

School inspection handbook

Handbook for inspecting schools in England under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

This handbook is for use from September 2015 and remains in draft until that point. Minor amendments may be made to the text prior to September.

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361

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Contents

Introduction	4
Part 1. How schools will be inspected	5
What are the legal requirements for the inspection of schools?	5
Before the inspection	10
Clarification for schools	10
Safeguarding	18
Seeking the views of registered parents and other stakeholders	19
During the inspection	20
Schools causing concern	27
After the inspection	30
Quality assurance and complaints	31
Part 2. The evaluation schedule – how schools will be judged	32
Background to the evaluation schedule	32
The evaluation schedule and grade descriptors	32
Overall effectiveness: the quality and standards of education	32
Grade descriptors for overall effectiveness	35
Effectiveness of leadership and management	36
Grade descriptors for the effectiveness of leadership and management	39
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	42
Grade descriptors for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment	46
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	48
Grade descriptors for personal development, behaviour and welfare	49
Outcomes for pupils	51
Grade descriptors for outcomes for pupils	55
Inspecting the effectiveness of the early years provision: the quality and standards	56
Inspecting provision for two-year-olds	58
Grade descriptors for the effectiveness of the early years provision: quality and standards	59
Inspecting the effectiveness of the 16 to 19 study programmes	61
Grade descriptors: the effectiveness of the 16 to 19 study programmes	63
Annex. Additional guidance	66
New academies	66
Inspecting partnerships and off-site provision	67
Inspection of religious education and collective worship	67
Aligned inspections of maintained and non-maintained schools or academies with registration as children’s homes	70

Introduction

1. This handbook describes the main activities undertaken during inspections of schools in England under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.¹ It sets out the evaluation criteria that inspectors use to make their judgements and on which they report.
2. The handbook has two parts:
 - Part 1: How schools will be inspected
This contains information about the processes before, during and after the inspection.
 - Part 2: The evaluation schedule
This contains the evaluation criteria inspectors use to make the graded judgements about schools and includes exemplification of the kinds of evidence and activities used by inspectors to make their judgements.
3. This handbook is primarily a guide for inspectors on how to carry out school inspections. However, it is made available to schools and other organisations to ensure that they are informed about the process and procedures of inspection. It seeks to balance the need for consistency in inspections with the flexibility required to respond to the individual circumstances of each school. It should not be regarded as a set of inflexible rules, but as an account of the procedures that govern inspection. It does not replace the professional judgement of inspectors. This handbook is for school inspections to be carried out from September 2015 under the 'Common inspection framework: education, skills and early years' (CIF).²

¹ In this handbook, any reference to the Education Act 2005 includes any amendments made by the Education Act 2011, the Education and Skills Act 2008, the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Academies Act 2010.

² *Common inspection framework*, Ofsted, June 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/common-inspection-framework-education-skills-and-early-years-from-september-2015.

Part 1. How schools will be inspected

What are the legal requirements for the inspection of schools?

How schools are selected for inspection

4. The CIF and this handbook set out the statutory basis for school inspections conducted under the Education Act 2005.
5. The handbook applies to all schools in England that are to be inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.³ The schools subject to inspection under this section of the Act are:
 - community, foundation and voluntary schools
 - community and foundation special schools
 - pupil referral units⁴
 - maintained nursery schools
 - academies⁵
 - city technology colleges
 - city technology colleges for the technology of the arts
 - certain non-maintained special schools approved by the Secretary of State under section 342 of the Education Act 1996.
6. An inspection of boarding or residential provision in a boarding or residential special school will be integrated with the school inspection where possible (see Annex). Integrated inspections cannot be carried out when inspection cycles do not coincide. In such cases, only an inspection of the boarding or residential provision will be conducted.⁶

³ There is a separate handbook for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005: *School inspection handbook for inspections under Section 8 of the Education Act 2005*, Ofsted, June 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-short-monitoring-and-unannounced-behaviour-school-inspections.

⁴ Paragraph 21 of Schedule 1, Part 1, to the Education (Pupil Referral Units) (Application of Enactments) (England) Regulations 2007 (SI 2007/2979) makes Part 1 of the Education Act 2005 (School inspections and other inspections by school inspectors) apply in relation to units as if they were schools.

⁵ This includes all academy family schools: sponsor-led academies, academy converter schools, academy special schools, free schools, special free schools, alternative provision free schools, university technical colleges (UTCs) and studio schools. The *Further education and skills inspection handbook* applies to 16 to 19 academies; www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-education-and-skills-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015.

⁶ The inspection of the boarding/residential provision will be conducted under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools or residential special schools, as appropriate. The boarding/residential inspection will

7. All schools have a unique reference number (URN). Any institution with its own URN that Ofsted inspects will receive an inspection report.⁷ However, Ofsted may seek to coordinate the inspection of certain groups of schools where this is possible.
8. Ofsted is required to inspect at prescribed intervals all schools to which section 5 applies.⁸ The regulations set the interval for section 5 inspections 'within five school years from the end of the school year in which the last inspection took place.'⁹ The exceptions to this requirement are schools that are exempt from section 5 inspection (known as 'exempt schools').

Risk assessment

9. Ofsted uses risk assessment to ensure that its approach to inspection is proportionate and so that it can focus its efforts where it can have the greatest impact. Risk assessment has two stages:
 - Stage one involves an assessment of each school, based on analysis of publicly available data.
 - Stage two involves a more in-depth desk-based review of a wider range of available information.
10. The outcomes of the risk assessment are used differently depending on the previous inspection grade of the school. Ofsted uses a broad range of indicators to select providers for inspection. The risk assessment process normally begins in the third school year after the most recent inspection.
11. In conducting a risk assessment, Ofsted analyses:
 - pupils' academic achievement over time, taking account of both attainment and progress
 - pupils' attendance

follow *Inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools – The inspection framework*, Ofsted, March 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-framework-for-inspecting-boarding-and-residential-provision-in-schools and the guidance set out in *Handbook for inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools – Guidance for inspecting boarding and residential provision in schools in England*, Ofsted, March 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-boarding-and-residential-provision-in-schools-guidance-for-inspectors.

⁷ Schools that work in partnership with other schools, through federations, managed groups, chains or other collaborative activities but that have a separate URN will be inspected as individual schools and separate inspection reports will be published.

⁸ Under section 5(1) of the Education Act 2005.

⁹ Education (School Inspection) (England) Regulations 2005 as amended by Regulation 2(3) of the Education (School Inspection) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/170).

- the outcomes of any inspections, such as survey inspections, carried out by Ofsted since the last routine inspection
 - the views of parents,¹⁰ including those shown by Parent View,¹¹ an online questionnaire for parents
 - qualifying complaints¹² about the school referred to Ofsted by parents
 - any other significant concerns that are brought to Ofsted's attention.
12. Ofsted may also conduct unannounced inspections and monitoring visits at any time.

Outstanding/exempt schools

13. Maintained primary and secondary schools and academies that were judged to be outstanding in their overall effectiveness at their most recent section 5 inspection are exempt from inspection under section 5. They can only be inspected under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. This exemption also applies to academy converter schools¹³ where the overall effectiveness of the predecessor school was outstanding at its most recent section 5 inspection.
14. Certain types of schools that were judged outstanding for overall effectiveness at their most recent section 5 inspection are currently not prescribed as exempt schools and must be inspected within the prescribed interval. These are special schools (including maintained special schools, special free schools, alternative provision academies and non-maintained special schools with residential provision), pupil referral units and maintained nursery schools.
15. If Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) or the Secretary of State has concerns about the performance of an exempt school (or any other school covered by section 5), HMCI has powers to inspect it at any time under section 8 of the Act. Under section 8, the Secretary of State may require HMCI to conduct an inspection of an exempt school (or any other school covered by section 5). The Secretary of State may also require HMCI to treat the inspection as if it were carried out under section 5.
16. Exempt schools are subject to risk assessment. If the risk assessment process raises concerns about the performance of an exempt school, it may be inspected at any time after the completion of the risk assessment. If no concerns are raised from the risk assessment, the school will not be informed.

¹⁰ 'Parents' refers to mothers, fathers and/or carers.

¹¹ <https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

¹² Ofsted has specific powers (under sections 11A–C of the Education Act 2005) to investigate certain complaints about schools, known as qualifying complaints.

¹³ Academy converter schools are schools that have been approved by the Secretary of State to convert to become an academy.

17. Where risk assessment identifies concerns about decline in the performance of pupils' academic achievement and overall decline in performance, these outstanding schools will receive a section 8 inspection (see paragraph 20). If during the course of the inspection, the lead inspector finds that the school may no longer be outstanding, then the lead inspector may convert the inspection to a section 5 inspection.
18. In addition, exempt schools may be inspected between risk assessments where:
- safeguarding, including a decline in the standards of pupils' behaviour and the ability of staff to maintain discipline and/or welfare concerns, suggests that it should be inspected
 - a subject or thematic survey inspection raises more general concerns
 - Ofsted has received a qualifying complaint about a school that, taken alongside other available evidence, suggests that it would be appropriate to inspect the school
 - concerns are raised about standards of leadership or governance
 - concerns are identified about the breadth and balance of the curriculum (including where the statutory requirement to publish information to parents is not met)
 - HMCI or the Secretary of State has concerns about a school's performance.
19. If any of the concerns listed above are identified for exempt schools, then these schools will usually be inspected under the section 8 no formal designation procedures.

Short inspections of good schools

20. The frequency of inspection is proportionate to the performance and circumstances of schools. From 1 September 2015, all schools judged to be good at their previous section 5 inspection will receive a one-day short inspection, carried out under section 8, approximately every three years, as long as the quality of education remains good. A separate section 8 handbook explains how these short inspections will be carried out.¹⁴
21. As is the case for all schools, a good school may still receive a 'no formal designation' inspection carried out under section 8 at any time if:

¹⁴ *School inspection handbook for inspections under Section 8 of the Education Act 2005*, Ofsted, June 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-short-monitoring-and-unannounced-behaviour-school-inspections.

- safeguarding, including a decline in the standards of pupils' behaviour and the ability of staff to maintain discipline and/or welfare concerns, suggests that it should be inspected earlier than its next scheduled inspection
 - a subject or thematic survey inspection raises more general concerns that suggest that it should be inspected earlier than its next scheduled inspection
 - Ofsted has received a qualifying complaint about the school that, taken alongside other available evidence, suggests that it would be appropriate to bring forward the school's inspection
 - concerns are raised about standards of leadership or governance that suggest that it should be inspected earlier than its next scheduled inspection
 - concerns are identified about the breadth and balance of the curriculum (including where the statutory requirement to publish information to parents is not met) that suggest that it should be inspected earlier
 - it is part of any sample selected to ensure that HMCI's Annual Report reflects evidence from a cross-section of schools of different types, phases and effectiveness
 - HMCI or the Secretary of State has concerns about the school's performance that suggest that it should be inspected earlier than its next scheduled inspection.
22. Pupil referral units, special schools (including maintained special schools and non-maintained special schools with residential provision) and maintained nursery schools that were judged good or outstanding at their previous section 5 inspection will receive short inspections approximately every three years carried out under section 8, as long as the quality of education remains good or outstanding. These settings are not exempt from routine inspections if they are judged outstanding.

Schools requesting an inspection

23. Schools are able, via the appropriate authority (normally the school's governing body), to request an inspection. If Ofsted carries out such an inspection (under section 8), HMCI may charge the appropriate authority for its cost.¹⁵ The inspection must be treated as if it were conducted under section 5.

Using evidence from section 5 and section 8 inspections

24. Ofsted may collect evidence on other aspects of provision through section 5 and section 8 inspections and use it to inform national reporting.

¹⁵ Under section 8(3) of the Education Act 2005; www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

Schools with a religious character

25. The Secretary of State designates certain schools as having a religious character.¹⁶ The content of collective worship and denominational education in such schools is inspected separately under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. Further details are provided in the Annex.

Separately registered childcare provision

26. Early years or childcare provision of more than two hours a day that is not managed by the governing body must normally be registered with Ofsted. If provision managed directly by a school governing body includes care for children under two years old, or where no child attending it is a pupil of the school, it must be registered with Ofsted. Provision registered in this way is not inspected under section 5 of the Act.

When can an inspection take place?

27. Inspection can take place at any point after the end of five working school days in the autumn term. For example, if pupils return to school on a Wednesday, inspection can take place as early as the following Wednesday.

Before the inspection

Clarification for schools

28. The information below, originally published by Ofsted in the autumn 2014 and revised in March 2015, serves to confirm facts about the requirements of Ofsted and to dispel myths about inspection that can result in unnecessary workloads in schools. It is intended to highlight specific practices that are not required by Ofsted. It is up to schools themselves to determine their practices and for leadership teams to justify these on their own merits rather than by reference to this inspection handbook.

Lesson planning

- Ofsted **does not** require schools to provide individual lesson plans to inspectors. Equally, Ofsted **does not** require schools to provide previous lesson plans.
- Ofsted **does not** specify how planning should be set out, the length of time it should take or the amount of detail it should contain. Inspectors are interested in the effectiveness of planning rather than the form it takes.

¹⁶ Under section 69(3) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998; www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/contents.

Self-evaluation

- Ofsted does not require self-evaluation to be provided in a specific format. Any assessment that is provided should be part of the school's business processes and not generated solely for inspection purposes.

Grading of lessons

- Ofsted **does not** award a grade for the quality of teaching or outcomes in the individual lessons visited. It **does not** grade individual lessons. It **does not** expect schools to use the Ofsted evaluation schedule to grade teaching or individual lessons.

Lesson observations

- Ofsted **does not** require schools to undertake a specified amount of lesson observation.
- Ofsted **does not** expect schools to provide specific details of the pay grade of individual teachers who are observed during inspection.

