



IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR LEARNERS THROUGH SELF-EVALUATION

THE JOURNEY TO EXCELLENCE



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IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR LEARNERS THROUGH SELF-EVALUATION

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HM Inspectorate of Education
Denholm House
Almondvale Business Park
Almondvale Way
Livingston
EH54 6GA

Tel: 01506 600 200

Fax: 01506 600 337

E-mail: enquiries@hmie.gsi.gov.uk

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FOREWORD

For more than 15 years schools and pre-school centres have been developing their approaches to self-evaluation, supported by the publication of *How good is our school?* and later by the publication of *The Child at the Centre*. The success of the 'Scottish approach' to self-evaluation – internal self-evaluation along with external inspection – is widely acknowledged. *Improving Scottish Education* attributed much of the recent improvements in schools to the success of self-evaluation. The importance of 'self assessment' to performance management was recognised by Professor Lorne Crerar in his report.¹

In November 2007 the Scottish Government published its approach to monitoring the performance of public services in Scotland in its National Performance Framework (NPF). The performance of schools and pre-school centres was identified specifically in this framework. This document provides additional guidance on the application of the three quality indicators (QIs) referred to in the NPF and on QI 5.9 Improvement through self-evaluation.

HMIE has been given the task of evaluating and reporting on the performance of schools and pre-school centres. We will do this by building on our successful approaches to inspecting these establishments.

The new approaches to inspection, commencing in September 2008, will build on the school's and pre-school's self-evaluation. It will be the starting point of inspections and will help to focus inspection teams. HM Inspectors will engage with school and pre-school staff to find out how the results of self-evaluation have brought about improvement. HM Inspectors will make the most of the successful professional relationships which exist between HM Inspectors and the teaching profession in pre-school and school settings by working together to bring about further improvement to children's and young people's learning experiences, achievements and attainments.

This guide should be used alongside *How good is our school?* and *The Child at the Centre* and will act as an additional tool for pre-school and school staff and inspection teams. It should enhance the common understanding and shared language of inspectors and pre-school and school staff.

Graham Donaldson

¹ *The Crerar Review: The Report of the Independent Review of Regulation, Audit, Inspection and Complaints Handling of Public Services in Scotland*, Scottish Government 2007.

1. INTRODUCTION

This document supplements the advice given in *How good is our school?* (HGIOS) – third edition and *The Child at the Centre* – second edition which set out comprehensive quality frameworks and provide helpful advice on the process of improvement through self-evaluation.

In particular, this document provides advice on the application of the three reference QIs – 1.1 Improvements in performance, 2.1 Learners' experiences² and 5.3 Meeting learning needs. It also provides advice on applying QI 5.9 Improvement through self-evaluation. Its purpose is to help staff in schools and pre-school centres to take a closer look at these four QIs. It has been written for pre-school centres and primary, special and secondary schools.

The focus is upon QIs 1.1, 2.1 and 5.3 as they have been selected as the principal quality indicators for inspections of school and pre-school centres from 2008 in the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework (NPF). The NPF sets out 15 National Outcomes and 45 National Indicators to be used to evaluate the performance of public services in Scotland. One of the indicators relates to the inspection of schools and another relates to pre-school centres. The NPF is annexed to the Government's Concordat with COSLA, which covers those public services provided by local government.

- NPF Indicator 11 – 'Schools receiving positive inspection reports' – is a measure of the proportion of schools receiving positive inspection reports. A positive inspection report is defined as one where the school receives an evaluation of *Satisfactory*³ or better in all three reference quality indicators. National reporting will incorporate a more aspirational approach by reporting also on the proportion of schools that receive an evaluation of *Good* or better in all three reference quality indicators and those that receive an evaluation of *Very Good* or better in all three reference quality indicators.
- NPF Indicator 17 – 'Pre-school centres receiving positive inspection reports' – will be used to monitor the number of pre-school centres which receive a positive inspection report. The definition of a pre-school centre includes all local authority nursery schools and classes and all private and voluntary pre-school centres which are in partnership with local authorities to provide pre-school education. A positive inspection report is again defined as one which receives evaluations of *Satisfactory* or better on each of the three reference quality indicators, with separate reporting also for *Good* and *Very Good* as above.

The NPF indicators will be included in new models of inspection which will be introduced from September 2008. However, the NPF reporting period commences in April 2008 and it is necessary to introduce as consistent an approach as possible to evaluating the indicators from that date onwards.

² In *The Child at the Centre* QI 2.1 is called Children's experiences. Each reference to Learner's experiences should be interpreted as Children's experiences for pre-school and early stages of primary education.

³ *Satisfactory* is a point on HMIE's six-point scale in Annex 1 on page 20.

2. USING *HOW GOOD IS OUR SCHOOL?* AND *THE CHILD AT THE CENTRE*

2.1 The quality indicator framework

The framework of quality indicators in *How good is our school?*, third edition, and *The Child at the Centre*, second edition, is based on the key activities of a school or pre-school centre and what these activities achieve in terms of outcomes for learners. Quality indicators help to explore complex relationships of cause and effect, and assist in the identification of aspects that need to be improved. Indicators sit within different parts of the model: in vision and leadership; in the processes which underpin the work and life of the school; and in outcomes and impacts, which identify the school's successes and achievements.

The reference QIs and QI 5.9 are located in the model as shown:

Figure 1



2.2 Key Features, Themes and Illustrations

Key Features indicate to the user what the QI is about. To help make judgements it is necessary to evaluate the available evidence from all the themes, using the illustrations at levels 5 and 2 to assist benchmarking. In addition, the generic six-point scale, in Annex 1 on page 20, will help to differentiate between levels by considering, for example, whether there are 'important strengths' or 'major strengths'.

Each QI has one or more themes. The themes are used to organise the evidence under different headings. They therefore serve as useful guides for collecting evidence.

