified in section 17 of the School Inspections Act (*), and a copy of the plan or summary of it to all parents of registered pupils and to those who work in the school; and
- report annually to parents on progress toward achieving the action plan.

(*) Subject to the passage of legislation, it will be necessary to send the action plan to OFSTED only where the school requires special measures or has serious weaknesses.

The governors' action plan

The action plan must provide a clear overview of what the school intends to do to implement the inspection findings, and should:

- define what action will be taken to bring about the improvements needed;
- identify the staff responsible for the work;
- contain a timetable for implementation;
- contain targets or indicators to help measure how far the school is making progress; and
- show how the governors will monitor and evaluate progress with the action plan.

More information about the statutory duties of governors can be found in *School Governors: a guide to the law*, published by the DfEE (now DfES).

Involving parents, and others with an interest in the school, in the inspection

In addition to the statutory parents' meeting, the governors are invited to send copies of the parents' questionnaire to parents of pupils at the school. Arrangements should be made for these to be returned, in confidence, to the registered inspector.

The governors might also invite others involved with the school to offer their views on the school to the registered inspector before the inspection in writing.

Governors are invited to hold a meeting with parents after the inspection to explain the inspection findings and discuss with parents how they plan to act on them.

Inspecting the work of governors

The detail of how the work of governors will be evaluated can be found in the section *How well is the school led and managed?* in the *Inspection Handbook*. Those governors who hold responsibilities within the governing body, such as the chair and vice chair, chairs of committee and governors who hold specific briefs, for example, for special educational needs, are nearly always involved in discussions with inspectors.

PUPILS, PARENTS AND INSPECTION

Pupils

Pupils benefit from inspection because it holds their schools accountable and contributes to their improvement. Inspectors' main interest is pupils: what they achieve, how well they are taught, and their well-being. Inspectors will talk to pupils about their life in school and the work they are doing. The inspection and the report should help the school to become a better place in which to learn.

Before inspection, inspectors will want to know pupils' views. This might be done in a variety of ways, for example, by drawing on any information the school has about the views of its pupils, by talking with groups of pupils when the registered inspector makes his or her pre-inspection visit to the school. Schools are invited to use the questionnaire for sixth-form students, and OFSTED is considering how best to seek the views of younger pupils.

During inspection, inspectors will spend much of their time with pupils in lessons, in study sessions outside the classroom, or in discussion with them. Inspectors will observe any school council or meetings of other groups of pupils. Discussions with pupils give opportunities to follow up pupils' views about their school.

After inspection, the school should find ways of talking with pupils about the findings of the inspection.

Parents

For parents, inspection provides:

- an external and independent view of what is good and not so good about their children's school compared with other schools;
- an opportunity to make their own views about the school heard;
- a report, written in plain English, that summarises what the inspection found out about the school;
- judgements about the standards of the school and its quality to place alongside all the other information they have about the school; and
- confidence that the school has received a clear assessment of what it does well and what it needs to do to improve.

The inspection draws on parents' views for some of its evidence. Parents have several ways of telling inspectors what they think about the work their children do, how well the school teaches and cares for their children and the standards the school achieves.

The parents' meeting

The governors must arrange a meeting between the registered inspector and the parents of pupils at the school. Parents should be given advance notice of this meeting, which will be held before the inspection begins. Parents will be asked to say what they think about important aspects of the school.

The parents' questionnaire

The governors are asked to send parents a questionnaire about the work of the school. Once completed, parents should return this confidentially to the registered inspector.

Parents can use the questionnaire form to add additional comments about the school.

Talking to the inspectors

During the inspection, inspectors will be very busy looking at the work of pupils but where parents wish to meet with and talk directly to inspectors, meetings can be arranged where possible. Inspectors are not able to get involved in complaints about the school, but will be interested in how well the school handles any complaints.

How parents find out what the inspectors think

The inspection report includes a summary, written in a clear and direct style, which must be sent by the governors to the parents of all pupils. The summary reports for all schools have a similar structure, but the text is unique to the school. The summary report tells parents:

- what sort of school it is;
- what the school does well, and what it should improve;
- whether the school has improved, regressed or remained the same since the last inspection;
- how high standards are;
- how good the teaching is;
- how well the school looks after its pupils;
- how well the school is led and managed; and
- what parents and pupils think of the school and how far inspectors agree or disagree and why.

After the inspection the plan of action drawn up by the governors must show how the school will deal with any weaknesses. Parents are sent a copy of this plan, or a summary of it, and every year the governors must report to parents on how the school is developing and taking action to improve.

The Governors are encouraged to hold a meeting with parents after the inspection to explain the findings and outline what they intend to do about them.