Pupils' work

- Ofsted **does not** expect to see a particular frequency or quantity of work in pupils' books or folders. Ofsted recognises that the amount of work in books and folders will depend on the subject being studied and the age and ability of the pupils.
- Ofsted recognises that marking and feedback to pupils, both written and oral, are important aspects of assessment. However, Ofsted **does not** expect to see any specific frequency, type or volume of marking and feedback; these are for the school to decide through its assessment policy. Marking and feedback should be consistent with that policy, which may cater for different subjects and different age groups of pupils in different ways, in order to be effective and efficient in promoting learning.
- While inspectors will consider how written and oral feedback is used to promote learning, Ofsted **does not** expect to see any written record of oral feedback provided to pupils by teachers.
- If it is necessary for inspectors to identify marking as an area for improvement for a school, they will pay careful attention to the way recommendations are written to ensure that these do not drive unnecessary workload for teachers.

Evidence for inspection

- Ofsted **does not** expect schools to provide evidence for inspection beyond that set out in this inspection handbook.
- Ofsted **will** take a range of evidence into account when making judgements, including published performance data, the school's in-year

performance information and work in pupils' books and folders. However, unnecessary or extensive collections of marked pupils' work **are not** required for inspection.

- Ofsted **does not** expect performance- and pupil-tracking information to be presented in a particular format. Such information should be provided to inspectors in the format that the school would ordinarily use to track and monitor the progress of pupils in that school.
- Ofsted **does not** require teachers to undertake additional work or to ask pupils to undertake work specifically for the inspection.
- Ofsted **will** usually expect to see evidence of the monitoring of teaching and learning and its link to teachers' performance management and the teachers' standards, but this should be the information that the school uses routinely and **not** additional evidence generated for inspection.
- Ofsted **does not** require schools to provide evidence for each teacher for each of the bulleted sub-headings in the teachers' standards.

Statutory provisions

- Ofsted **will** report on any failure to comply with statutory arrangements, including those relating to the workforce, where these form part of the inspection framework and evaluation schedule (Part 2 of this handbook).

Inspectors' planning and preparation

29. The lead inspector will prepare for the inspection by gaining an overview of the school's recent performance and any changes since the last inspection. The lead inspector will use all available evidence to develop an initial picture of the school's performance. The planning will be informed by analysis of:
- the previous inspection report
 - the findings of any recent Ofsted survey and/or monitoring letters
 - responses from Parent View,¹⁷ Ofsted's online survey available for parents
 - issues raised by or the findings from the investigation of any qualifying complaints¹⁸ about the school (inspectors do not investigate individual complaints but they must consider any wider issues raised by the complaint)¹⁹

¹⁷ <https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

¹⁸ Ofsted has specific powers (under section 11A-C) of the Education Act 2005 to investigate certain complaints known as qualifying complaints. Further guidance is available in *Complaints about Ofsted: guidance for parents*, April 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/complaints-ofsted-about-schools-guidance-for-parents.

¹⁹ Further guidance for inspectors on obtaining complaints and concerns about a school in preparation of an inspection can be found in guidance issued by the Complaints about Schools team, *Inspector*

- information available from the provider information portal (PIP),²⁰ including any warning notices issued to maintained schools²¹
 - the executive summary and areas for development of the most recent Ofsted inspection report on the relevant local authority's child protection arrangements; this may be either as a stand-alone inspection or as part of the wider inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers
 - information on the school's website, including its statement on the use of the pupil premium,²² in primary schools the PE and sport premium, the statutory sharing with parents of curriculum information (so the lead inspector can start to assess the breadth and balance of the school's curriculum and whether it is likely to promote preparation for and an appreciation of life in modern Britain), the special educational needs (SEN) information report, the presence and suitability of the safeguarding guidance, taking into account current government requirements, information about the promotion of equality of opportunity and other information for parents²³
 - data from RAISEonline, including on attendance and exclusions,²⁴ the sixth form performance and assessment (PANDA) report and the Level 3 Value Added (L3VA) report
 - any other information from relevant stakeholders such as regional schools commissioners, local authorities, the Department for Education (DfE) and the police.
30. The lead inspector will prepare and distribute brief joining instructions for the inspection team. This will include factual information, a brief analysis of the pre-inspection information and the key issues and lines of enquiry that are the focus for the inspection.

guidance for obtaining complaints and concerns information held by Ofsted in preparation for school inspections; Ofsted, 2013.

²⁰ The provider information portal (PIP) provides a high-level view for Ofsted inspectors of information about providers we inspect and regulate.

²¹ Warning notices for academies are listed at www.gov.uk/government/publications/list-of-letters-to-academy-trusts-about-poor-performance. Inspectors should also note that they can locate individual warning notices by conducting a search on the GOV.UK website by typing the name of the academy followed by the words 'warning notice' into the search facility.

²² Throughout this document, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support.

²³ Information for schools about information required on a school website is available at www.gov.uk/what-maintained-schools-must-publish-online.

²⁴ <http://dashboard.ofsted.gov.uk/>. (Guidance on the use of the school data dashboard is also available on this link.)

31. Ofsted may schedule concurrent inspections of schools with collaborative arrangements that share important aspects of their provision, such as schools with shared 16 to 19 study programmes or a shared inclusion unit. Inspectors should make sure that they communicate with each other before and during the inspection. They should ensure that they give sufficient consideration to the emerging judgements about the linked provision.
32. The inspection of boarding or residential provision in a school is undertaken by one or more social care regulatory inspectors. Contact between the education and social care regulatory inspectors should take place before the inspection. Guidance on pre-inspection activity for integrated inspections is set out in the 'Handbook for inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools, Guidance for inspecting boarding and residential provision in schools in England'.²⁵

Notification and introduction

33. Ofsted will normally contact the school by telephone to announce the inspection during the afternoon of the working day before the inspection.
34. If the headteacher is unavailable when the notification call is made, Ofsted will ask to speak to the most senior member of staff available. Once Ofsted is able to confirm that the inspection will take place, the school will receive formal confirmation by email.
35. Once Ofsted has informed the school of the inspection, the lead inspector will contact the school and ask to speak to the headteacher. The call will be short and focused on practical issues.
36. The purpose of the lead inspector's initial call is to:
 - make the school aware of its statutory duty to inform parents of the inspection and that Parent View is the main vehicle for gathering the views of parents at the point of inspection; inspectors should remind the school that Ofsted's letter to parents containing the link to Parent View may be sent electronically as well as a paper copy sent via pupils
 - establish whether the school has a special educational needs resource base
 - establish whether the school has any pupils who attend off-site alternative provision, either full-time or part-time. Inspectors must ask the school about the registration status of any alternative providers that they use. Any provider of alternative provision must be registered as an independent school if it caters full-time for five or more pupils of compulsory school age,

²⁵ *Handbook for inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools*, Ofsted, 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-boarding-and-residential-provision-in-schools-guidance-for-inspectors.

or one such pupil who is looked after, has an education, health and care (EHC) plan or has a statement of special educational needs

- establish whether the school has an off-site unit to cater for pupils with behaviour or attendance difficulties either run by the school or in partnership with other schools
- make arrangements for the inspection; this includes an invitation to the headteacher to participate in observations of teaching and learning and to observe the main inspection team meetings
- make arrangements for meetings with key staff
- establish what the governance structure of the school or academy is,²⁶ including with reference to the constitution, and make arrangements for a meeting with the chair of the governing body and as many governors as possible, and request that as many governors as possible are also present at the final feedback meeting
- request either a face-to-face meeting or a telephone call with a representative from the local authority, academy chain, multi-academy trust board, sponsor or other relevant responsible body; this does not apply to stand-alone academy converters
- request that, where appropriate, a representative from the local authority, academy chain, multi-academy trust board, sponsor or other relevant responsible body is present at the inspection feedback; this does not apply to stand-alone academy converters
- request that relevant school documents are made available as soon as possible from the start of the inspection (see paragraph 35)
- provide an opportunity for the school to ask any questions
- establish whether the school is either providing support for other schools or receiving it; if so, inspectors should include this information, giving the names of the school(s), in the 'school context' section of the report. This should include any such activity over the previous 12 months.

²⁶ This can be checked with the headteacher as part of the call. Where multi-academy trusts have delegated responsibility to local governing bodies, this should be set out in a statement of delegation. Academies should also set out their governance structure in their annual statement of accounts, which can generally be accessed through the DfE performance tables site. Inspectors should clarify where responsibility lies and who they should talk with during the inspection, especially where a school is part of a multi-academy trust.

37. Inspectors will request that the following information is available at the start of the inspection:
- a summary of any school self-evaluation or equivalent
 - the current school improvement plan or equivalent, including any strategic planning that sets out the longer term vision for the school
 - school timetable, current staff list and times for the school day
 - any information about pre-planned interruptions to normal school routines during the inspection
 - the single central record of the checks and vetting of all staff working with pupils
 - records and analysis of exclusions, pupils taken off roll, incidents of poor behaviour and any use of internal isolation
 - records and analysis of bullying, discriminatory and prejudicial behaviour, either directly or indirectly, including racist, disability and homophobic bullying, use of derogatory language and racist incidents
 - a list of referrals made to the designated person for safeguarding in the school and those that were subsequently referred to the local authority, along with brief details of the resolution
 - a list of all pupils who are open cases to children's services/social care and for whom there is a multi-agency plan
 - up-to-date attendance analysis for all groups of pupils
 - records of the evaluation of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment
 - information about the school's performance management arrangements, including the most recent performance management outcomes and their relationship to salary progression, in an anonymised format
 - documented evidence of the work of governors and their priorities, including any written scheme of delegation for an academy in a multi-academy trust
 - any reports of external evaluation of the school, including any review of governance or use of the pupil premium funding.

Resource bases

38. If the school has a special educational needs resource base delegated to it or the local authority maintains direct responsibility for the period of time when the pupils in the provision are within mainstream classes at the school being inspected, the resource base must be inspected. Inspectors must consider evidence about the resourced provision when making judgements about the school overall.

39. During the initial telephone contact with the school, Ofsted will obtain specific information about any resource base, including:
- the number of pupils and the range of the needs catered for by the specially resourced provision, together with pupils' timetables, including when they are taught within mainstream classes (with and without support) and when they receive specialist support in separate resourced provision
 - the type(s) of language/communication systems used; if the specialist provision is for deaf pupils, it is important to establish whether a British Sign Language interpreter is required when meeting with the pupils (the lead inspector should contact the Ofsted regional duty desk as soon as possible if this support is needed)
 - staffing arrangements and details of any outreach services provided by the resourced provision.

Requests for deferral or cancellation

40. If a school requests a deferral of its inspection, the lead inspector must immediately make Ofsted aware by contacting the Ofsted regional duty desk. Ofsted will decide whether this should be granted in accordance with its deferral policy.
41. In exceptional circumstances, an inspection might be cancelled or deferred after the school has been notified, following a request made by the school. Normally, however, if pupils are receiving education in the school, an inspection will go ahead.
42. The deferral policy makes clear that the absence of the headteacher is not normally a reason for deferring an inspection. If a school is within six months of confirmed closure, but the headteacher does not request a cancellation when the inspector makes contact, the inspection coordinator should call the duty desk to highlight this and get advice as to whether the inspection should still be carried out. Decisions will be made case by case.
43. In the case of unannounced inspections, any requests for a deferral will be passed to the Ofsted Regional Director, who will decide whether the request can be granted.

No-notice inspections

44. Ofsted may conduct inspections without notice.²⁷ When this happens, the lead inspector will normally telephone the school about 15 minutes before arriving

²⁷ Inspection without notice will be considered where there are serious concerns about one or more of the following: the breadth and balance of the curriculum; rapidly declining standards; safeguarding,

on site. In these cases, the inspector will make the initial call simply to inform the school that the inspection is about to begin and will leave all other arrangements until arriving at the school.

Using the school's self-evaluation

45. Ofsted does not require schools to produce a self-evaluation document or summary in a particular format. Any assessment that is provided should be part of the school's business processes and not generated solely for inspection purposes.

Safeguarding

46. Inspectors will always have regard for how well children and learners are helped and protected so that they are kept safe. Although inspectors will not provide a separate numerical grade for this key aspect of a provider's work, inspectors will always make a written judgement under leadership and management in the report about whether or not the arrangements for safeguarding children and learners are effective.
47. Ofsted has published a document setting out the approach inspectors should take to inspecting safeguarding in all the settings covered by the framework. It should be read alongside the framework and handbooks:
- 'Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings', June 2015.²⁸
48. It is also essential that inspectors are familiar with the statutory guidance in relation to safeguarding:
- 'Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges', March 2015²⁹
 - 'Working together to safeguard children', March 2015.³⁰

including a decline in standards of pupils' behaviour and the ability of staff to maintain discipline; and standards of leadership or governance.

²⁸ *Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings*, Ofsted, June 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-safeguarding-in-early-years-education-and-skills-from-september-2015.

²⁹ *Keeping children safe in education*, Department for Education, 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2.

³⁰ *Working together to safeguard children*, Department for Education, 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2.

Reporting on evidence or allegations of child abuse

49. On a very small number of occasions, inspectors may come across evidence or allegations of child abuse within a school. Inspectors should consult 'Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings'. Inspectors must not attempt to investigate the incident.