The illustrations are statements on the quality of provision at two levels. They are not checklists. They need to be interpreted to take account of the context of the establishment. Establishments do not have to exhibit all of the features in an illustration at a particular level in order to achieve an evaluation at that level. The illustrations are not exhaustive and establishments may exhibit particular strengths or weaknesses which are not in the illustration.

Further information on using quality indicators can be found on pages 6 to 15 of *HGIOS* and pages 8 to 12 of *The Child at the Centre*.

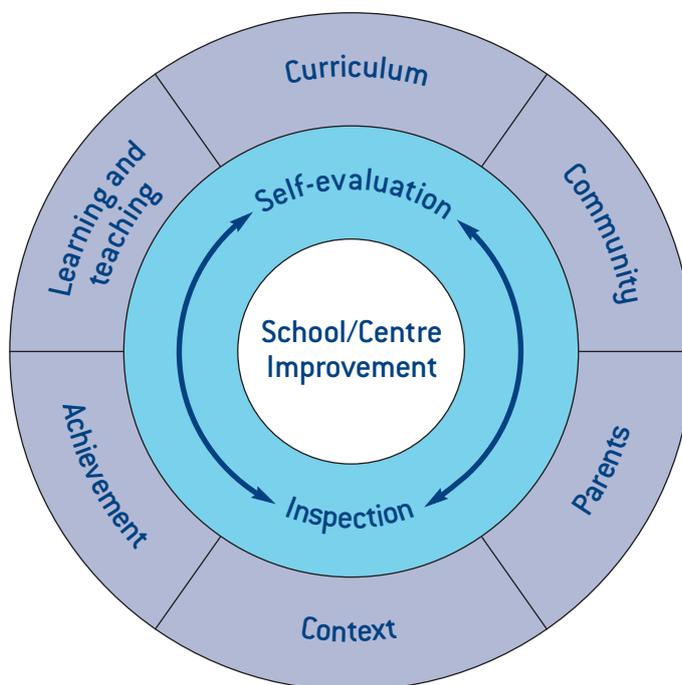
3. THE INSPECTION PROCESS

3.1 Using an establishment's self-evaluation

One of the main purposes of inspection is to help staff to bring about further improvement to the learning experiences and achievements of children and young people. Inspection will build on the establishment's self-evaluation to effect further improvement. The starting point of an establishment's inspection is its self-evaluation. Inspection teams will discuss with the school or pre-school centre the establishment's strengths and areas it has identified for improvement. Inspection teams will be particularly interested in how the results of self-evaluation have been taken forward.

In these discussions, pre-school centres and schools do not need to use the *HGIOS/The Child at the Centre* six-point scale in order to report on the quality of their provision.

The following diagram illustrates some of the key aspects of the self-evaluation process and the link to inspection.



Self-evaluation will draw upon the evidence which the school or centre has already built up through its own provision. Self-evaluation will take account of the nature of the school, its pupil population and its context. Evidence can be collected from a variety of sources, such as questionnaire analyses and attainment data/information on children's progress; from interviews and discussions with learners, staff, parents and other stakeholders; and crucially by observing learning and teaching.

3.2 Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC)

The Scottish Government's policy, exemplified in the report *Getting it right for every child*⁴, seeks to improve the wellbeing of all children and young people. Wellbeing is seen as a necessary requirement for children and young people to enable them to develop the four capacities within *Curriculum for Excellence*. It is characterised by the seven indicators of wellbeing – safe, nurtured, healthy, active, achieving, respected, responsible and included. A GIRFEC approach requires better working arrangements between professionals who work with children, a single system of assessment and access to one record for each child. Where action to support children and young people involves multi-agency activity, there should be one integrated plan and, ideally, the child and family should be involved in its development and implementation. These GIRFEC approaches should become embedded in the working practices of schools and pre-school centres and should be evident when making evaluations on how children's and young people's learning needs are being met.

⁴ *Getting it right for every child: Proposals for Action*; Scottish Executive 2005.

4. QI 5.3 MEETING LEARNING NEEDS

This QI is located in the section of the model relating to 'delivery of educational processes'. It is one of a range of process QIs which relate to the overall outcomes for the school and the impacts on learners.

4.1 Key Features

In evaluating this QI a holistic, rounded judgement is made on how well the school or centre makes arrangements to meet the learning needs of children and young people. The scope of the QI is given in the Key Features:

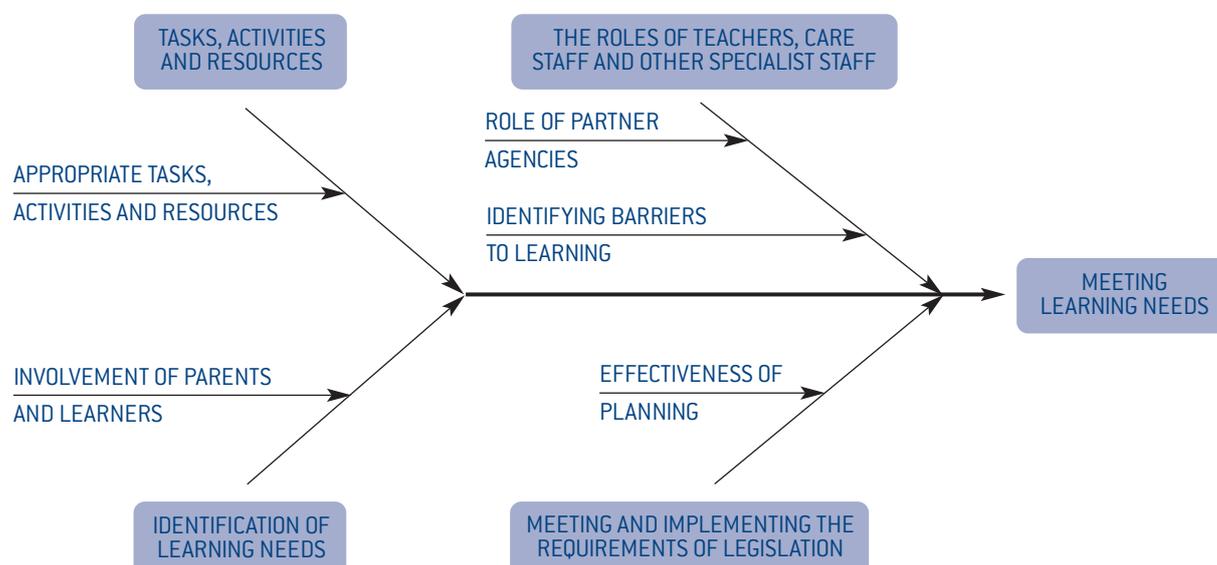
This indicator relates to the school's or centre's arrangements for meeting the needs of all learners, including potentially vulnerable groups, and addressing barriers to learning. This includes identifying the needs of, and providing support and challenge for, groups and individuals who may have additional support needs arising from, for example, the learning environment, family circumstances, disability or health needs; or social and emotional factors.