More information can be found in *School Inspections: a guide for parents* published by OFSTED. More detail about how the school's partnership with its parents is inspected can be found in the section of the *Evaluation Schedule* entitled *How well does the school work in partnership with parents?*

TEACHERS, SUPPORT STAFF AND INSPECTION

Inspection provides teachers with recognition of what they do well and pointers on how they can improve. It is teachers in schools who raise standards for pupils, and inspection feedback on their teaching helps them to do so. Evaluating the quality of teaching and the effect this has on pupils' learning is one of the most important aspects of inspection.

The Code of Conduct for inspectors is designed to help to ensure that teachers are guaranteed an inspection of high quality. This should keep stress of inspection to a minimum.

OFSTED's Quality Guarantee to teachers and other staff states that:

- inspectors will always treat staff in a courteous and friendly manner, particularly when entering and leaving a classroom where a teacher is teaching;
- teachers will not normally be observed for more than about half their teaching in any one day, and never more than 75 per cent of teaching time;
- judgements on teaching will only be made where an inspector has observed for a reasonable length of time, normally at least 30 minutes;
- inspectors will respect the confidentiality of information;
- inspectors will be offered feedback and opportunity to discuss aspects of their work with them;
- inspectors will explain the reasons for their judgements and see to help identify where improvement is needed; and
- inspectors will not expect teachers or other staff to create additional paperwork specifically for the inspection.

Before the inspection begins

Shortly before the inspection begins, the registered inspector, together with the headteacher, will brief the staff on the inspection process and how it will affect them. At this meeting teachers have a chance to talk about:

- how teaching is observed and how records of the observation are kept;
- how the quality of teaching and learning is evaluated;
- how they will be involved in discussions with inspectors; and
- the organisation and purpose of the feedback on teaching.

At this meeting staff should feel able to give their views about the school, among other things in relation to what it achieves, how well it achieves what it sets out to do, its direction, and what it is like to work in the school.

During the inspection

Most of the inspectors' time will be spent observing lessons, looking at pupils' work and talking to pupils. Inspectors will also look for evidence of planning and recording by teachers and discuss with teachers how this planning is used. While they are working, inspectors will take notes and evaluate what they see. Their evaluations are recorded as grades on a seven-point scale, ranging from excellent to very poor, which will be used to produce data about the quality of teaching. Inspectors' notes will include:

- what the lesson is about;

- what is being taught, how it is taught and the impact of the teaching on pupils' learning;
- evidence and evaluation of the standards pupils reach, their learning and their involvement in lessons; and
- pupils' attitudes and behaviour.

Feedback

All teachers will be offered feedback after they have been seen teaching. Feedback will also be given to those with specific responsibilities. Inspectors will:

- report on what they have seen and share their evaluations;
- explain their evaluations through exemplification;
- respond to questions and ensure that evaluations are understood; and
- help teachers to improve through clear identification of what does and does not work.

Further detail on how the work of teachers is inspected will be found in the *Evaluation Schedule* in the section entitled *How well are pupils or students taught?*

Support staff, care staff and adult workers

During an inspection it is inevitable that inspectors will see the work of all or almost all the adults who work in a school such as teaching assistants and other support staff. Where this work has a direct impact on pupils, they will be looking for evidence of its quality. Wherever possible, inspectors will talk to support staff about their work, and their contributions to the school will form part of an overall judgement about the impact of their work.

HEADTEACHERS AND INSPECTION

Inspection is about evaluating impact not describing intention. It provides an opportunity for the headteacher and for the staff to demonstrate their skills in teaching, leadership and management and all other aspects of their work. Good inspections provide vital management information on how good a school is and why, and contribute to the agenda for improvement. Thus they can help a school to improve.

The best inspections are built on a constructive, objective and honest relationship between the headteacher and the registered inspector

The inspection forms

Before the inspection the headteacher should advise the appropriate authority on the completion of *Form S1*, and is responsible for the completion of the other forms including the school's audit of compliance with statutory requirements and its self-evaluation. Detailed *Notes of Guidance* are provided for each of these forms. The information provided by the headteacher on these forms is crucial to an effective inspection. Headteachers must use them to communicate as much detailed information about the school as possible to the inspection team, thus providing a good foundation for all aspects of the inspection.

The self-evaluation form provides crucial evidence of the effectiveness of the headteacher as both a leader and a manager, and also significant insights into the school, its strengths and areas for improvement. One of the important judgements the inspection team will make is how well the school knows its own strengths and areas for improvement, how it knows these, and what it does about them. The form also gives the headteacher an opportunity to draw the attention of the inspection team to the specific context of the school.