Seeking the views of registered parents and other stakeholders

50. When a school is notified of a section 5 inspection, it is required to take such steps as are reasonably practicable to notify all registered parents of registered pupils³¹ at the school, including those who have been excluded, attend alternative provision or are away from school. Schools are also required to notify relevant bodies of the inspection, including providers of alternative provision.³²
51. Inspectors also have a statutory duty to have regard to the views of parents and other prescribed persons³³ at the point of a section 5 inspection. Ofsted's email confirming the inspection includes a letter that formally notifies parents. It also explains Parent View and how parents can contact inspectors. Schools should encourage parents to complete Parent View by placing a link on their website to the Parent View website.³⁴ In addition, inspectors should encourage the school to notify parents using its own electronic systems (such as SMS messages), where these are available.
52. Inspectors will review the evidence from Parent View throughout the inspection to ensure that all online responses received during the inspection are taken into account. If the response rate for Parent View is low, inspectors may take steps during the inspection to gather further evidence of parents' views.
53. Inspectors will also take into account any other evidence from parents, including the results of any past surveys the school has carried out or commissioned.
54. If individual parents raise serious issues, inspectors should follow these up with the school and record its response.
55. During integrated inspections of boarding or residential special schools, social care regulatory inspectors will take account of the views that parents have given on Parent View about the school's boarding or residential provision. Views of children and young people who are boarders or residential pupils and boarding staff will have been gathered through Ofsted's annual point-in-time

³¹ Under section 6(1) of the Education Act 2005.

³² Under regulation 4 of the Education (School Inspection) (England) Regulations 2005.

³³ Under section 7 of the Education Act 2005.

³⁴ <https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

surveys.³⁵ The views of placing authorities are also gathered for residential special schools.

56. The views of staff in schools are gathered through a questionnaire that the inspection coordinator sends to the school alongside the formal notification of inspection. The school is asked to distribute the questionnaire to all staff apart from those in the boarding provision (whose views will have already been sought through the point-in-time survey). Staff should complete and return their questionnaire by 11am of the second day of the inspection, where practicable.

During the inspection

Days allocated to inspection and inspection team members

57. Inspections do not normally last longer than two days. The size of the inspection team will vary according to the size and nature of the school. Inspectors will spend most of their time gathering first-hand evidence to inform judgements.

The start of the on-site inspection

58. The lead inspector should meet the headteacher and/or senior leadership team briefly at the beginning of the inspection to:
 - introduce any team inspectors
 - make arrangements for a longer meeting at a convenient time with the headteacher to discuss the school's self-evaluation or equivalent and other relevant matters
 - confirm arrangements for meetings with representatives of those responsible for the governance of the school and with key staff
 - confirm arrangements for providing feedback following observing teaching and learning in lessons
 - request information about staff absence and other practical issues
 - ascertain whether there are particular reasons why any teachers should not be observed, for example where they are subject to capability procedures
 - ensure that the headteacher is aware that Ofsted's evidence from observations of teaching and learning, whether joint or otherwise, must not be used as evidence in capability/disciplinary proceedings or for the purposes of performance management.

³⁵ *Ofsted's point-in-time survey for boarders/residential pupils aged 3–19 about a school's boarding houses/residential provision*, Ofsted, September 2013; www.gov.uk/government/publications/survey-of-boarders-or-residential-pupils-about-accommodation.

59. Where there is more than one inspector, a short team meeting should take place to clarify inspection activities, the initial lines of enquiry the team should explore and individual roles and responsibilities.

Gathering and recording evidence

60. Inspectors must spend as much time as possible gathering evidence about the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in lessons and other learning activities, to collect a range of evidence about the typicality of teaching, learning and assessment in the school. Inspectors will scrutinise pupils' work, talk to pupils about their work, gauging both their understanding and their engagement in learning, and obtain pupils' perceptions of the typical quality of teaching in a range of subjects.
61. Inspectors will evaluate evidence relating to the achievement of specific groups of pupils and individuals, including disadvantaged pupils, the most able pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. They will give specific attention to the quality of learning within mainstream lessons and on-site separate provision and evidence of learning in off-site alternative provision.
62. Other evidence gathered by inspectors will include discussions with pupils and staff, listening to pupils read (with particular focus on hearing lower-attaining pupils read) and looking at examples of pupils' work to seek out evidence for progression in knowledge and understanding. Inspectors will also scrutinise the school's records and documentation relating, for example, to pupils' academic and vocational achievement and the welfare and safety of pupils in alternative provision.

Observing teaching, learning and assessment

63. Inspectors will visit lessons to gather evidence about teaching, learning and assessment and will consider this first-hand evidence alongside documentary evidence about the quality of teaching and views from leaders, governors, staff, pupils and parents. Inspectors will also include evidence from observing pupils learning in, for example, extra-curricular activities. This range of evidence also informs the evaluation of pupils' progress, pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, and the impact of leaders' and managers' improvements to teaching.
64. Once agreed with the headteacher, the lead inspector will share the strategy for observing in lessons with the inspection team and ensure that senior leaders and inspectors understand the rationale for it. Observations in lessons will seek to cover as wide a range of subjects, key stages and ability groups as possible. The school will not normally be informed in advance about which classes will be visited. Not all teachers and classes will necessarily be observed. This will be the case in most secondary schools and large primary schools.

65. Inspectors may engage in:

- short visits to a number of lessons, spending a few minutes in each
- short observations of small group teaching
- observing learning in lessons, during which they may observe activities, talk with pupils about their work and scrutinise pupils' hard copy and electronic work
- joining a class or specific group of pupils as they go from lesson to lesson, to assess their experience of a school day or part of a school day. Inspectors may identify a class, or classes, that contains one or more pupils from the specific groups identified in the pre-inspection analysis and initial lines of enquiry. In this way, the experience, progress and learning of these pupils can be judged within the context of other pupils' experience, such as their behaviour, their attitudes to learning and their access to the curriculum
- joint observations of teaching and learning carried out with the headteacher and/or senior staff.

Feedback to and discussion with teachers and other staff after observations

66. Inspectors must offer feedback to teachers. Feedback may take a variety of forms, at the discretion of inspectors, such as one-to-one or discussions with groups of observed teachers or with whole staff groups. The lead inspector should make the arrangements clear to senior leaders so that all staff understand how feedback will be conducted. These discussions should encourage a dialogue between the inspector and teacher about the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching observed, the context of the lesson and how the lesson fits into the pupils' programme of learning.

67. Inspectors must **not** provide an overall grade (either numerically or in words) for the lesson or for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The headteacher is responsible for advising staff that the feedback will not be used by the school for performance management purposes; it is provided in confidence.

Joint observations

68. The lead inspector should invite the headteacher or a senior member of staff to take part in joint lesson observations. The number of these is at the discretion of the lead inspector.

69. After a joint observation, the inspector and headteacher or senior member of staff must discuss their views about the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching, learning and assessment they have observed. Following a joint observation, the headteacher or other senior member of staff will feed back to the teacher observed. If possible, the inspector should observe this feedback. This may provide evidence about the quality of leaders' discussion about

pedagogy and the effectiveness of the school's arrangements for professional development and performance management.

70. If the headteacher or senior member of staff offers a written record of the observation, the inspector should consider this. The inspector and the school's observer should discuss any differences in their analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching, learning and assessment they have observed and the pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare. Any notes taken by the headteacher or senior member of staff should remain in the school; they should not be included in the evidence base for the inspection.

Trainees working in schools during section 5 inspections

71. When the lead inspector requests a copy of the current staff list, they must confirm whether this includes:
- any newly qualified teachers (NQTs)
 - any trainees on placement, including those on School Direct or School Direct (salaried) training routes.
72. In addition to meeting as many NQTs as possible, inspectors should meet any trainees who are training on the School Direct (salaried) route and are employed by the school.
73. When assessing the strengths and weaknesses of teaching, learning and assessment, inspectors should take into account the stage of trainees' development. The teachers' standards state that providers should assess trainees against the standards in a way that is consistent with what could reasonably be expected of a trainee teacher prior to the awarding of qualified teacher status (QTS); inspectors will do likewise.³⁶ Inspectors **should not** take trainees' performance into account when assessing the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school.

Talking to and observing pupils outside lessons

74. Inspectors must ensure that they observe pupils in a range of situations outside normal lessons to evaluate other aspects of personal development, behaviour and welfare, for example:
- at the start and finish of the school day
 - during lunchtime, including in the dining hall, and break or play times
 - during assemblies and tutor periods

³⁶ Teachers' standards, Department for Education, September 2011; www.gov.uk/government/collections/teachers-standards.

- when moving between lessons
- during enrichment activities (including clubs and activities outside of the normal timetabled curriculum).

The use of performance information/data

75. During inspection, inspectors should consider performance information presented by the school for current pupils across year groups and previous cohorts, including that provided by external organisations. They should also consider the published data available to them before the inspection.
76. Performance information/data must be considered alongside other evidence gathered during the inspection on progress, attainment, attendance and exclusion to evaluate:
 - overall consistency in performance, trends of improvement or decline, and differences between groups
 - the accuracy of the school's assessment of pupils' progress and attainment
 - the robustness and accuracy of the school's self-evaluation or equivalent, particularly about pupils' outcomes, teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare.
77. Inspectors should consider a wide range of information/data. No single measure or indicator should determine judgements.
78. Inspectors should not report separately on small numbers (typically fewer than five) where individual pupils could be identified.

Meetings with pupils, parents, staff and other stakeholders

79. Inspectors must take advantage of opportunities to gather evidence from a wide range of pupils, both formally and informally. During informal conversations with pupils, inspectors must ask them about their experiences of learning and behaviour in the school, including the prevention of bullying and how the school deals with discrimination and prejudiced behaviour, if they happen.
80. As well as meeting pupils, inspectors should usually conduct meetings with:
 - parents (these may be informal at the start and end of the day)
 - staff (conducting a specific meeting with NQTs and trainees to discuss, for example, the effectiveness of induction and mentoring arrangements)
 - other stakeholders.
81. Many schools gather views regularly from these groups and inspectors will consider findings from these consultations/surveys where available.

82. These meetings must take place without the presence of the headteacher or senior staff. In drawing on evidence from such meetings, every endeavour must be made to protect the identity of individuals. There may be circumstances, however, in which it is not possible to guarantee the anonymity of the interviewee. Inspectors have a duty to pass on disclosures that raise child protection or safeguarding issues and/or where there are concerns about serious misconduct or criminal activity.

Meeting those responsible for governance

83. Inspectors will always seek to meet those responsible for governance during the inspection. This includes maintained school governors, proprietors, academy trustees or members of the school's local board. In a multi-academy trust, this is likely to include members of the local governing board or advisory board at school level as well as the multi-academy trust trustees. This is particularly important where there is limited delegation by the board of governance functions to school level. It is also important where another authority has governance functions if schools are combined in managed groups or federations.
84. The contribution of governors to the school's performance is evaluated as part of the judgement on the effectiveness of leadership and management. As with the meetings between inspectors and pupils, parents and staff, meetings with governors should take place without the headteacher or senior staff.

Meetings during inspection

85. The lead inspector should meet the headteacher regularly throughout the inspection to:
- provide an update on emerging issues, including initial general findings about teaching, learning and assessment and to enable further evidence to be provided
 - allow the headteacher to raise concerns, including those related to the conduct of the inspection or of individual inspectors
 - alert the headteacher to any serious concerns.
86. The lead inspector must ensure that the executive headteacher, if such arrangements exist, is invited to contribute to the inspection.
87. The inspection team will meet at different points during the course of the inspection. In particular, the team should:
- meet briefly at lunchtime on day one
 - meet at the end of day one to discuss and record emerging findings (the headteacher should be invited)

- meet at the end of day two to finalise judgements and identify areas for improvement (the headteacher should be invited)
 - record important points from, and the outcomes of, all team meetings on evidence forms, including an electronic summary evidence form.
88. If, by the end of day one or during day two, there is evidence that the school might be judged as inadequate, the lead inspector should alert the headteacher to this possibility. It must be emphasised that final judgements are not made until the final team meeting at the end of day two.

Reaching final judgements

89. Inspection activity, including lesson observations, should continue throughout the second day. The team should also ensure that time is set aside to complete any feedback to staff and to prepare for the final team meeting and the final feedback. During the final team meeting, an electronic summary evidence form will be completed. This will provide an accurate record of the evidence used to arrive at the final inspection judgements. The main points for feedback to the school will be recorded as the meeting progresses.

Providing feedback

90. The on-site inspection concludes with a final feedback meeting with the school. Those connected with the school likely to attend include:
- the headteacher and other senior leaders agreed by the lead inspector and headteacher
 - the chair of the governing body, board of trustees or local governing body as appropriate and preferably as many governors as possible
 - in an academy that is part of a multi-academy trust, at least one representative of the board of trustees
 - a representative from the local authority, academy sponsor and/or the designated responsible body.
91. During this meeting, the lead inspector will ensure that the school is clear:
- about the provisional grades awarded for each key judgement
 - that the grades are provisional and so may be subject to change as a result of quality assurance procedures or moderation and must, therefore, be treated as restricted and confidential to the relevant senior personnel (as determined by the school); they must not be shared beyond the school's leadership team; information about the inspection outcomes should be shared only when the school receives a copy of the final inspection report
 - that the main findings of the inspection and the main points provided orally in the feedback, subject to any change, will be referred to in the text of the report

- about any recommendations for improvement
 - the reasons for recommending an external review of governance and/or an external review of the use of the pupil premium (where applicable) and reference to the fact that this will be followed up at the next inspection
 - that, on receipt of the draft report, it must ensure that the report remains restricted and confidential to the relevant senior personnel (as determined by the school) and that the information contained within it is not shared with any third party or published under any circumstances
 - that it is invited and encouraged to complete the post-inspection survey
 - about the implications of the school being placed in a category of concern where this is relevant
 - where a school requires special measures, whether NQTs may be appointed³⁷
 - about the procedure for making a complaint about the inspection.
92. Where the school is judged as requires improvement (overall effectiveness grade 3), inspectors should indicate that Ofsted has published a report, 'Getting to good: how headteachers achieve success',³⁸ that sets out the strategies used in schools that have improved to good or outstanding. Inspectors should also direct schools to Ofsted's section 8 handbook.³⁹

Schools causing concern

93. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be inadequate (grade 4) will be deemed to be in a formal category of concern.