When applying this QI and making judgements on the quality of provision it is important to:

- evaluate what teachers/staff do to ensure that the needs of all learners, including the most vulnerable learners, those with additional support needs and gifted and talented learners, are met within the class/playroom;
- evaluate the processes which the school or centre puts in place to identify and assess the needs of individuals which impact on their education and ensure that all learners have appropriate and equitable access to the curriculum and to the range of experiences offered by the school or centre;
- evaluate how the school/centre makes use of input of health, social work and other partner agencies, and parents and carers in meeting young people's learning needs; and
- follow appropriate 'audit trails' which have been identified, for example, provision for learners who are *Looked After and Accommodated* (LAAC), or learners with autism spectrum disorders.

The following diagram shows that evidence from each of the four themes of the QI must be examined in order to make an evaluation. The diagram does not imply that a set order of evaluation must be followed.

In addition, when making an evaluation, it is necessary to cross refer to the evidence for QI 2.1 and QI 1.1 to check whether the action taken was successful in having a positive impact on the learning experiences of, and outcomes for, children and young people.



The tables which follow illustrate in more detail factors which should be taken into account when making an evaluation of QI 5.3.

4.2 QI 5.3 Organising evidence underpinning evaluations

The first two themes, *Tasks activities and resources* and *identification of learning needs* are interdependent and it is helpful to consider them together. The second theme evaluates how well the needs of all learners are identified. The first evaluates the quality of differentiation in practice for all learners. An evaluation of the two themes together will also be informed by related QIs which focus on the impact and outcomes of these processes to meet learning needs. These two themes focus broadly on processes for all learners, and within that pay attention to how well the needs of vulnerable learners are met. Evidence for this QI can be collected by following audit trails for particular groups of learners. For example, how well the learning needs of bilingual learners are met⁵.

Theme 1: Tasks activities and resources

In this theme the quality of differentiation across the school/centre is evaluated.

Key Questions	Sources of Evidence	Related Impact and Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How effectively do we support and challenge learners by choosing learning tasks, resources and activities which are well matched to their needs, progress or attainments? How well did learning and our teaching on a day-to-day basis and across programmes/courses meet the different needs of learners? Do we 'reach' different groups through our teaching and questioning? How well do we give focused, targeted and appropriate support when moving around the classroom/playroom? Do we have appropriate expectations for different groups of learners? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observation and reflection on learning and teaching: matching learning opportunities and support to the range of learning needs Sampling with individuals and groups of learners: the quality of support and challenge in tasks and learners' responses <p>Additional evidence will be found in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff/teachers' plans and programmes to meet differing needs and levels of attainment The quality and use of learning resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate tasks, activities and resources enable all learners to make progress in their learning. Those with IEPs will be achieving the short-term targets. [QI 1.1] Suitable tasks, activities and resources also help to develop learners' self esteem and confidence and other broader capacities. The impact of the tasks, activities and resources can be seen from the responses of learners. Appropriate tasks, activities and resources engage children/young people. [QI 2.1]

⁵ Further advice on this audit trail can be found in *How good is our school?*, Self-evaluation series, *Inclusion and equality Part 4: Evaluating educational provision for bilingual learners*, HMIE 2006.

Theme 2: Identification of learning needs

Learning needs are likely to be met appropriately when they are clearly identified. This theme is about the arrangements the school or centre has made to identify the learning needs of all learners, particularly the needs of the most vulnerable groups and those whose needs vary significantly from their peers.

Key Questions	Sources of Evidence	Related Impact and Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well do we observe and assess learning needs in the light of learners' responses to tasks and activities? • How well do we share information and discuss learning to enable other staff to identify clearly the learning needs of all, including vulnerable learners? • How effective are whole-school/centre approaches and the contributions of specialist staff? • How well do we draw on the knowledge of health, social work and other partner agencies when identifying learning needs? • Do we take sufficient account of the needs of LAAC in identifying barriers to learning? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation of teaching and learning • Discussion with learners • Samples of learners' work • Assessment evidence and its use by staff to identify the needs of all learners • Information issued to staff on those with additional support needs • Discussion with learning support staff, pastoral care staff, class teachers, key workers • Interviews with health, social work and other professionals • Interviews with parents/carers • Minutes of planning meetings to identify and assess needs • Lesson plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective identification of learning needs should lead to appropriate learning and teaching with suitable tasks and activities. This should lead to successful learning. The impact of this theme will then be seen in learners' responses (QI 2.1) and in learners' progress, attainment and achievement (QI 1.1).

The third and fourth themes focus more closely on the quality of support from learning support staff and partner agencies, and the use of legislation to help meet the needs of learners receiving additional support. Once again, when evaluating provision for some learners, these two themes are closely related. In considering the impact and outcomes for learners of the work of support staff and the implementation of legislation, a key consideration will be the quality of learners' experiences and their progress and achievements.