The school's self-evaluation should provide a strong focus for discussion with the registered inspector at the pre-inspection visit. If the school opts to nominate an area for particular attention in the inspection, it should stem from the self-evaluation.

OFSTED recommends that headteachers update the forms annually, and surveys the views of its pupils, parents and other partners regularly so that when an inspection is due all the required information is immediately to hand. Like *PANDA Reports*, the inspection forms constitute an important management tool that good schools will make use of regularly.

Before the inspection

Before the inspection the headteacher, in liaison with the registered inspector, has responsibility for dealing with administrative arrangements for the inspection, and should:

- check any data in the partially pre-filled inspection forms, and resolve any queries arising from the inspection forms;
- clarify any aspects of the inspection beyond the standard contract;
- check information in the *PANDA report*, particularly in respect of attendance, examination results, finance and census information about the school;
- provide the registered inspector with a copy of the previous governors' action plan, and evidence from any other external monitoring;
- collect together documents needed by the team before the inspection;
- agree how the team is to have access to information needed during the inspection;
- arrange for school/class/subject teachers' timetables to be provided as early as possible so the deployment of the inspection team can be planned effectively; and

- clarify arrangements for the meetings between the registered inspector and the staff, governors and parents.

Before the inspection, the registered inspector will share the pre-inspection commentary with the headteacher, who will usually discuss it with the chair of governors and senior staff. Having the commentary before inspection means that the school can reflect on its contents and identify where the headteacher, staff and governors need to contribute further evidence. It is also intended to encourage dialogue throughout the inspection.

The headteacher is responsible for integrating the inspection into the daily life of the school. In particular, the registered inspector will wish to discuss with the headteacher arrangements for:

- the observation of lessons;
- analysing samples of pupils' work and individual records;
- discussions with individual teachers, teaching assistants and non-teaching staff about their work;
- meetings with governors holding specific responsibilities;
- discussions with pupils about their work;
- providing feedback to staff with subject responsibilities and to individual teachers about their teaching;
- feedback of the inspection findings to the senior management team and governors; and
- accommodation for the inspection team.

It is very valuable for the headteacher to meet the registered inspector at least daily throughout the inspection period.

Documentation to be provided

An analysis of the documentation provided by the school will be used by the inspection team to help them understand the school, its background and context and to identify issues that might be a focus for inspection.

With the exception of the inspection forms, the documentation required by inspectors is limited to what schools would normally expect to have available. Documentation should not be written specifically for the inspection as this puts an undesirable burden on staff. It is also unacceptable for inspectors to issue additional forms to schools for completion beyond those prescribed by OFSTED.

The registered inspector will need some documents in order to prepare for the preliminary visit to the school. When headteachers send the forms to the registered inspector they should also send:

- the current school development, management or improvement plan; and
- the school prospectus or brochure.

In all inspections, at the preliminary meeting the school will need to provide the registered inspector with:

- a programme or timetable of the school's work for the period of the inspection;
- a staff handbook, if one is available, and a list of key people to contact in the school, showing their responsibilities;
- a plan of the school;

- a copy of the last annual report to parents (not needed for pupil-referral units);
- evidence of progress towards the targets set by governors;
- whole-school policy documents;
- the outcomes of self-evaluations carried out recently by the school;
- an analysis of assessment or examination results carried out by the school;
- the outcomes of any external monitoring or evaluations carried out since the last inspection;
- any other documentation the school wishes to be considered.

In all inspections of special schools and PRUs, the registered inspector will need records showing the progress made by an agreed sample of pupils.

Inspectors will not ask for more than this before the inspection but will read carefully any additional documents the school chooses to provide. **No one should develop or rework documents especially for the inspection. Wherever practicable, inspectors will accept data in the form held by schools.**

During the inspection the team will have right of access to other material that would normally be in the school. This may include:

- samples of pupils' work;
- curriculum plans, policies, guidelines or schemes of work already in existence;
- pupils' records and reports;
- documents for pupils with special educational needs;
- teachers' planning and assessment documents and guidelines or schemes of work not provided earlier;
- attendance registers; and
- daily lesson planning.

Feedback and reporting

During the inspection the registered inspector will keep the headteacher informed about emerging views. The final judgements about the school are made at the team meeting held after the end of the inspection.

After the inspection the registered inspector will meet with the headteacher and with the governors to provide more detailed feedback. At these meetings the headteachers and governors can seek clarification and explanation of inspection judgements. Factual points can be checked, although judgements are not negotiable.

The report must be factually accurate. To ensure this, a final draft is sent to the school for checking. The school must respond within a week. Factual errors must be corrected. Only if these have a direct bearing on inspection judgements can changes to the report be considered by the registered inspector.