Procedures for judging a school as inadequate

94. If by the end of the first day of the inspection the lead inspector thinks it is possible that the school's overall effectiveness is inadequate and that it might be judged to have serious weaknesses or to require special measures, she or he must ring Ofsted's Applications, Regulatory and Contact team helpdesk.
95. To ring the helpdesk, inspectors should use the hotline number 0300 123 4234 and choose option 1. When the call is answered, the lead inspector should use the following form of words:

³⁷ In the case of an academy made subject to special measures, the lead inspector will make a recommendation on whether or not the academy may appoint newly qualified teachers.

³⁸ *Getting to good: how headteachers achieve success*, Ofsted, 2012; www.gov.uk/government/publications/getting-to-good-how-headteachers-achieve-success.

³⁹ *School inspection handbook for inspections under Section 8 of the Education Act 2005*, Ofsted, June 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-short-monitoring-and-unannounced-behaviour-school-inspections.

'I am an inspector leading an inspection in a school and I would like to talk to the schools causing concern duty HMI.'

96. The lead inspector will be asked for her or his name and the name and unique reference number (URN) of the school, and will then be put through to the duty HMI, with whom she or he will be able to talk through the evidence to support the inspector(s) in reaching an emerging judgement. The judgement is not confirmed at this point. The inspector should record the key points of the conversation on an evidence form.
97. During the second day of the inspection, the lead inspector may contact the helpline again to discuss emerging findings. When the inspection team has made the final judgement and if it is that the school has serious weaknesses or requires special measures, the lead inspector must telephone the helpline before the oral feedback and use the form of words indicated in the previous paragraph. The lead inspector should be prepared to explain briefly the reasons and underpinning evidence for the judgement.

Serious weaknesses

98. A school is judged to have serious weaknesses because one or more of the key judgements is inadequate (grade 4) and/or there are important weaknesses in the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, normally, inspectors will have judged leadership and management to be at least grade 3 because leaders, manager and governors will have demonstrated the capacity to secure improvement.

Special measures

99. A school requires special measures if:
 - it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and
 - the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.⁴⁰

Informing a school that it is deemed to be causing concern

100. If a school is deemed to require special measures or has been judged to have serious weaknesses inspectors will use the following words during the feedback, indicating that the overall effectiveness judgement is subject to moderation by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and, in the case of special measures, agreement by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI).

⁴⁰ As set out under section 44 of the Education Act 2005.

■ Where the school has serious weaknesses:

'In accordance with section 44 of the Education Act 2005 , Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is likely to be of the opinion that this school has serious weaknesses because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.'

■ Where the school requires special measures:

'In accordance with section 44 of the Education Act 2005 Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is likely to be of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.'

Implications for a school causing concern

101. If a school is judged to be causing concern, the timescale for publishing the report is extended so that the judgements can be moderated and, in the case of schools judged to require special measures, confirmed either by HMCI or a Regional Director on his behalf.
102. Schools judged to have serious weaknesses will be subject to monitoring by Ofsted.⁴¹ They will normally be inspected within 18 months of the inspection.
103. Schools judged to require special measures will be subject to regular monitoring. The timing of the next section 5 inspection will be determined by the school's rate of improvement. However, it will normally take place no later than 24 months after the inspection that judged it to require special measures.

Taking a school out of a category of concern

104. When an inspection team judges that a school that was previously subject to special measures no longer requires special measures, inspectors will use the following words during the feedback:

'In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005 , Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.'

⁴¹ As set out in the *School inspection handbook for inspections under Section 8 of the Education Act 2005*, Ofsted, June 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/handbook-for-short-monitoring-and-unannounced-behaviour-school-inspections.

105. When an inspection team judges that a school previously judged to have serious weaknesses no longer has serious weaknesses, inspectors will use the following words during the feedback:

‘In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005 , Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.’

After the inspection

Arrangements for publishing the report⁴²

106. The lead inspector is responsible for writing the inspection report and submitting the evidence to Ofsted shortly after the inspection ends. The text of the report should explain the judgements and reflect the evidence. The findings in the report should be consistent with the feedback given to the school at the end of the inspection.
107. Inspection reports will be quality-assured before Ofsted sends a draft copy to the school. The draft report is restricted and confidential to the relevant personnel (as determined by the school) and should not be shared or published.
108. The school will be informed of the timescale for commenting on the draft report. The lead inspector will consider comments including details of any factual inaccuracies identified by the school and will make changes as appropriate. Ofsted will notify the school of the lead inspector’s response.
109. Ofsted may share a draft of the inspection report with the Department for Education (DfE), funding bodies or Regional Schools Commissioners as necessary, where the Chief Inspector considers it appropriate to do so.
110. Typically, schools will receive an electronic version of the final report within 14 working days of the end of the inspection. In most circumstances, the final report will be published on Ofsted’s website within 19 working days. Ofsted will tell the school the publication date when the draft report is sent.
111. If Ofsted decides that a report should be subject to further quality assurance, the school will usually receive an electronic version of the final report within 23 working days. In these circumstances, the final report will usually be published within 28 working days.
112. Once a school has received its final report, it is required to take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that every registered parent of a registered

⁴² The term ‘report’ is used to describe the formal written outcome from the inspection.

pupil at the school receives a copy of the report within five working days.⁴³ After that time, the report will be published on Ofsted's website.

113. In all cases, the inspection process should not be treated as complete until all inspection activity has been undertaken and the final version of the inspection report has been sent to the provider and published on Ofsted's website.

Quality assurance and complaints

Quality assurance

114. All inspectors are responsible for the quality of their work. The lead inspector must ensure that inspections are carried out in accordance with the principles of inspection and the code of conduct.
115. Ofsted monitors the quality of inspections through a range of formal processes and HMI/Senior HMI visit some schools to quality-assure inspections. Ofsted may also evaluate the quality of an inspection evidence base. The lead inspector will be responsible for feeding back to team inspectors about the quality of work and conduct.
116. All schools are invited to take part in a post-inspection evaluation in order to contribute to inspection development.

Handling concerns and complaints during the inspection

117. The great majority of Ofsted's work is carried out smoothly and without incident. If concerns do arise during an inspection, they should be raised with the lead inspector as soon as possible in order to resolve issues before the inspection is completed. The lead inspector should seek advice where necessary. Any concerns raised and actions taken should be recorded in the inspection evidence.
118. If it is not possible to resolve concerns during the inspection, the school may wish to lodge a formal complaint. The lead inspector should ensure that the school is informed of the procedures for making a formal complaint. Information about how to complain is available on Ofsted's website.⁴⁴
119. Complaints must be submitted no more than 10 working days after the publication of any inspection report. Ofsted does not normally delay publication of an inspection report while complaints are investigated.

⁴³ Under section 14(4) (c) of the Education Act 2005.

⁴⁴ *Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*, Ofsted, 2010; www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted/about/complaints-procedure.

Part 2. The evaluation schedule – how schools will be judged

Background to the evaluation schedule

120. The evaluation schedule must be used in conjunction with the guidance set out in Part 1 of this document: 'How schools will be inspected' and the 'Common inspection framework: education, skills and early years' (the CIF).
121. The evaluation schedule is not exhaustive. It does not replace the professional judgement of inspectors. Inspectors must interpret grade descriptors in relation to pupils' age, stage and phase of education.
122. In line with the CIF, inspectors will make key judgements on the following areas:
- overall effectiveness
 - effectiveness of leadership and management
 - quality of teaching, learning and assessment
 - personal development, behaviour and welfare
 - outcomes for pupils.
123. Inspectors use the following four-point scale to make all judgements, including, where applicable, judging the effectiveness of the early years provision and the 16 to 19 study programmes:
- grade 1: outstanding
 - grade 2: good
 - grade 3: requires improvement
 - grade 4: inadequate.

The evaluation schedule and grade descriptors

Overall effectiveness: the quality and standards of education

124. Inspectors must use all their evidence to evaluate what it is like to be a pupil in the school. In making their judgements about a school's overall effectiveness, inspectors will consider whether the standard of education is good or whether it exceeds good and is outstanding. If it is not good, then inspectors will consider whether it requires improvement or is inadequate.

125. In judging the overall effectiveness, inspectors will take account of the four key judgements. Inspectors should first make the key judgements on:
- the quality of teaching, learning and assessment
 - personal development, behaviour and welfare
 - outcomes for pupils.
126. In coming to each of these key judgements, inspectors will also draw on evidence from inspection of any early years provision or from the 16 to 19 study programmes (the sixth form provision) and consider the impact.
127. Inspectors will then judge the effectiveness of any early years provision or the 16 to 19 study programmes. For either case or both, inspectors must report a numerical grade and write sections in the report that summarise the key findings and explain the effectiveness grading.
128. The grade for early years and/or the grade for the 16 to 19 study programmes may be higher or lower than the overall effectiveness grade. Inspectors will explain any variation between the grades in the report. Inspectors will take into account the size of the early years and sixth form provision when considering the impact of these judgements on the overall effectiveness grade.
129. Inspectors will then make the key judgement on the effectiveness of leadership and management. In making this judgement, inspectors must take into proportionate account any significant issues in the quality of early years provision or 16 to 19 study programmes that may have an impact on judging the effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a whole.
130. Inspectors will always make a written judgement in the section on leadership and management about the effectiveness of the arrangements for safeguarding pupils.
131. Before making the final judgement on the overall effectiveness, inspectors must evaluate:
- the effectiveness and impact of the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (see below)
 - the extent to which the education provided by the school meets the needs of the range of pupils at the school including:
 - disabled pupils
 - pupils who have special educational needs.

Defining spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

132. The spiritual development of pupils is shown by their:

- ability to be reflective about their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, that inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people's faiths, feelings and values
- sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them
- use of imagination and creativity in their learning
- willingness to reflect on their experiences.

133. The moral development of pupils is shown by their:

- ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong and to readily apply this understanding in their own lives, recognise legal boundaries and, in so doing, respect the civil and criminal law of England
- understanding of the consequences of their behaviour and actions
- interest in investigating and offering reasoned views about moral and ethical issues and ability to understand and appreciate the viewpoints of others on these issues.

134. The social development of pupils is shown by their:

- use of a range of social skills in different contexts, for example working and socialising with other pupils, including those from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds
- willingness to participate in a variety of communities and social settings, including by volunteering, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively
- acceptance and engagement with the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; they develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

135. The cultural development of pupils is shown by their:

- understanding and appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage and those of others
- understanding and appreciation of the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of their preparation for life in modern Britain
- knowledge of Britain's democratic parliamentary system and its central role in shaping our history and values, and in continuing to develop Britain

- willingness to participate in and respond positively to artistic, musical, sporting and cultural opportunities
- interest in exploring, improving understanding of and showing respect for different faiths and cultural diversity and the extent to which they understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity, as shown by their tolerance and attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities.

Grade descriptors for overall effectiveness

Outstanding (1)

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding.
- All other key judgements are likely to be outstanding. In exceptional circumstances one of the key judgements may be good, as long as there is convincing evidence that the school is improving this area rapidly and securely towards outstanding.
- The school's thoughtful and wide-ranging promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their physical well-being enables pupils to thrive.
- Safeguarding is effective.

Good (2)

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is at least good.
- All other key judgements are likely to be good or outstanding. In exceptional circumstances one of the key judgement areas may require improvement, as long as there is convincing evidence that the school is improving it rapidly and securely towards good.
- Deliberate and effective action is taken to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their physical well-being.
- Safeguarding is effective.

Requires improvement (3)

- Other than in exceptional circumstances, it is likely that, where the school is judged to require improvement in any of the key judgements, the school's overall effectiveness will require improvement.
- There are weaknesses in the overall promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Safeguarding is effective.

Inadequate (4)

- The judgement on the overall effectiveness is likely to be inadequate where any one of the key judgements is inadequate and/or safeguarding is ineffective and/or there are serious weaknesses in the overall promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

136. The CIF sets out the overarching criteria for judging the effectiveness of leadership and management.

137. In making this judgement in schools, inspectors will consider:

- the leaders' and governors' vision and ambition for the school and how these are communicated to staff, parents and pupils
- whether leaders have created a culture of high expectations, aspirations and scholastic excellence in which the highest achievement in academic and vocational work is recognised as vitally important
- whether leaders have the highest expectations for social behaviour among pupils and staff, so that respect and courtesy are the norm
- the rigour and accuracy of self-evaluation and how well it leads to planning that secures continual improvement
- the design, implementation and evaluation of the curriculum, ensuring breadth and balance
- how the school supplements the formal curriculum with extra-curricular opportunities for pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding and to improve their skills in a range of artistic, creative and sporting activities
- how effectively leaders use the PE and sport premium and measure its impact on outcomes for pupils, and how effectively governors hold them to account for this
- how the school prepares pupils positively for life in modern Britain and promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith
- the effectiveness of the actions leaders take to secure and sustain improvements to teaching, learning and assessment
- how leaders ensure that the school has a motivated, respected and effective teaching staff to deliver a high quality education for all pupils
- the quality of continuing professional development for teachers at the start and middle of their careers and later, and how leaders use performance management to promote effective practice across the school
- how effectively leaders and governors track the progress of groups of pupils to ensure that none falls behind and underachieve, and how effectively governors hold them to account for this
- how well leaders engage with parents, carers and other stakeholders and agencies to support all pupils

- how effectively leaders use additional funding, including the pupil premium, and measure its impact on outcomes for pupils, and how effectively governors hold them to account for this
- the effectiveness of governors in discharging their core statutory functions⁴⁵
- how leaders promote all forms of equality and foster greater understanding of and respect for people of all faiths (and those of no faith), races, genders, ages, disability and sexual orientations (and other groups with protected characteristics⁴⁶), through their words, actions and influence within the school and more widely in the community
- the effectiveness of safeguarding
- the work to raise awareness and keep pupils safe from the dangers of abuse, sexual exploitation, radicalisation and extremism, and what the school does when it suspects that pupils are vulnerable to these issues.