Theme 3: The roles of teachers and specialist staff

Key Questions	Sources of Evidence	Related Impact and Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well do we involve appropriate specialist staff in identifying learning needs? • How effective are specialist staff? • How well do we address barriers to learning? • How well do we share information among education, health, social work and other relevant partner agencies? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remits of staff • The role of specialist staff in meeting learning needs including visiting teachers, specialist staff and relevant staff from partner agencies • Support, advice and training the school or centre receives from specialist staff and their agencies • Quality of placement of children/young people, including shared or part-time placement in provision outwith the school or centre • Interviews with staff from partner agencies as appropriate in planning and delivering support 	<p>The impact of identifying, planning for and meeting the needs of all learners would be evident in their engagement with learning and development (QI 2.1) and in their progress, attainments and achievements (QI 1.1).</p>

Theme 4: Meeting and implementing the requirements of legislation

Most children and young people who require additional support will have their learning needs met by the day-to-day classroom practice. Where they require detailed planning for learning or substantial adaptation to the curriculum, an individualised educational programme (IEP) may be appropriate. A small number with significant additional support needs may require a coordinated support plan (CSP) to ensure that support for learning is coordinated effectively across agencies. CSPs and IEPs in themselves do not indicate whether needs are met, or otherwise. It is the quality and effectiveness of planning to meet learning needs and the processes of meeting these needs which are important. Effective planning involves parents, learners and staff from partner agencies as appropriate. The principles of GIRFEC will be important in achieving this. This fourth theme should not dominate evaluations.

Key Questions	Sources of Evidence	Related Impact and Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How good is our planning to meet the needs of all learners? • How effectively have we involved other staff in drawing up these plans? How have these plans been shared by staff? Is there a move to a single plan? • Do our IEPs and CSPs set out a suitable approach to meeting needs? • Are the short-term and long-term targets appropriate and clear? • Do we regularly review the targets? Is there a move to a single multi-agency review? • How do we involve learners and their parents in these processes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence from child/pupil progress records (PPRs) and other attainment and achievement records • Quality and effectiveness of care planning, CSPs and IEPs • Interviews with parents, learners and partner agencies, as appropriate, in planning and reviewing • Observation/minutes of planning meetings to identify and assess needs • Observation/minutes of review meetings • Transition arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact in identifying, planning for and meeting the needs of all learners would be evident in learners engagement with learning and their development as learners (QI 2.1) and in their progress, attainments and achievements (QI 1.1).

Overall, when evaluating this QI a rounded judgement is provided on how well the school or centre makes arrangements for meeting the needs of all learners by identifying learning needs, by providing appropriate tasks, resources and activities, by deploying effectively teachers and specialist staff, and by meeting the requirements of legislation.

5. QI 2.1 LEARNERS' EXPERIENCES/ CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES

This QI is placed in the 'impact on learners' section of the model. It evaluates the impact of the education provided by the school or centre on individual learners.

5.1 Key Features

In evaluating this QI, a holistic, rounded judgement is made on the quality of learners' experiences. The scope of the QI is given in the Key Features:

This indicator relates to the quality of learners' experiences. Learners are aware of their strengths and needs as learners and are satisfied that their views are taken into account.

When applying this QI and making judgements on the quality of provision it is important to:

- take account of the context of the school or centre;
- evaluate the extent to which learners are engaged with the school or centre and are motivated and eager participants in learning and in the wider life of the school or centre;
- evaluate how learners are developing the four capacities⁶ within *Curriculum for Excellence* and are becoming successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors to society; and
- evaluate how well pupils feel safe, encouraged to be healthy, included, and respected.

This QI is evaluated primarily by observing the impact of teaching on learners. The impact of other out-of-classroom activities and experiences should also be taken into account.

Other evidence of learners' responses can be obtained by talking to them, and by using stakeholder questionnaires. Such evidence can support direct observation. In addition, a sense of learners' broader engagement with the establishment can be found by looking at participation data and exclusion and attendance data. These indicators may be measuring other things as well, and consequently they are not as useful as the first two in supporting direct observation.

If learners are consulted and their views are acted upon, then they may be positively disposed towards learning and hence there may be good learner engagement in the class or playroom. However, this is not of itself a good yardstick for QI 2.1. Similarly, we can seek evidence on the seven well-being indicators – safe, nurtured, healthy, active, achieving, respected and responsible, and included. These are important but they are themselves not primary indicators of effective engagement with learning. Although if any of these factors are absent in some way and adversely affect the learner, then we cannot expect to see effective engagement of learners. These are therefore necessary factors for really effective learning, but they are not primary indicators that effective engagement with learning is taking place. What is crucial is the quality of engagement with learning.

The impact of the school or centre on learners will determine how well they achieve the outcomes in the four capacities. Through active engagement in appropriate tasks, they will be developing as successful, confident and responsible learners who contribute effectively. However, the extent to which they have actually developed the capacities is evaluated in the second theme of QI 1.1.

⁶ The four capacities are expanded in Annex 2 on page 21.

The second component of QI 2.1 is about the development of children and young people as effective learners. The way teachers and other staff engage with learners and how they take account of learners' views is important. Effective teaching and learning develops learning skills and this is a good impact measure of teaching. Observations of learning and discussions with learners and teachers will provide further evidence of the development of learners' skills and their awareness of their own needs as learners.

In making the overall evaluation a balanced judgement would have to be made across these two elements.

5.2 QI 2.1 Organising evidence underpinning evaluations

This QI is about the response of learners to teaching and to the other activities that the learner is involved with in the establishment.

There is just one theme to this impact QI and the following table provides more information on making an evaluation.

