



*Rhagoriaeth i bawb - Excellence for all*

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg  
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate  
for Education and Training in Wales

## **An explanation of risk assessed inspection types (Full/Standard/Short)**

**February 2008**



**BUDDSODDWR MEWN POBL  
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE**



## Inspection of Schools

There will be three types of inspection for maintained primary and secondary schools. These are called '**full**', '**standard**' and '**short**' inspections. They are broadly characterised as follows:

**Full** - A full inspection involves all seven key questions of the common inspection framework and all subjects and/or areas of learning taught in the school at each key stage.

**Standard** - A standard inspection involves fewer inspection days. The school's own self-evaluation will help to determine the extent to which some aspects of the seven key questions of the common inspection framework are inspected. It will involve in-depth inspection of six subjects and/or (for early years) areas of learning. We will select the subjects primarily on the basis of the school's performance in the previous inspection.

**Short** - A short inspection will involve even fewer inspection days and less detailed inspection of the seven key questions. There will be no explicit evaluation and reporting of individual subjects and/or areas of learning.

The Chief Inspector will retain his right, where the circumstances justify it, to determine the type of inspection to be carried out in any school, even if this differs from the type of inspection that would normally result from applying the relevant criteria.

No matter what type of inspection is carried out, it will always be possible for the Registered Inspector to recommend that the school is in need of significant improvement or special measures.

To identify which school receives each type of inspection, we will use summary inspection data from the previous inspection and the most recently available assessment data, benchmarked against free school meal entitlement. You will find an explanation of how this approach will work in annex A.

The approach takes account of the need for the criteria to be **transparent**. With few exceptions, schools should be able easily to work out which category of inspection they are likely to receive. The use of several criteria allows us to make a **robust** risk assessment. It will ensure, for example, that schools with positive previous inspection outcomes, but poor recent assessment results, will have the type of inspection appropriate to the degree of risk presented.

All **nursery schools** will have the same type of inspection, as there is no benchmarked performance data for these schools. Standard nursery school inspections will cover all areas of learning and address all seven key questions in the common inspection framework.

Schools whose previous inspection placed them in **special measures** or identified them as having **serious weaknesses (in need of significant improvement)**, will have a **full inspection** irrespective of the category of inspection indicated by applying the criteria.

**New schools** (whether newly opened or formed from the expansion or closure of previously existing schools) pose a high risk. These schools will have no assessment and inspection data against which the criteria can be applied. We have therefore decided that new schools will undergo a **full inspection** no earlier than one full year following their opening.

All **maintained special schools** (including **PRUs**) and **independent special schools** will be subject to a **full inspection**. Our reasons include:

- the rapidly changing circumstances of PRUs and some special schools, for example a number of PRUs have opened and closed at short notice and special schools' intakes are varying significantly as LEAs modify social inclusion strategies;
- the high cost per pupil of provision;
- the special educational needs of the pupils makes many of them especially vulnerable; and
- this is the first full cycle of Estyn led inspections for independent schools.

## **ANNEX A**

### **Identifying which school receives each type of inspection**

#### **What are the criteria?**

There will be two sets of criteria. We will use summary inspection data from the previous inspection as the first set. This is supplemented, where appropriate, by a criterion based on the most recently available assessment data, benchmarked against free school meal entitlement.

In keeping with the premise of the Common Inspection Framework, the risk criteria focus on the achievements of learners. They are measures based on:

- inspection grades for standards of achievement in the most recent inspection; and
- benchmarked performance in a key indicator over three years, including the latest year for which they are available.

#### **What are the key measures for inspection grades?**

The key measures for schools in the first set of criteria are:

- the proportions of classes in which standards are at least satisfactory;
- the proportions of classes in which standards are good or very good;
- the proportions of subjects in which standards are at least satisfactory; and
- the proportions of subjects in which standards are good or very good.

#### **What are the key measures for benchmarked performance?**

The key measure for the second criterion will be the performance of the school against a key indicator in relation to other schools in the same free school meal benchmark group for the three years preceding the inspection.

In infants' schools, while the Welsh Assembly Government continues to implement and collect the results of teacher assessment, the key indicator will be the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level in the CSI by teacher assessment at KS1.

In junior and primary schools, it will be the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level in the CSI for KS2 tests.

In secondary schools, the key indicator will be the average GCSE points score.

The risk assessment will make use of the latest available benchmarked performance data at the time of sending out invitations to tender.

In each calendar year, the data usually becomes available in December for assessments and examinations completed in the previous summer term. Invitations to tender are issued about six months before the beginning of the term in which the inspection takes place. The risk assessment of schools will therefore almost always be based on data relating to assessments and examinations that took place a year or more before the inspection.

### **How will the criteria be applied?**

The criteria will be combined in the following way to determine the type of inspection for each primary and secondary school.

#### **Full inspection**

1. School was in the lowest quarter for pupils' performance in its FSM benchmark group in at least two of the three latest years for which data is available;
2. Standards of achievement at the end of the school's highest compulsory key stage were unsatisfactory in at least one subject in the last inspection report; and
3. Standards of achievement were satisfactory or better in less than 90% of classes/lessons in the last inspection report.

#### **Short inspection**

1. School was above the median for pupils' performance in its FSM benchmark group in the latest year for which data is available;
2. School was not in the lowest quarter for pupils' performance in its FSM benchmark groups (GCSE average points score for secondary, core subject indicator in the final year of the school for primary) in any of the three latest years for which data is available; and
3. No subject was judged unsatisfactory for standards of achievement at the end of the school's highest compulsory key stage in the last inspection report; and
4. Standards of achievement at the end of the school's highest compulsory key stage in the last inspection report were satisfactory in no more than four subjects in secondary schools\* and no more than six subjects in primary schools\*; and
5. Standards of achievement were satisfactory or better in at least 95% of classes/lessons and good or very good in at least 50% of classes/lessons in the last report.

\* ie in at least half of the subjects in primary schools, and in a clear majority of the subjects offered in secondary schools, standards were good or very good.

## **Standard inspection**

All of the remaining schools.

### **How will the subjects or areas of learning be chosen in standard inspections?**

In standard inspections of primary and secondary schools, we will inspect six subjects or areas of learning.

The subjects or areas of learning will generally include those identified in the previous inspection with the highest and lowest standards of achievement. The focus on these subjects or areas of learning will enable the inspection to investigate:

- the school's efforts to maintain and extend its best practice;
- the school's approach to improving pupils' standards where they are weakest; and
- the school's self-evaluation of standards and quality in a range of subjects.

In identifying these subjects or areas for learning, we will also take account of a number of factors, including:

- the relative strength of the subjects in each key stage;
- the need to inspect any subject(s) that may not have been fully evaluated in the previous inspection;
- the need to ensure adequate coverage of core subjects;
- the need for inspection evidence to respond to Welsh Assembly Government priorities; and
- Estyn's need for evidence across the range of subjects or areas of learning.

### **How will inspector days be allocated?**

The approach means less inspection time overall for most schools:

- In standard inspections, there will be approximately 70%-80% of the number of inspector days needed for a full inspection; and
- In short inspections, there will be approximately 50%-60% of the number of inspector days needed for a full inspection.