Sources of evidence

138. Inspectors will obtain a range of evidence from meetings with leaders and governors and first-hand evidence of their work across the school. Inspectors will use documentary evidence provided by the school, evaluating the impact of leaders' and governors' work, both currently and over time, in conjunction with first-hand evidence. Responses to the staff questionnaire and Parent View will also provide useful evidence for judging the culture that has been established in the school by leaders and managers.
139. Inspectors should consider any evidence the school has from regularly surveying the staff and how leaders and managers have responded to concerns raised by staff or parents, for example about how teachers are supported by senior leaders to tackle low-level disruptive behaviour. Inspectors will always report on the school's activity to survey staff, whether through the school's internal procedures or its use of the Ofsted questionnaire (they will do this in the 'information about this inspection' section).

Safeguarding

140. In judging the effectiveness of leadership and management, inspectors **must** also judge whether the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are effective. There is detailed guidance on evaluating safeguarding arrangements in 'Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education, skills settings from September 2015'.

⁴⁵ *Governors' handbook*, Department for Education and National College for Teaching and Leadership, January 2015; www.gov.uk/governors-handbook.

⁴⁶ As defined by section 4 of the Equality Act 2010 www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15.

Governance

141. Many schools are cooperating as groups, federations or chains, with an overarching board and chief executive officer that assume some of the responsibilities formerly shouldered by the individual school governing body. In the case of such extended management and governance arrangements, inspectors will seek evidence of the impact of the overarching board and its staff, as well as the school's local board, committee or governing body where there are relevant delegated responsibilities.
142. Where a children's centre is managed directly by the school's governing body, inspectors will consider the impact of any judgements about the children's centre or the services and activities offered through or by the centre, in judging leadership and management.
143. Inspectors will report on the achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This includes reporting on the pupils in any specialist resource provision managed by the governing body and the extent to which the education the school provides meets the needs of these pupils.
144. Inspectors will recommend an external review if governance is weak. Under 'What the school should do to improve further', inspectors should use the following words in the report:
- 'An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.'
145. The school should decide how this review will take place and commission it. Reviews should be developmental. They do not represent a further inspection, although inspectors will follow up on the review during any subsequent inspection. Full details of what might be the form and nature of such reviews can be found at: www.gov.uk/reviews-of-school-governance.

Use of the pupil premium

146. Inspectors will gather evidence about the use of the pupil premium in relation to the following key issues:
- the level of pupil premium funding received by the school in the current academic year and levels of funding received in previous academic years⁴⁷
 - how the school has spent the pupil premium and why it has decided to spend it in the way it has

⁴⁷ Since April 2014, the grant allocation for looked after children must be managed by the designated virtual school headteacher in the local authority that looks after those children, whose responsibilities are set out at: www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-virtual-school-heads-responsibilities.

- any differences made to the learning and progress of disadvantaged pupils as shown by outcomes data and inspection evidence.

147. Inspectors will recommend an external review of the school's use of the pupil premium if they identify specific issues regarding the provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. The form of words to be used in the inspection report is:

'An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.'

148. This means that the school should seek support from an independent external system leader with a track record of accelerating disadvantaged pupils' achievement. Full details of what might be the form and nature of such reviews can be found at: www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-reviews. Inspectors will follow up on the review during any subsequent inspections.

Grade descriptors for the effectiveness of leadership and management

Note: Grade descriptors are not a checklist. Inspectors adopt a 'best fit' approach that relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Outstanding (1)

- Leaders and governors have created a culture that enables pupils and staff to excel. They are committed unwaveringly to setting high expectations for the conduct of pupils and staff. Relationships between staff and pupils are exemplary.
- Leaders and governors focus on consistently improving outcomes for all pupils, but especially for disadvantaged pupils. They are uncompromising in their ambition.
- The school's actions have secured substantial improvement in progress for disadvantaged pupils. Progress is rising across the curriculum, including in English and mathematics.
- Governors systematically challenge senior leaders so that the effective deployment of staff and resources, including the pupil premium and SEN funding, secures excellent outcomes for pupils. Governors do not shy away from challenging leaders about variations in outcomes for pupil groups, especially between disadvantaged and other pupils.
- Leaders and governors have a deep, accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness informed by the views of pupils, parents and staff. They use this to keep the school improving by focusing on the impact of their actions in key areas.
- Leaders and governors use incisive performance management that leads to professional development that encourages, challenges and supports teachers' improvement. Teaching is highly effective across the school.
- Staff reflect on and debate the way they teach. They feel deeply involved in their own professional development. Leaders have created a climate in which teachers are motivated and trusted to take risks and innovate in ways that are right for their pupils.
- The broad and balanced curriculum inspires pupils to learn. The range of subjects and courses helps pupils acquire knowledge, understanding and skills in all aspects of their

education, including linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technical, human and social, physical and artistic learning.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and, within this, the promotion of fundamental British values, are at the heart of the school's work.
- Leaders promote equality of opportunity and diversity exceptionally well, for pupils and staff, so that the ethos and culture of the whole school counters any form of direct or indirect discriminatory behaviour. Leaders, staff and pupils do not tolerate prejudiced behaviour.
- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders and managers have created a culture of vigilance where pupils' welfare is actively promoted. Pupils are listened to and feel safe. Staff are trained to identify when a pupil may be at risk of neglect, abuse or exploitation and they report their concerns. Leaders and staff work effectively with external partners to support pupils who are at risk or who are the subject of a multi-agency plan.
- Leaders' work to protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism is exemplary. Leaders respond swiftly where pupils are vulnerable to these issues. High quality training develops staff's vigilance, confidence and competency to challenge pupils' views and encourage debate.

Good (2)

- Leaders set high expectations of pupils and staff. They lead by example to create a culture of respect and tolerance. The positive relationships between leaders, staff and pupils support the progress of all pupils at the school.
- Leaders and governors are ambitious for all pupils and promote improvement effectively. The school's actions secure improvement in disadvantaged pupils' progress, which is rising, including in English and mathematics.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the quality of education at the school. This helps them plan, monitor and refine actions to improve all key aspects of the school's work.
- Leaders and governors use performance management effectively to improve teaching. They use accurate monitoring to identify and spread good practice across the school.
- Teachers value the continuing professional development provided by the school. It is having a positive impact on their teaching and pupils' learning. Teaching is consistently strong across the school or where it is not, it is improving rapidly.
- Governors hold senior leaders stringently to account for all aspects of the school's performance, including the use of pupil premium and SEN funding, ensuring that the skilful deployment of staff and resources delivers good or improving outcomes for pupils.
- The broad and balanced curriculum provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to learn. The range of subjects and courses helps pupils acquire knowledge, understanding and skills in all aspects of their education, including linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technical, human and social, physical and artistic learning. This supports pupils' good progress. The curriculum also contributes well to pupils' behaviour and welfare, including their physical, mental and personal well-being, safety and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders consistently promote fundamental British values and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders promote equality of opportunity and diversity, resulting in a positive school culture. Staff and pupils work together to prevent any form of direct or indirect discriminatory behaviour. Leaders, staff and pupils do not tolerate prejudiced behaviour.
- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders and staff take appropriate action to identify pupils who

may be at risk of neglect, abuse or sexual exploitation, reporting concerns and supporting the needs of those pupils.

- Leaders protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism. Staff are trained and are increasingly vigilant, confident and competent to encourage open discussion with pupils.

Requires improvement (3)

- Leadership and management are not yet good.
- Safeguarding is effective.

Inadequate (4)

Leadership and management are likely to be inadequate if one or more of the following apply:

- Capacity for securing further improvement is poor and the improvements leaders and governors have made are unsustainable, have been implemented too slowly or are overly dependent on external support.
- Leaders are not doing enough to tackle poor teaching, learning and assessment, which significantly impairs the progress of pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged, disabled or have special educational needs.
- Leaders are not aware of or are not taking effective action to stem the decline in the progress of disadvantaged pupils.
- The unbalanced and poorly taught curriculum fails to meet the needs of pupils or particular groups of pupils. Pupils are entered for public examinations inappropriately early. The range of subjects is narrow and does not prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in modern Britain.
- Leaders are not taking effective steps to secure good behaviour from pupils and a consistent approach to discipline.
- Leaders and governors, through their words, actions or influence, directly and/or indirectly, undermine or fail to promote equality of opportunity. They do not prevent discriminatory behaviour and prejudiced actions and views.
- Safeguarding is ineffective. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not meet statutory requirements, or they give serious cause for concern. Insufficient action is taken to remedy weaknesses following a serious incident.
- Leaders and governors are not protecting pupils from radicalisation and extremist views when pupils are vulnerable to these. Policy and practice are poor, which means pupils are at risk.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

149. Inspectors will make a judgement on the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment by evaluating the extent to which:

- the teachers' standards are being met⁴⁸
- teachers and other staff have consistently high expectations of what each pupil can achieve, including most able and disadvantaged pupils
- teachers and other staff have a secure understanding of the age group they are working with and have relevant subject knowledge that is detailed and communicated well to pupils
- assessment information is gathered from looking at what pupils already know, understand and can do, and is informed by their parents/previous providers as appropriate in the early years
- assessment information is used to plan appropriate teaching and learning strategies, including to identify pupils who are falling behind in their learning or who need additional support, enabling pupils to make good progress and achieve well
- except in the case of the very young, pupils understand how to improve as a result of useful feedback, written or oral, from teachers
- the school's engagement with parents, carers and employers helps them to understand how children and learners are doing in relation to the standards expected and what they need to do to improve
- equality of opportunity and recognition of diversity are promoted through teaching and learning
- English, mathematics and the skills necessary to function as an economically active member of British society are promoted through teaching and learning.

Sources of evidence

150. Inspectors will use a considerable amount of first-hand evidence gained from observing pupils in lessons, talking to them about their work, scrutinising their work and assessing how well leaders are securing continual improvements in teaching. Direct observations in lessons will be supplemented by a range of other evidence to enable inspectors to evaluate the impact that teachers and support assistants have on pupils' progress. Inspectors will **not** grade the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in individual lessons or learning walks.

⁴⁸ *The teachers' standards*, Department for Education, 2011; www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards.

151. Inspectors will consider:

- leaders' evaluations of teaching and its impact on learning
- how information at transition points between schools is used effectively so that teachers plan to meet pupils' needs in all lessons from the outset – this is particularly important between the early years and Key Stage 1 and between Key Stages 2 and 3
- whether work in all year groups, particularly in Key Stage 3, is demanding enough for all pupils
- pupils' views about the work they have undertaken, what they have learned from it and their experience of teaching and learning over time
- information from discussions about teaching, learning and assessment with teachers, teaching assistants and other staff
- parents' views about the quality of teaching, whether they feel their children are challenged sufficiently and how quickly leaders tackle poor teaching
- scrutiny of pupils' work, with particular attention to:
 - pupils' effort and success in completing their work, both in and outside lessons, so that they can progress and enjoy learning across the curriculum
 - the level of challenge and whether pupils have to grapple appropriately with content, not necessarily 'getting it right' first time, which could be evidence that the work is too easy
 - how well teachers' feedback, written and oral, is used by pupils to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills. Inspectors should note the clarification points set out in Part 1 about pupils' work and marking.

152. In evaluating the accuracy and impact of assessment, inspectors will consider how well:

- teachers use any assessment for establishing pupils' starting points, teacher assessment and testing to modify teaching so that pupils achieve their potential by the end of a year or key stage; inspectors should note that Ofsted does not expect to see any particular system of assessment in place.
- assessment draws on a range of evidence of what pupils know, understand and can do across the curriculum
- teachers make consistent judgements about pupils' progress and attainment, for example within a subject, across a year group and between year groups.

Inspecting the impact of the teaching of literacy including reading

153. Literacy includes the key skills of reading, writing and oral communication that enable pupils to access different areas of the curriculum.
154. Inspectors will consider the impact of the teaching of literacy and the outcomes across the range of the school's provision. They will consider the extent to which the school intervenes to provide support for improving pupils' literacy, especially those pupils at risk of underachieving.
155. During the inspections of infant, junior, primary and middle schools, inspectors must listen to children reading. They should place a particular focus on hearing lower-attaining pupils read and should discuss their reading with them. This is to find out how effectively the school is teaching reading and to assess whether the pupils are equipped with the phonic strategies needed to tackle unfamiliar words. There may be occasions when inspectors need to hear lower-attaining pupils read in Years 7 and 8 in secondary schools.
156. Inspectors should decide which pupils they will listen to read, taking into account the school's progress information and published data on reading and other information such as lesson observations. Inspectors should hear children read from books that are appropriate to their age, including from previously unseen books. When listening to younger children read, inspectors may use the national phonics check material⁴⁹ to help them make their judgements about the impact of phonics teaching. Wherever possible, inspectors should listen to children reading within a classroom or in an open area with which pupils are familiar.

Inspecting the teaching of mathematics

157. When evaluating the effectiveness of a school's work in mathematics through the analysis of performance information/published data, observations in lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work, inspectors will consider:
 - how well the school is identifying and tackling inconsistency in the quality of mathematics teaching between different groups of pupils, key stages, sets and classes, including those taught by non-specialist teachers of mathematics in secondary schools
 - in the mathematics lessons observed, through discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their work and by reviewing curriculum plans, how well teaching:

⁴⁹ *Statutory guidance: phonics screening check*, Department for Education and Skills Funding Agency, February 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-1-assessment-and-reporting-arrangements-ara/phonics-screening-check.