Key Questions	Sources of Evidence	Related Process QIs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent are our learners well motivated and actively engaged in learning? Are there signs that our learning activities are developing the four capacities? How do we take account of the views of learners? Are our learners actively involved in out-of-classroom or out-of-hours learning activities; how are they benefiting from these activities? Are our learners with complex additional support needs experiencing a range of contexts? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observation of learning and teaching Depth of learners' engagement in activities and tasks Observation of pupils/children engaged in activities beyond the class/playroom, in the playground, corridors, on excursions and fieldwork Discussion with learners on the quality of their learning experiences Analyses of responses of learners and other stakeholders to questionnaires <p>Other evidence can be found from records of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> levels and trends of attendance and exclusion; learners' profiles, assessment records, achievement records; and participation and progression in social, sporting, cultural and citizenship activities, including out-of-school learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the curriculum appropriate?⁷ (QI 5.1) Is the range of teaching approaches appropriate for engaging learners? (QI 5.2) Are tasks, activities and resources appropriate? (QI 5.3) Are teachers' and learners' expectations appropriate? (QI 5.5) Are learners treated fairly? (QI 5.6) Has sufficient account been taken of learners' emotional, physical and social needs? (QI 5.8)

⁷ This QI is used to indicate a relevant area of the work and life of the school/pre-school centre. It does not imply that this and other QIs, shown in plain text, have to be evaluated.

6. QI 1.1 IMPROVEMENTS IN PERFORMANCE

This QI is placed in the outcomes/impact section of the framework. The QI relates to the achievements of the school or centre as a whole. It relates to all the work of the school or centre and is about the outcomes the school or centre has achieved. In essence, this QI focuses on how successful the establishment is at delivering its vision.

6.1 Key Features

In evaluating this QI, a holistic, rounded judgement is made on how well the school or centre is improving its performance. The scope of the QI is given in the Key Features:

This indicator relates to the achievements of the school or centre. It relates to the overall performance and improvement of learners' progress in becoming successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. It also relates to how successfully the school or centre has taken forward its vision. The application of this quality indicator should take account of the nature of the school or centre, its learner population and its context.

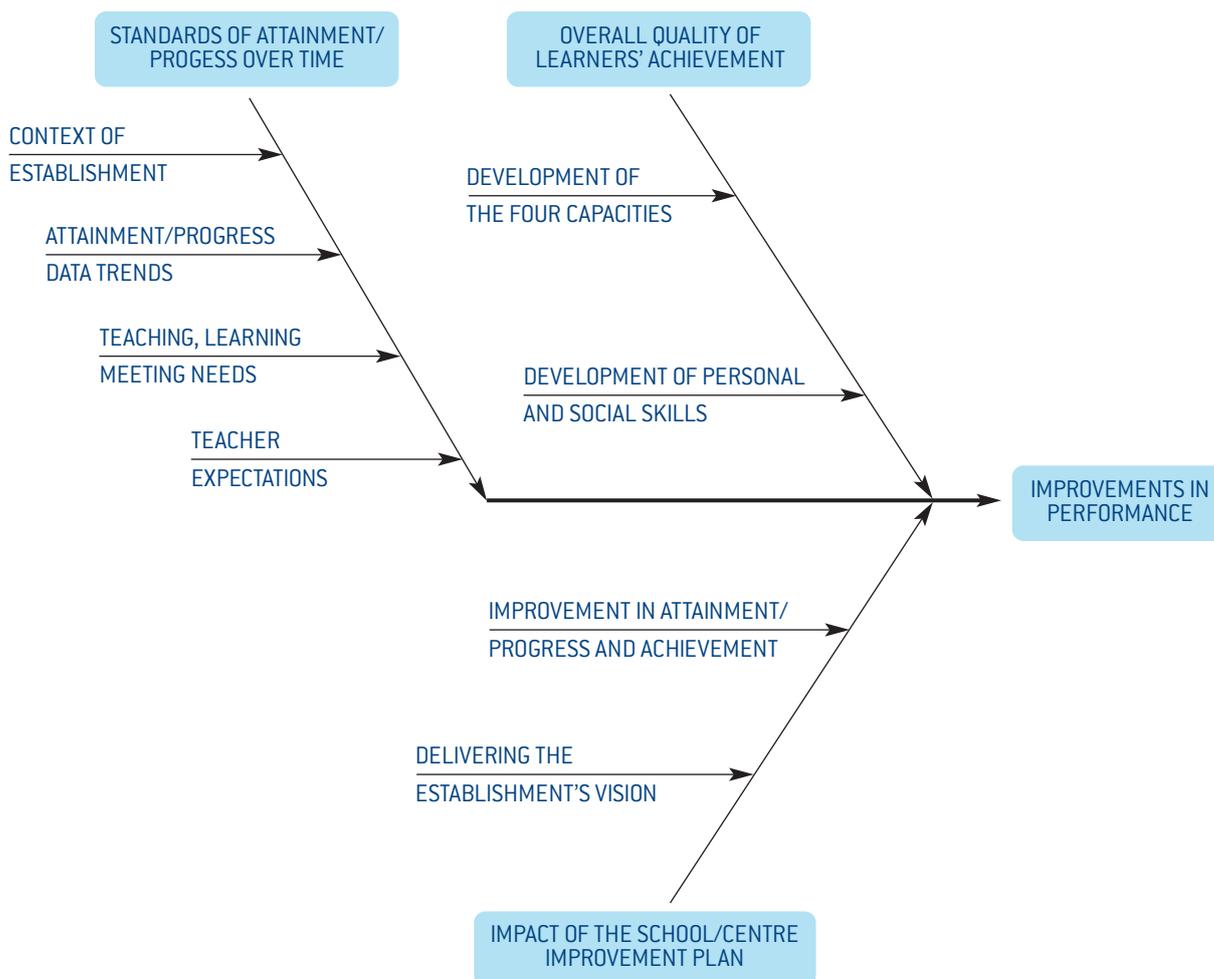
When applying this QI and making judgements on the quality of provision it is important to:

- take account of the context of the school or centre in each theme;
- take account of the evaluation of QI 2.1 learners' experiences; and
- take account of the quality of teaching (QI 5.2), meeting learning needs (QI 5.3) and expectations and promoting achievement (QI 5.5).

This QI is a direct measure of the success of an establishment. It includes the outcomes for its learners, expressed as their attainments and achievements, and these depend on the quality of its approaches to teaching and helping learners to learn. In addition, this measure also includes how well the establishment knows itself and how well it is improving or maintaining high levels of performance.