- fosters mathematical understanding of new concepts and methods, including teachers' explanations and the way they require pupils to think and reason mathematically for themselves
- ensures that pupils acquire mathematical knowledge appropriate to their age and starting points and enables them to recall it rapidly and apply it fluently and accurately, including when calculating efficiently and in applying arithmetic algorithms
- uses resources and approaches to enable pupils in the class to understand and master the mathematics they are learning
- develops depth of understanding and readiness for the next stage – the national curriculum for mathematics⁵⁰ at Key Stages 1 and 2 specifies the aims and then states, 'The expectation is that the majority of pupils will move through the programmes of study at the same pace'. At all key stages, the national curriculum⁵¹ states, 'Decisions about when to progress should always be based on the security of pupils' understanding and their readiness to progress to the next stage. Pupils who grasp concepts rapidly should be challenged through being offered rich and sophisticated problems before any acceleration through new content. Those who are not sufficiently fluent with earlier material should consolidate their understanding, including through additional practice, before moving on'
- enables pupils to solve a variety of mathematical problems, applying the mathematical knowledge and skills they have been taught
- enables pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills in other subjects in the curriculum, where appropriate.

⁵⁰ *Mathematics programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2: National curriculum in England*, Department for Education, September 2013; www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335158/PRIMARY_national_curriculum_-_Mathematics_220714.pdf.

⁵¹ *Statutory guidance: national curriculum in England: mathematics programmes of study*, Department for Education, July 2014; www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-mathematics-programmes-of-study/national-curriculum-in-england-mathematics-programmes-of-study.

Grade descriptors for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Note: Grade descriptors are not a checklist. Inspectors adopt a 'best fit' approach that relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Outstanding (1)

- Teachers demonstrate deep knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. They use questioning highly effectively and demonstrate understanding of the ways pupils think about subject content. They identify pupils' common misconceptions and act to ensure they are corrected.
- Teachers plan lessons very effectively, making maximum use of lesson time and coordinating lesson resources well. They manage pupils' behaviour highly effectively with clear rules that are consistently enforced.
- Teachers provide adequate time for practice to embed the pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills securely. They introduce subject content progressively and constantly demand more of pupils. Teachers identify and support any pupil who is falling behind, and enable almost all to catch up.
- Teachers check pupils' understanding systematically and effectively in lessons, offering clearly directed and timely support.
- Teachers provide pupils with incisive feedback, in line with the school's assessment policy, about what pupils can do to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills. The pupils use this feedback effectively.
- Teachers set challenging homework, in line with the school's policy and as appropriate for the age and stage of pupils, that consolidates learning, deepens understanding and prepares pupils very well for work to come.
- Teachers embed reading, writing and communication and, where appropriate, mathematics exceptionally well across the curriculum, equipping all pupils with the necessary skills to make progress. For younger children in particular, phonics teaching is highly effective in enabling them to tackle unfamiliar words.
- Teachers are determined that pupils achieve well. They encourage pupils to try hard, recognise their efforts and ensure that pupils take pride in all aspects of their work. Teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils' attitudes to learning.
- Pupils love the challenge of learning and are resilient to failure. They are curious, interested learners who seek out and use new information to develop, consolidate and deepen their knowledge, understanding and skills. They thrive in lessons and also regularly take up opportunities to learn through extra-curricular activities.
- Pupils are eager to know how to improve their learning. They capitalise on opportunities to use feedback, written or oral, to improve.
- Parents are provided with clear and timely information on how well their child is progressing and how well their child is doing in relation to the standards expected. Parents are given guidance about how to support their child to improve.

- Teachers are quick to challenge stereotypes and the use of derogatory language in lessons and around the school. Resources and teaching strategies reflect and value the diversity of pupils' experiences and provide pupils with a comprehensive understanding of people and communities beyond their immediate experience. Pupils love the challenge of learning.

Good (2)

- Teachers use effective planning to help pupils learn well. Time in lessons is used productively. Pupils focus well on their learning because teachers reinforce expectations for conduct and set clear tasks that challenge pupils.
- In lessons, teachers develop, consolidate and deepen pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. They give sufficient time for pupils to review what they are learning and to develop further. Teachers identify and support effectively those pupils who start to fall behind and intervene quickly to help them to improve their learning.
- Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to plan learning that sustains pupils' interest and challenges their thinking. They use questioning skilfully to probe pupils' responses and they reshape tasks and explanations so that pupils better understand new concepts. Teachers tackle misconceptions and build on pupils' strengths.
- Teachers give pupils feedback in line with the school's assessment policy. Pupils use this feedback well and they know what they need to do to improve.
- Teachers set homework, in line with the school's policy and as appropriate for the age and stage of pupils, that consolidates learning and prepares pupils well for work to come.
- Teachers develop pupils' reading, writing and communication, and where appropriate mathematics, well across the curriculum. For younger children in particular, the teaching of phonics is effective in enabling them to tackle unfamiliar words.
- Teachers expect and encourage all pupils to work with positive attitudes so that they can apply themselves and make strong progress.
- Pupils develop the capacity to learn from mistakes and they become keen learners who want to find out more. Most are willing to find out new information to develop, consolidate and deepen their knowledge, understanding and skills, both in lessons and in extra-curricular activities.
- Most pupils commit to improving their work. They are given time to apply their knowledge and understanding in new ways that stretches their thinking in a wide range of subjects, and to practise key skills.
- The school gives parents information about how well their child is progressing, how well their child is doing in relation to the standards expected, and what their child needs to do to improve.
- Teachers promote equality of opportunity and diversity in teaching and learning.

Requires improvement (3)

- Teaching, learning and assessment are not yet good.

Inadequate (4)

Teaching, learning and assessment are likely to be inadequate if one or more of the following applies:

- Teaching is poorly planned.
- Weak assessment practice means that teaching fails to meet pupils' needs.
- Pupils or particular groups are making inadequate progress because teaching does not develop their knowledge, understanding and skills sufficiently.
- Pupils cannot communicate, read, write or apply mathematics as well as they should, so they do not make sufficient progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills because they are unable to access the curriculum.
- Teachers do not promote equality of opportunity or understanding of diversity effectively and so discriminate against the success of individuals or groups of pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

158. The CIF sets out the main criteria for judging personal development, behaviour and welfare.
159. Inspectors must make a clear written judgement about behaviour and a separate clear written judgement about personal development and welfare in the report. Where the judgements differ, the lower of the two will determine the overall judgement for personal development, behaviour and welfare and is recorded in the report.
160. Evaluating, judging and reporting behaviour and welfare in this way distinguishes between each aspect so that schools and parents clearly understand the two separate judgements. Inspectors must consider carefully the effectiveness of safeguarding when pupils' welfare is judged to require improvement or be inadequate.

Attendance and punctuality

161. Inspectors will consider:
- overall absence and persistent absence rates for all pupils, and for different groups in relation to national figures for all pupils
 - the extent to which low attenders are improving their attendance over time and whether attendance is consistently low (in the lowest 10%)
 - punctuality in arriving at school and at lessons.

Sources of evidence

162. Inspectors will make this judgement using evidence seen during the inspection as well as evidence of trends over time. The judgement will be informed by

documentary evidence about behaviour, including how the school tackles poor behaviour, as well as discussions with and observations of pupils at break times, lunchtimes and between lessons. Inspectors will assess the school's use of exclusion, including the rates, patterns and reasons for exclusion, as well as any differences between groups of pupils.⁵² Inspectors will gather the views of parents, staff, governors and other stakeholders.

163. Inspectors must take account of the views different groups of pupils express, their experiences of others' behaviour and attitudes towards them, and their understanding of the importance of such attributes in school and adult life.
164. Inspectors evaluate the experience of particular individuals and groups, such as pupils for whom referrals have been made to the local authority (checking how the referral was made and the thoroughness of the follow-up), disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, looked after children and those with mental health needs. Inspectors must look at a small sample of case studies about the experience of these pupils.
165. If the school runs (on its own or in partnership with other schools) an off-site unit for pupils whose behaviour is poor or with low attendance, an inspector must visit the unit. Inspectors will assess safeguarding procedures, the quality of teaching and how effectively the unit helps to improve pupils' behaviour, learning and attendance.

Grade descriptors for personal development, behaviour and welfare

Note: Grade descriptors are not a checklist. Inspectors adopt a 'best fit' approach that relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Outstanding (1)

- Pupils are confident, self-assured learners. Their excellent attitudes to learning have a strong, positive impact on their progress. They are proud of their achievements and of their school.
- Pupils discuss and debate issues in a considered way, showing respect for others' ideas and points of view.
- High quality, impartial careers guidance helps pupils to make informed choices about which courses suit their academic needs and aspirations. They are prepared for the next stage of their education, employment, self-employment or training.
- Pupils understand how their education equips them with the behaviours and attitudes necessary for success in their next stage of education, training or employment and for their adult life.

⁵² *Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England*, Department for Education, 2012; www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion.

- Pupils value their education and rarely miss a day at school. No groups of pupils are disadvantaged by low attendance. The attendance of pupils who have previously had exceptionally high rates of absence is rising quickly towards the national average.
- Pupils' impeccable conduct reflects the school's effective strategies to promote high standards of behaviour. Pupils are self-disciplined. Incidences of low-level disruption are extremely rare.
- For individuals or groups with particular needs, there is sustained improvement in pupils' behaviour. Where standards of behaviour were already excellent, they have been maintained.
- Pupils work hard with the school to prevent all forms of bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying.
- Staff and pupils deal effectively with the very rare instances of bullying behaviour and/or use of derogatory or aggressive language.
- The school's open culture actively promotes all aspects of pupils' welfare. Pupils are safe and feel safe at all times. They understand how to keep themselves and others safe in different situations and settings. They trust leaders to take rapid and appropriate action to resolve any concerns they have.
- Pupils can explain accurately and confidently how to keep themselves healthy. They make informed choices about healthy eating, fitness and their emotional and mental well-being. They have an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships and are confident in staying safe from abuse and exploitation.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe online, the dangers of inappropriate use of mobile technology and social networking sites.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development equips them to be thoughtful, caring and active citizens in school and in wider society.

Good (2)

- Pupils are confident and self-assured. They take pride in their work, their school and their appearance.
- Pupils' attitudes to all aspects of their learning are consistently positive. These positive attitudes have a good impact on the progress they make.
- Pupils show respect for others' ideas and views.
- Pupils use careers guidance to make choices about the next stage of their education, employment, self-employment or training.
- Pupils are punctual and prepared for lessons. They bring the right equipment and are ready to learn.
- Pupils value their education. Few are absent or persistently absent. No groups of pupils are disadvantaged by low attendance. The attendance of pupils who have previously had exceptionally high rates of absence is showing marked and sustained improvement.
- Pupils conduct themselves well throughout the day, including at lunchtimes.
- The school is an orderly environment. Pupils respond quickly to instructions and requests from staff, allowing lessons to flow smoothly and without interruption. Low-level disruption is rare.
- Pupils' good conduct reflects the school's efforts to promote high standards. There are marked improvements in behaviour for individuals or groups with particular behavioural needs.
- Parents, staff and pupils have no well-founded concerns about personal development, behaviour and welfare.

- Teachers and other adults are quick to tackle the rare use of derogatory or aggressive language and always challenge stereotyping.
- Teachers and other adults promote clear messages about the impact of bullying and prejudiced behaviour on pupils' well-being. Pupils work well with the school to tackle and prevent the rare occurrences of bullying.
- The school's open culture promotes all aspects of pupils' welfare. They are safe and feel safe. They have opportunities to learn how to keep themselves safe. They enjoy learning about how to stay healthy and about emotional and mental health, safe and positive relationships and how to prevent misuse of technology.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensures that they are prepared to be reflective about and responsible for their actions as good citizens.

Requires improvement (3)

- Pupils' personal development and welfare are not yet good and/or behaviour in the school is not yet good.
- Pupils are safe and they feel safe.

Inadequate (4)

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are likely to be inadequate if any one of the following applies:

- Pupils' lack of engagement, persistent low-level and/or high-level wilful, disruption, contribute to reduced learning and/or disorderly classrooms.
- A significant minority of pupils show a lack of respect for each other or staff and a lack of self-discipline. Pupils ignore or rebut requests from teachers to moderate their conduct. This results in poor behaviour around the school.
- Pupils show negative attitudes about the value of good manners and behaviour as key factors in school life, adult life and work.
- Attendance is consistently low for all pupils or groups of pupils and shows little sign of sustained improvement.
- A significant minority of pupils do not understand how and why to live healthy, positive lives both physically and emotionally.
- Incidents of bullying or prejudiced and discriminatory behaviour, both direct and indirect, are frequent. Pupils have little confidence in the school's ability to tackle bullying successfully.
- Pupils or particular groups of pupils are not safe or do not feel safe at school and/or at alternative placements.

Outcomes for pupils

166. Inspectors will take account of current standards and progress, including the school's own performance information, and make a relevant judgement on academic and other learning outcomes for pupils by evaluating the extent to which all pupils:

- progress well from their different starting points and achieve or exceed standards expected for their age nationally (at the end of a key stage), or within the school's own curriculum

- attain relevant qualifications so that they can and do progress to the next stage of their education into courses that lead to higher level qualifications or into jobs that meet local and national needs.
167. To judge outcomes, inspectors will evaluate pupils' academic and vocational achievement.
168. In judging achievement, inspectors will give most weight to pupils' progress. They will take account of pupils' starting points in terms of their prior attainment and age when evaluating progress. Within this, they will give most weight to the progress of pupils currently in the school, taking account of how this compares with the progress of recent cohorts, where relevant. Inspectors will consider the progress of pupils in **all** year groups, not just those who have taken or are about to take examinations or national tests. As part of pupils' progress, inspectors will consider the growth in pupils' security, breadth and depth of knowledge, understanding and skills.

Sources of evidence

169. Inspectors will gather evidence about the progress of current pupils through:
- observations in lessons
 - discussions with pupils about their understanding of things they have been learning about
 - scrutiny of pupils' acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills over time as shown in their work, not exclusively that in their books
 - the school's own information, taking account of the quality and rigour of the assessment on which it is based.
170. Inspectors will recognise that published data for very small groups of children should be treated with caution. For example, it will not be possible to draw conclusions about trends in relation to very small groups. Equally, it will be misleading to compare national rates of progress and attainment with progress and attainment rates for very small groups or for groups that have high proportions of pupils with special educational needs arising from their low cognitive abilities.
171. When considering the school's records for the progress of current pupils, inspectors will recognise that schools are at different points in their move towards adopting a system of assessment without national curriculum levels.
172. In scrutinising pupils' work, inspectors will consider how well:
- pupils are on track to meet or exceed the attainment expected for their age as set out by the school's own curriculum and assessment system and the national curriculum

- all pupils are set aspirational targets, given their starting points, and are on track to meet or exceed these
- the most able pupils do work that deepens their knowledge, understanding and skills, rather than simply undertaking more work of the same difficulty or going on to study different content.

Disadvantaged pupils

173. Inspectors will take particular account of the progress made by disadvantaged pupils by the end of the key stage compared with that made nationally by other pupils with similar starting points and the extent to which any gaps in this progress, and consequently in attainment, are closing. Inspectors will first consider the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils compared with the national figures for non-disadvantaged pupils and how much any gaps are closing. They will then also consider any in-school gaps between disadvantaged pupils' progress and attainment and the progress and attainment of the other pupils in the school and how much these gaps are closing.
174. Inspectors will consider the impact of what a school is doing to narrow any gaps in progress and attainment between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils. Where in-school gaps are narrowing, inspectors will check that this is because the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils are rising and not because the progress or attainment of non-disadvantaged pupils is falling. Where an in-school attainment gap exists or widens, inspectors should consider whether this is because disadvantaged pupils attain more highly than other pupils nationally, but non-disadvantaged pupils in the school attain even more highly. A school should not be penalised in these circumstances.

The most able

175. Inspectors will pay particular attention to whether the most able pupils are making progress towards attaining the highest standards and achieving as well as they should. They will also consider whether they are receiving the support they need to reach their full potential. For example, inspectors will consider whether a large enough proportion of pupils who had the highest attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics achieve A*/A GCSE grades in these subjects by the age of 16 and whether enough current pupils are on track to do so.
176. Inspectors will consider the progress that lower-attaining pupils are making and the impact of provision for them on raising their attainment so that they reach standards expected for their age. Inspectors will also consider the impact of provision on raising the attainment of other pupils who have fallen behind so that they attain as well as they should.

177. In evaluating progress in literacy and mathematics, inspectors will take into account the progress of those for whom the Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium provides support.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs

178. Inspectors will consider the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in relation to the progress of pupils nationally with similar starting points. Inspectors will examine the impact of funded support for them on closing any gaps in progress and attainment. The expectation is that the identification of special educational needs leads to additional or different arrangements being made and a consequent improvement in progress.
179. Inspectors will consider whether any differences exist between the progress and attainment of pupils in resource-based provision and those with similar starting points who are disabled or have special educational needs in the main school. Inspectors will report on any differences and the reasons. When considering any whole-school published data on progress and attainment, inspectors will take into account the impact that a large number of pupils in resource-based provision might have on these figures.
180. For groups of pupils whose cognitive ability is such that their attainment is unlikely ever to rise above 'low', the judgement on outcomes will be based on an evaluation of the pupils' learning and progress relative to their starting points at particular ages and any assessment measures the school holds. Evaluations should not take account of their attainment compared with that of all other pupils.

Incomplete key stages

181. When evaluating pupil progress, inspectors will take into account where pupils started a key stage elsewhere or have not completed their current key stage. This could include middle schools and newly opened schools, or where pupil mobility is high. For maintained nursery schools with children aged three and four years who move to primary school before any nationally comparable assessments are made, inspectors will evaluate the children's learning and progress relative to their age and draw on evidence of their starting points. When evaluating pupil progress between Key Stages 2 and 4, inspectors will take into account where pupils start at age 14.

Off-site provision

182. Inspectors must consider the progress of pupils who attend off-site alternative provision for all or part of the week and the school's own records of these pupils' progress.

Grade descriptors for outcomes for pupils

Note: Grade descriptors are not a checklist. Inspectors adopt a 'best fit' approach that relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Outstanding (1)

- Throughout each year group and across the curriculum, including in English and mathematics, current pupils make substantial and sustained progress, developing excellent knowledge and understanding, considering their different starting points.
- The progress across the curriculum of disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs currently on roll matches or is improving towards that of other pupils with the same starting points.
- Pupils are typically able to articulate their knowledge and understanding clearly in an age-appropriate way. They can hold thoughtful conversations about them with each other and adults.
- Pupils read widely and often across subjects to a high standard, with fluency and comprehension appropriate to their age. Children in Year 1 achieve highly in the national phonics check.
- For pupils generally, and specifically for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs, progress is above average across nearly all subject areas.
- From each different starting point, the proportions of pupils making and exceeding expected progress in English and in mathematics are high compared with national figures. The progress of disadvantaged pupils matches or is improving towards that of other pupils nationally.
- The attainment of almost all groups of pupils is broadly in line with national averages or, if below these, it is improving rapidly.
- Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment and have attained relevant qualifications. Compared with the national average for all pupils, higher proportions of pupils and of disadvantaged pupils, progress on to a range of higher and further education establishments, apprenticeships, employment or training. These destinations strongly support their career plans.

Good (2)

- Across almost all year groups and in a wide range of subjects, including in English and mathematics, current pupils make consistently strong progress, developing secure knowledge and understanding, considering their different starting points.
- In a wide range of subjects, the progress of disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs currently on roll is close to or is improving towards that of other pupils with the same starting points.
- Pupils read widely and often, with fluency and comprehension appropriate to their age. The vast majority of children in Year 1 achieve the expected standard in the national phonics check.
- Pupils' progress is above average or improving across most subject areas. Overall progress of disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs is above average or improving.
- From different starting points, the proportions of pupils making and exceeding expected progress in English and in mathematics are close to or above national

figures. The progress of the vast majority of disadvantaged pupils is similar to or improving in relation to other pupils nationally.

- Where attainment overall is low, it shows consistent improvement.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment and have attained relevant qualifications. The proportion of pupils progressing to higher and further education establishments, apprenticeships, employment or training is close to or above average. These pupils do so at a level suitable to meet appropriate career plans.

Requires improvement (3)

- Outcomes are not yet good.

Inadequate (4)

Outcomes are likely to be inadequate if one or more of the following applies:

- Progress in any key subject⁵³ or key stage indicates that pupils are underachieving considerably.
- From their different starting points, the proportions of pupils in different year groups making or exceeding expected progress in English or in mathematics are consistently low and show little or no improvement.
- For disadvantaged pupils, the proportions making or exceeding expected progress from their different starting points in English or in mathematics are consistently well below those of other pupils nationally and show little or no improvement.
- There are wide gaps in the progress and/or attainment of different groups and these are not improving.
- The school's performance regularly falls below the floor standards.⁵⁴ Any improvement is insufficient, fragile or inconsistent.
- Pupils' proficiency in reading, writing or mathematics is not sufficiently strong for them to succeed in the next year or stage of education, or in training or employment.
- Pupils have not attained the qualifications appropriate for them to progress on to their next stage of education, training or employment.

Inspecting the effectiveness of the early years provision: the quality and standards

183. Inspectors are required to write a section in the inspection report that summarises the effectiveness of the early years provision and to provide a numerical grade for it.
184. In order to achieve comparability with the way in which registered early years providers are inspected and judged under the common inspection framework, the grade descriptors below reflect those in the early years handbook.

⁵³ 'Key' subjects in primary schools are English and mathematics. In secondary schools, they are English, mathematics, science and any subjects studied by a high proportion of pupils.

⁵⁴ Floor standards refer to the expected levels of performance at Key Stages 2 and 4 set by the government.

185. Inspectors will judge the overall quality and standards of the early years provision, taking into account:

- the effectiveness of leadership and management
- the quality of teaching, learning and assessment
- how well the provision contributes to children’s personal development, behaviour and welfare
- outcomes for children.

186. Inspectors will consider:

- the rigour and effectiveness of systems to drive improvement, including
 - monitoring the quality of provision and children’s outcomes
 - the professional development of staff
 - evaluation of the impact of actions taken
 - setting ambitious targets
- how effectively leaders use additional funding, including the early years pupil premium where applicable, and measure its impact on narrowing gaps in children’s outcomes
- the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures
- how well teaching nurtures, engages and motivates children and promotes their sense of achievement and commitment to learning
- the breadth of the curriculum and how well it is based on accurate assessment of children’s learning and development, so that activities and experiences meet their needs
- the quality and impact of phonics teaching
- how well all staff work with parents, engage them in their children’s learning and keep them informed about their children’s achievements and progress
- children’s enjoyment of learning, including their participation and willingness to make choices and decisions, and the extent to which children are active and inquisitive learners who are creative and think critically
- how well children behave, cooperate and share with each other, make friends, respect each other’s differences and build their understanding and respect for different families, people and communities beyond their immediate experience
- the extent to which children behave in ways that are safe, understand how to stay safe and show that they feel safe
- the proportions of children who have made typical or better progress from their starting points, including disabled children, those with special educational needs and the most able

- the attainment of children at the end of Reception compared with Early Years Foundation Stage Profile national figures, including the proportion that achieve a good level of development,⁵⁵ particularly in terms of how well children are prepared for Key Stage 1
- whether outcomes are consistent across areas of learning, particularly in the prime areas and the specific areas of literacy and mathematics
- how quickly disadvantaged children, and any groups that are underachieving, are catching up.

Inspecting provision for two-year-olds

187. From September 2015, schools that take two-year-olds as part of their early years provision will no longer need to register that provision with Ofsted. The provision for two-year-olds will be inspected under section 5. Inspectors should ensure that the written judgement on the effectiveness of early years provision includes evaluation of the provision for two-year-olds.

188. When observing provision for two-year-olds, inspectors will assess whether practitioners are:

- knowledgeable about the typical development and characteristics of learning for two-year-olds, including their emotional and physical dependency on adults
- aware of the large difference in development between children who are 'just two' and those approaching their third birthday
- aware when children need comforting and respond in an appropriate way that provides that comfort
- focused on teaching children through the three prime areas of learning
- attentive to children's care needs and use times caring for them as an opportunity to help children's learning
- giving children time to be in familiar, small groups and opportunities to be in smaller, quieter areas for play
- patient, attentive and allow two-year-olds to express their ideas
- listening to children and responding to children's verbal and non-verbal communication rather than interrupting children
- gently talkative with children and are not put off when there is no response
- not reactive when children display a tantrum.

⁵⁵ A child achieves a good level of development, as defined by the government, if she or he meets the expected level in the early learning goals in the prime areas of learning (personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language) and in the specific areas of mathematics and literacy. This is not the same as making good progress.

189. Inspectors will be aware that two-year-olds typically:

- continue to develop the language to communicate verbally – they may often use single words, they may string single words together or use language that is hard for adults to discern
- show interest in others but are learning to play cooperatively – children may play ‘side by side’, although they may be less willing to share resources
- watch others and copy others as ways of learning
- have conflict with other two-year-olds
- ask ‘what?’ and ‘where?’
- begin to develop their independence – children may often state ‘me do it’ and ‘no’
- use physical means to express themselves.

Grade descriptors for the effectiveness of the early years provision: quality and standards

Note: Grade descriptors are not a checklist. Inspectors adopt a ‘best fit’ approach that relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Outstanding (1)

- The pursuit of excellence by leaders and managers is shown by an uncompromising, highly successful drive to improve outcomes or maintain the highest levels of outcomes, for all children over a sustained period of time.
- Incisive evaluation of the impact of staff’s practice leads to rigorous performance management and supervision. Highly focused professional development improves the quality of teaching.
- Safeguarding is effective.
- There are no breaches of statutory welfare requirements.
- Children’s health, safety and well-being are greatly enhanced by the vigilant and consistent implementation of robust policies and procedures.
- Leaders use highly successful strategies to engage parents and carers, including those from different groups, in their children’s learning in school and at home.
- A highly stimulating environment and exceptional organisation of the curriculum provides rich, varied and imaginative experiences.
- Teaching is consistently of a very high quality, inspirational and worthy of dissemination to others; it is highly responsive to children’s needs.
- Assessment is accurate and based on high quality observations. It includes all those involved in the child’s learning and development. Provision across all areas of learning is planned meticulously. It is based on rigorous and sharply focused assessments of children’s achievement so that every child undertakes highly challenging activities.
- Children are highly motivated and very eager to join in. They consistently demonstrate curiosity, imagination and concentration. They are highly responsive to adults and each other. They do not distract others or become distracted easily themselves.

- The vast majority of children are developing a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and manage risks. They demonstrate exceptionally positive behaviour and high levels of self-control, cooperation and respect for others.
- Children make consistently high rates of progress in relation to their starting points and are extremely well prepared academically, socially and emotionally for the next stage of their education. As a result, almost all children, including disabled children, those who have special educational needs, disadvantaged children and the most able, are making substantial and sustained progress.
- Gaps between the attainment of groups of children and all children nationally, including disadvantaged children, have closed or are closing rapidly. Any gaps between areas of learning are closing.

Good (2)

- Leaders and managers have an accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision as a result of effective self-evaluation. The impact of concerted and effective action to improve provision, including the training and development of staff, can be seen in children's achievement.
- Leaders ensure that children's needs are identified and give them the support they need, including through effective partnerships with external agencies and other providers.
- Safeguarding is effective.
- There are no breaches of statutory welfare requirements.
- Child protection policies and procedures are implemented consistently; practice is reviewed regularly and clearly evaluated.
- The curriculum provides a broad range of interesting and demanding experiences that meet children's needs and help them make progress towards the early learning goals.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- All adults have high expectations of children based on accurate assessment of children's skills, knowledge and understanding when they join the school. Practitioners use regular and precise assessments of children's learning and development to plan activities that are suitably challenging for all children.
- Parents and carers contribute to initial assessments of children's starting points and are kept well informed about their children's progress. Parents are encouraged to support their children's learning and development at home.
- Children are motivated and interested in a broad range of activities and are keen learners. They listen carefully to adults and each other.
- Children's behaviour is good and shows that they feel safe. They gain an understanding of risk through activities that encourage them to explore their environment. Children are learning to respect and celebrate each other's differences and to build their understanding of diversity beyond their immediate experience through a range of activities that teach them effectively about people in the wider world.
- Children make at least typical progress and most children make progress that is better than this from their starting points. This includes disabled children, those who have special educational needs, disadvantaged children and the most able. Children develop the key skills needed to make a positive start to the next stage of their education.
- Where children's starting points are below those of other children of their age, assessment shows they are catching up quickly. Any gaps between the attainment of

groups, including those for whom the school receives additional funding and all children nationally, are closing.