The following diagram shows the evidence which must be considered when making this evaluation.

QI 1.1 Improvements in performance



6.2 QI 1.1 Organising evidence underpinning evaluations

Theme 1: Standards of attainment over time/children’s progress

In looking at this theme, the context of the establishment is taken into account. The quality of learning and teaching and meeting learning needs also has to be taken into account when evaluating attainment data. If there is, for example, significant headroom for improvement in teachers’ expectations of learners, the quality of teaching and meeting learning needs, then it can be expected that there would also be significant headroom for improvement in attainment/progress.

Key Questions	Sources of Evidence	Related Impact and Process QIs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have we improved standards of attainment or maintained them at a consistently high level? • How good is our children’s progress/pupils’ attainment? • Does the quality of our learning, teaching and meeting learning needs suggest that there is significant headroom for improvement or is it very high? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners’ progress records • Attainment data eg school data on reading levels; EA data; SQA data • Data on other qualifications, e.g. City and Guilds awards and enterprise awards • Comparative data with other schools with similar characteristics • Achievement of targets in IEPs 	<p>Are learners actively engaged in learning? (QI 2.1)</p> <p>How effective is teaching and the involvement of learners? (QI 5.2)⁸</p> <p>How effective is the establishment at making arrangements to meet learners’ needs? (QI 5.3)</p> <p>Do teachers and learners have appropriate expectations? Is there a strong ethos of achievement? (QI 5.5)</p>

⁸ This QI is used to indicate a relevant area of the work and life of the school/pre-school centre. It does not imply that this and other QIs, shown in plain text, have to be evaluated.

Theme 2: Overall quality of learners' achievements

This theme focuses on the overall quality of learners' achievements. It is about the overall success of the establishment in developing its young people as successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

To evaluate the evidence for this theme, the evidence and evaluation made for QI 2.1 should be taken into account. It is necessary to look for data on the overall quality of achievement in comparison to similar schools; to aspects of personal and social development; to the range of achievements; and the impact of additional activities in and beyond the school/pre-school centre day. It is important to take account of the context of the establishment and evaluate the value added to learners by the establishment. Data will include school leavers' destinations.

Key Questions	Sources of Evidence	Related Impact and Process QIs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What difference are we making to the personal and social development of learners? • How determined are our young people to succeed and achieve high standards? • Are our learners becoming progressively more confident, more effective contributors, more responsible as they move from stage to stage? Do their learning skills develop at an appropriate pace?⁹ • How good is the range of activities and experiences and how well are our learners engaging with them in developing their personal and wider achievements? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation of learning experiences, e.g. in class, wider opportunities, out-of-hours clubs • Records of achievements such as success in work experience; residential courses; and additional activities in and beyond the school day • Data on personal and social skills qualifications, e.g. Duke of Edinburgh's Awards, Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) • Interviews of different groups of learners • Analysis of questionnaire responses of learners and other stakeholders • Youth Achievement Awards data • Trend data on school leavers' destinations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are learners actively engaged in learning? (QI 2.1) • Do learners have an appropriate curriculum? (QI 5.1) • Do teachers use methods which are likely to develop all four capacities? (QI 5.2) • Do the establishment's arrangements for meeting learning needs help to develop all four capacities? (QI 5.3) • Do teachers and learners have appropriate expectations? (QI 5.5) • Does the establishment take effective steps to meet learners' emotional, physical and social needs? (QI 5.8)

⁹ The four capacities are expanded in Annex 2 on page 21.

Theme 3: Impact of the school improvement plan

This theme focuses on the extent to which the school or centre has been successful in achieving its vision and aims and bringing about planned improvements to the outcomes for learners.

The effectiveness of the school's or centre's self-evaluation is a critical feature in considering this theme. The school or centre should be able to show that it knows itself from its self-evaluation activities; that it has brought about demonstrable improvement to children and young peoples' learning experiences, achievements and attainments; and that it has been successful in providing high and improving quality education for all learners.

Key Questions	Sources of Evidence	Related Impact, Process and Leadership QIs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well have we achieved our vision for children and young people? • To what extent have we improved learners' experiences? • To what extent have we improved progress or attainment? • To what extent have we improved the wider achievements of learners? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement Plans • Progress/attainment and achievement data trends • Standards and Quality reports • Senior manager and staff interviews • Parent/Parent Council interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the leadership of the establishment have ambition? Do the vision, values and aims guide and have an impact on improvement? [QI 9.1]¹⁰ • How effective are leaders at bringing about change and improvement? [QI 9.4] • Does the school/centre have appropriate systems and culture to evaluate its own progress and take steps to bring about improvements? [QI 5.9]

¹⁰ Further advice on evaluating leadership can be found in *Leadership for learning: The challenges of leading in a time of change*, HMIE 2007.

7. QI 5.9 IMPROVEMENT THROUGH SELF-EVALUATION

This QI is in the 'delivery of educational processes' section in the model. It is one of a range of process QIs which relate to the overall outcomes for the school and the impacts on individuals.

7.1 Key Features

In evaluating this QI a holistic, rounded judgement is made on how well the school or centre brings about improvement through self-evaluation. The scope of the QI is given in the Key Features:

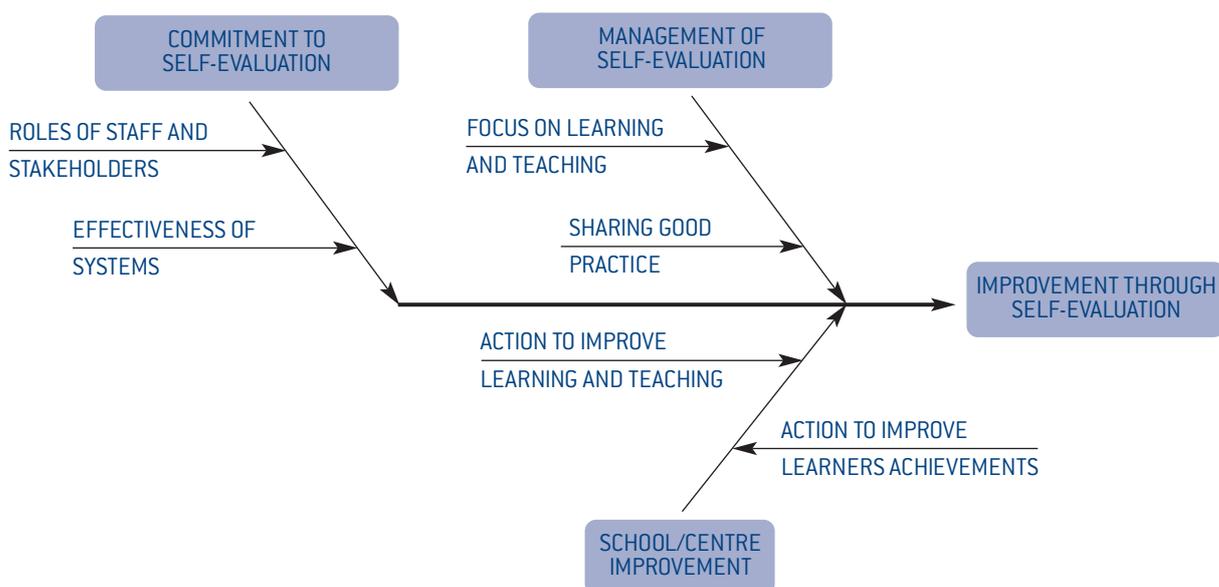
This indicator relates to the school's or centre's arrangements for improvement through self-evaluation and its commitment to this. It highlights the importance of gathering and responding to the views of all partners and stakeholders and involving them. It focuses on the extent to which a school/pre-school centre knows itself well and improves the successes and achievements of learners, and the school/pre-school centre community more widely.

When applying this QI and making judgements on the quality of provision it is important to:

- evaluate the roles of teachers, other staff, partners, learners and other stakeholders in self-evaluation; and the effectiveness of approaches to gathering views on the work of the establishment;
- evaluate the extent to which the establishment focuses on learning and teaching; its success in identifying strengths and areas for improvement; and how well good practice is shared; and most important of all
- evaluate how well the establishment acts on its self-evaluation results; and how successful this has been in bringing about improvement to learning and teaching and the achievements of learners.

The following diagram shows that there are three themes for QI 5.9 and that evidence from each of these areas must be collected in order to make an evaluation. The diagram does not imply that a set order of evaluation must be followed.

In addition, the success of these processes in resulting in a positive impact would be considered when making an evaluation.



The following tables illustrate in more detail factors which should be taken into account when making evaluations.

7.2 QI 5.9 Organising evidence underpinning evaluations

This QI is concerned with the roles of those involved in self-evaluation; the focus of self-evaluation activities on learning and teaching and the sharing of good practice; and how well the results of self-evaluation are used to bring about improvement to learning and teaching and learners' achievements.

Theme 1: Commitment to self-evaluation

In this theme, the role of those involved with self-evaluation is evaluated.

Key Questions	Sources of Evidence	Related Impact and Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent does our vision for the school/centre give direction to self-evaluation?¹¹ Are all staff, partner agencies, learners and other stakeholders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> involved in self-evaluation? aware of resulting strengths and development needs? committed to take action to effect improvement? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with managers, a cross-section of staff, partner agencies, learners and other stakeholders Analyses of stakeholder questionnaires Improvement plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective self-evaluation would lead to improvement in learning and teaching, the curriculum and to other areas of the school/centre. These in turn would lead to improvement in learners' engagement with learning (QI 2.1) and to improvements in learners' progress, attainment and achievement. (QI 1.1).

Theme 2: Management of self-evaluation

In this theme the focus and effectiveness of self-evaluation is evaluated. In addition, whether self-evaluation yields clear strengths and development needs and whether these result in good practice being shared.

Key Questions	Sources of Evidence	Related Impact and Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do we focus self-evaluation sufficiently on learning and our teaching? Have we identified important strengths and areas for improvement through self-evaluation? Has self-evaluation helped us to share good practice? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality assurance calendar Interviews with managers, other staff, partner agencies, learners and other stakeholders Improvement plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective self-evaluation would lead to improvement in learning and teaching, the curriculum and to other areas of the school. These in turn would lead to improvement in pupils engagement with learning (QI 2.1) and to improvements in pupils' progress, attainment and achievement. (QI 1.1).

¹¹ Further advice on the relationship between an establishment's vision and self-evaluation can be found in: *Journey to Excellence Part 4: Planning for Excellence*, HMIE 2007.

Theme 3: School/centre improvement

This theme is the touchstone of effective self-evaluation – effective self-evaluation leads to school/centre improvement. This is evaluated by looking for discernible impact on the quality of learning and teaching and the attainment and achievement of learners.

Key Questions	Sources of Evidence	Related Impact and Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the evidence of improvement in our children's progress/pupils' attainment; in their broader achievement as learners; and in the quality of learning and our teaching? • Is there evidence of improvement in other areas of our work? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation of learning and teaching • Discussion with staff, pupils and other stakeholders • Records of progress, achievement and attainment • Stakeholder questionnaires • Learners' work • Evidence about improvements brought about by previous improvement plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective self-evaluation would lead to improvement in learning and teaching, the curriculum and to other areas of the school. These in turn would lead to improvement in pupils' engagement with learning (QI 2.1) and to improvements in pupils' progress, attainment and achievement. (QI 1.1).

8. ANNEX 1: THE SIX-POINT SCALE

An evaluation of **excellent** applies to provision which is sector leading. Learners' experiences and achievements are of a very high quality. An evaluation of excellent represents an outstanding standard of provision which exemplifies very best practice and is worth disseminating beyond the school or centre. It implies that very high levels of performance are sustainable and will be maintained.

An evaluation of **very good** applies to provision characterised by major strengths. There are very few areas for improvement and any that do exist do not significantly diminish learners' experiences. Whilst an evaluation of very good represents a high standard of provision, it is a standard that should be achievable by all. It implies that it is fully appropriate to continue to make provision without significant adjustment. However, there is an expectation that the school or centre will take opportunities to improve and strive to raise performance to excellent.

An evaluation of **good** applies to provision characterised by important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh any areas for improvement. An evaluation of good represents a standard of provision in which the strengths have a significantly positive impact. However, the quality of learners' experiences is diminished in some way by aspects in which improvement is required. It implies that the school or centre should seek to improve further the areas of important strength, but take action to address the areas for improvement.

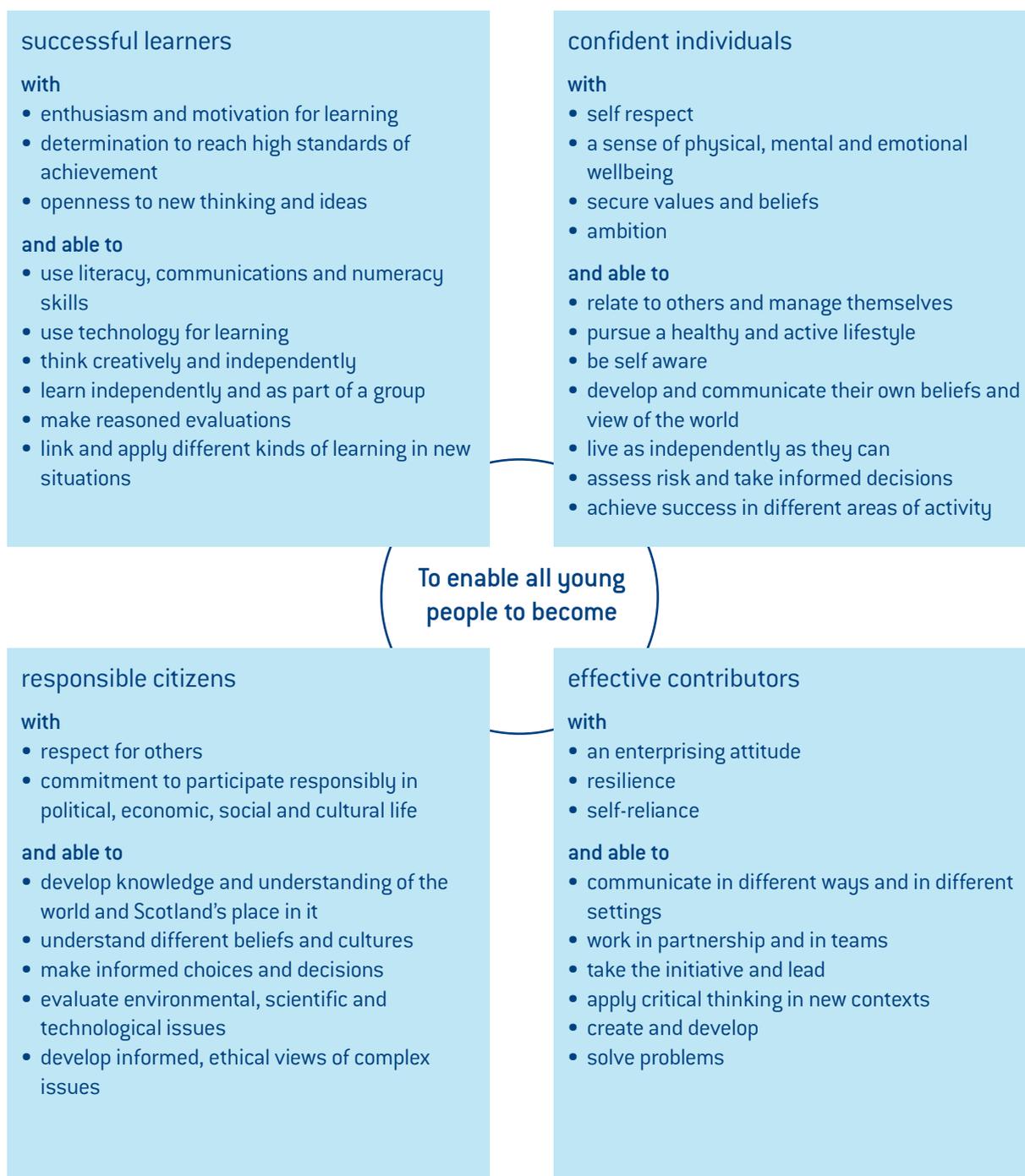
An evaluation of **satisfactory** applies to provision characterised by strengths which just outweigh weaknesses. An evaluation of satisfactory indicates that learners have access to a basic level of provision. It represents a standard where the strengths have a positive impact on learners' experiences. However, while the weaknesses are not important enough to have a substantially adverse impact, they do constrain the overall quality of learners' experiences. It implies that the school or centre should take action to address areas of weakness by building on its strengths.

An evaluation of **weak** applies to provision which has some strengths, but where there are important weaknesses. In general, an evaluation of weak may be arrived at in a number of circumstances. While there may be some strengths, important weaknesses will, either individually or collectively, be sufficient to diminish learners' experiences in substantial ways. It implies the need for prompt, structured and planned action on the part of the school or centre.

An evaluation of **unsatisfactory** applies when there are major weaknesses in provision requiring immediate remedial action. Learners' experiences are at risk in significant respects. In almost all cases, staff responsible for provision evaluated as unsatisfactory will require support from senior managers in planning and carrying out the necessary actions to effect improvement. This may involve working alongside other staff or agencies in or beyond the school or centre.

9. ANNEX 2: THE FOUR CAPACITIES

The four capacities are shown in the following diagram.



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Further Information is available from:

HM Inspectorate of Education
Denholm House
Almondvale Business Park
Almondvale Way
Livingston
EH54 6GA

Tel: 01506 600 200

Fax: 01506 600 337

E-mail: enquiries@hmie.gsi.gov.uk

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