Requires improvement (3)

- The effectiveness of the early years provision is not yet good.
- Safeguarding is effective.
- There are no material breaches of statutory welfare requirements.

Inadequate (4)

The early years provision is likely to be inadequate if one or more of the following applies:

- Self-evaluation is weak, with too little focus on raising achievement and improving the quality of provision. Any actions taken to tackle areas of identified weakness have been insufficient or ineffective.
- The curriculum is too narrow. It does not offer a broad range of experiences that challenge children or promote their understanding of people and communities beyond their own experience.
- Teachers and other adults are not knowledgeable enough and/or they are not vigilant enough to ensure that children are kept safe and that their health and welfare are promoted.
- Safeguarding is ineffective.
- Statutory welfare requirements are not met.
- Leaders and/or staff have a poor understanding of how to promote children's learning and development, resulting in weak teaching that is not matched to children's needs.
- Information from assessment is not accurate and not used well enough to enable children to make the progress they should.
- Children's behaviour is not managed consistently. As a result, more than occasionally, lack of engagement in activities leads to a disorderly environment that hinders their learning and/or puts them and others at risk.
- Children or specific groups of children such as disabled children, those with special educational needs, those for whom the school receives additional funding, or the most able do not achieve as well as they can. Many start Year 1 without the skills and knowledge they need.
- Low attainment of any group shows little sign of rising. Gaps between different groups show little sign of closing or may be widening.
- Strategies for engaging parents about their child's learning and development are weak. As a result, parents do not know what their child is learning or how they can help them improve.

Inspecting the effectiveness of the 16 to 19 study programmes

190. Inspectors are required to write a section in the inspection report that summarises the effectiveness of the 16 to 19 study programmes and to provide a numerical grade for it.

191. In order to achieve comparability with the way in which 16 to 19 provision within further education and skills providers are inspected and judged under the

common inspection framework, the grade descriptors below reflect those in the further education and skills handbook.

192. Inspectors will judge the effectiveness of the 16 to 19 study programmes, taking into account:

- the effectiveness of leadership and management
- the quality of teaching, learning and assessment
- the personal development, behaviour and welfare of learners
- outcomes for learners.

193. Inspectors will consider how well:

- leaders promote high expectations and use rigorous systems to drive improvement, including through monitoring and developing the quality of 16 to 19 provision and improving the progress and achievement of learners and groups of learners
- study programmes for each learner are planned and managed so that they meet fully the principles of the DfE's 16 to 19 study programmes⁵⁶ by providing progression, stretch, mathematics and English for all learners without GCSE grades A* to C, as well as work experience and non-qualification activities
- teaching and assessment support and challenge learners
- study programmes build on each learner's prior attainment and enable them to make progress and move on to a higher level of qualification when they are ready to do so
- learners receive high quality impartial careers guidance that prepares them for their chosen next steps and enables them to make well-informed decisions about their future plans
- learners develop personal, social, employability and independent learning skills and achieve high levels of punctuality, attendance and conduct, including through the contribution of non-qualification or enrichment activities and/or work experience
- learners understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy, both physically and emotionally
- learners, and groups of learners, make progress from their different starting points, remain on their study programme, achieve their core aim and make

⁵⁶ The guidance on 16 to 19 study programmes www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-study-programmes-advice-on-planning-and-delivery provides a set of principles that cover all 16 to 19 provision (other than apprenticeships and traineeships) in all settings.

progress towards a GCSE grade C in English and/or mathematics if they do not already have one

- learners, and groups of learners, progress to the planned next stage in their careers, such as a higher level of education or training, or to employment or an apprenticeship
- the 16 to 19 interim minimum standards are met where applicable.

194. Inspectors will also consider whether or not arrangements for safeguarding learners are effective.

Grade descriptors: the effectiveness of the 16 to 19 study programmes

Note: Grade descriptors are not a checklist. Inspectors adopt a 'best fit' approach that relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Outstanding (1)

- Leaders pursue excellence. They improve provision and outcomes rapidly and reduce achievement gaps between groups by monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment as well as learners' retention, progress and skill development.
- Leaders plan, manage and evaluate study programmes so that learners undertake highly individualised and challenging learning that builds on their prior attainment, meets all the requirements of 16 to 19 provision and prepares them very well for future employment.
- Learners without GCSE grades A* to C in either English or mathematics follow appropriately tailored courses in English and/or mathematics. The considerable majority make substantial and sustained progress towards grade C or above.
- High-quality impartial careers guidance ensures that learners follow study programmes that build on their prior attainment and enable them to develop clear, ambitious and realistic plans for their future. Learners understand the options available and are informed about local and national skills needs.
- Teaching, learning and assessment support and challenge learners to make sustained and substantial progress in all aspects of their study programme. Teaching enables learners who fall behind to catch up swiftly and the most able to excel.
- Learners are confident and conduct themselves well. They are punctual. They have excellent personal, social and employability skills and undertake high quality non-qualification activities and work experience that matches their needs. Attendance rates are high.
- Learners are safe and feel safe. They are thoughtful, caring and respectful citizens. They take responsibility for keeping themselves safe and healthy and contribute to wider society and life in Britain.
- Throughout the time spent on their study programmes, learners and groups of learners make substantial and sustained progress from their starting points. Rates of retention are high for almost all groups of learners. Any

gaps in the progress or retention of groups with similar starting points are closing.

- Almost all learners progress swiftly to higher levels during their study programme. Almost all learners complete their study programmes, achieve qualifications relevant to their career aims and move on to sustained education, employment, training or an apprenticeship.
- Progress on level 3 qualifications in terms of value added is above average across nearly all subjects.

Good (2)

- Leaders have high expectations. They improve provision and reduce achievement gaps between groups by monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and learners' retention, progress and skill development.
- Leaders plan and manage individualised study programmes that build on learners' prior attainment, meet all the requirements of 16 to 19 provision and prepare them well for future employment.
- Learners without GCSE grades A* to C in either English or mathematics follow relevant courses in English and/or mathematics. Many make progress towards grade C.
- Impartial careers guidance ensures that learners undertake study programmes that build on their prior attainment and enables them to develop clear and realistic plans for their future.
- Teaching, learning and assessment support and challenge learners so that they make strong progress across all aspects of their study programmes. Learners who fall behind are helped to catch up and the most able are stretched.
- Learners develop personal, social and employability skills, including through high quality non-qualification activities and work experience relevant to their needs. They are punctual and attendance is high.
- Learners are safe and feel safe. They behave well, respect others and understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy and to contribute to wider society and life in Britain.
- The great majority of learners and groups of learners make strong progress from their starting points. Gaps in the progress or retention of groups with similar starting points are closing.
- The great majority of learners progress to higher levels during and after their study programme. They complete their study programmes, achieve qualifications relevant to their career aims and move on to sustained education, employment, training or an apprenticeship.
- Progress on level 3 qualifications in terms of value added is above average or improving across most subjects.

Requires improvement (3)

- Effectiveness of the 16 to 19 study programmes is not yet good.

Inadequate (4)

Effectiveness of the 16 to 19 study programmes is likely to be inadequate if one or more of the following apply:

- Leadership of 16 to 19 study programmes is weak.
- The requirements of the 16 to 19 study programmes are not met.
- Study programmes are insufficiently challenging or relevant to learners' prior attainment or planned next steps.
- Weak assessment practice or poor planning mean that teaching fails to meet learners' needs.
- Learners or groups of learners make inadequate progress from their starting points.
- Too few learners are retained on their courses or achieve their core aim.
- Learners or groups of learners are ill-prepared for their next steps in terms of attainment, personal skills or behaviours.
- Too many learners or groups of learners are unsuccessful in securing relevant sustained education, employment or training.
- The 16 to 19 minimum standards are not met for either vocational or academic qualifications.
- Safeguarding is ineffective.

Annex. Additional guidance

New academies

When a school becomes an academy, an Academy Order is made by the Secretary of State. The predecessor school is closed and a new school, the academy, is established. The new academy is legally a new school, even though in many cases it is likely to comprise the same pupils, teachers and buildings. Academies are independent of local authority control but are state-funded schools. Statutory regulations permit Ofsted to provide RAISEonline data from a predecessor school to the new academy.

When inspecting and reporting on academies, inspectors must have regard for their new legal status. Inspectors must take care not to include undue consideration of the progress and attainment in the predecessor school nor take account of the progress made by a new academy against the areas for improvement identified in the most recent inspection report of its predecessor school.

Although inspectors may take account of information relating to a predecessor school, either from a predecessor school inspection report or from another source such as RAISEonline, such information may only be used to inform the inspection of an academy during the period from the date on which the academy was established. However, information or data relating to a predecessor school may be used to inform the evidence base that is gathered during the inspection of the academy to enhance inspectors' understanding about its performance: for example, whether the academy, since its establishment, has:

- improved, consolidated or is responsible for a decline in pupils' performance, using the predecessor school's performance as baseline
- tackled any areas of weakness or built on strengths.

Inspectors should make clear to academies the extent to which they can take account of the performance data from predecessor schools.

For the first section 5 inspection of the school since it became an academy, the report should say 'not previously inspected as an academy'. However, for the first section 5 inspection of a converter academy, this must be explained in the context section. To ensure consistency, all first section 5 inspection reports for academy converter schools must include a factual explanation in the context section that follows the example below:

'Piccadilly Gate Academy converted to become an academy school on 1 September 2012. When its predecessor school, Piccadilly Gate Secondary School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good overall.'

By doing this, Ofsted will ensure that readers have the appropriate context and that reporting is consistent and transparent for all academy converter schools.

Judgements made in a predecessor report are judgements about that school. They are not judgements about a converter academy. Inspectors should not refer to the key judgements or the areas for improvement in the inspection report for the predecessor school.

Inspecting partnerships and off-site provision

Inspectors may wish to speak to key partners who work with the school. They should make every effort to telephone or meet staff in the institutions where pupils are taught off-site to help assess the school's quality assurance arrangements. They must evaluate the rigour with which the school monitors the attendance, behaviour, learning and progress of the pupils who attend them.

Units dealing with pupils' behaviour may exist away from the school site, but be run by the school. Sometimes, this provision may be shared by one or more schools. It is important to find out how this is monitored and evaluated, both day to day and over time. An inspector should visit the unit briefly to assess safeguarding procedures, the quality of teaching and how effectively the unit helps to improve pupils' behaviour, learning and attendance. The visit should be proportionate to the number of pupils who attend and the length of time they spend there. This can be full-time provision for a number of pupils over several weeks, so it is important to evaluate it thoroughly.

If special schools or pupil referral units (PRUs) use alternative provision, inspectors must visit a sample of the placements during the inspection, in addition to evaluating the areas outlined above. The lead inspector should ask the headteacher to provide details of all the provision used by the school or PRU. Inspectors should give priority to visiting unregistered providers.

Inspection of religious education and collective worship

Schools with a religious character

If a voluntary or foundation school is designated as having a denominational religious character ('a school with a religious character'), then denominational religious education, the school ethos and the content of collective worship are inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. Academies designated as having a religious character by the Secretary of State are inspected in an equivalent way by virtue of a provision in the academy's funding agreement. The inspectors who conduct section 48 inspections are appointed by the school's governing body or the foundation governors in a voluntary controlled school, having consulted with person(s) prescribed in regulations (normally the appropriate religious authority) where applicable. The inspectors are normally drawn from the relevant faith group's section 48 inspection service, although not all faith groups have their own inspectors organised in this way. Regulations specify that section 48 inspections must be

conducted within five school years from the end of the school year in which the last section 48 inspection took place.⁵⁷

In schools with a religious character, section 5 inspectors must not comment on the content of religious worship or on denominational religious education (RE). Inspectors may visit lessons and assemblies in order to help them evaluate how those contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their personal development, behaviour and welfare.

The relationship between section 5 and section 48 inspections is governed by a protocol between Ofsted and signatory faith group inspectorates.

Ofsted's lead inspector should check the section 48 arrangements and:

- if a section 48 inspection is occurring at the same time, the section 5 report, in the section on 'information about this school', should mention that a section 48 inspection also took place; the section 5 report should not use evidence from the section 48 inspection
- if a section 48 inspection has been carried out since the previous section 5 or short inspection, inspectors should inform themselves of any key issues raised but should not use its evidence in their own inspection
- if no section 48 inspection by a suitable person has taken place, the lead inspector should check the arrangements; if the governors have not arranged for a section 48 inspection, inspectors should conclude that they have failed to carry out a statutory responsibility and refer to this in the section 5 inspection report.

Schools without a religious character

In the case of other maintained schools and academies where religious education (RE) is being provided in line with the legislation that underpins the locally agreed syllabus, RE is inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

These schools must conform to the legal requirements for non-faith schools:

- RE in maintained schools (except voluntary aided schools, those with specific trust requirements and voluntary controlled/foundation schools whose parents request denominational RE) should be based on the locally agreed syllabus prepared by the Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC). The RE curriculum should reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Britain are, in the main, Christian while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Britain. It also means that a school or academy without a religious designation must not provide an RE

⁵⁷Regulation 4 of The Education (School Inspection) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2009.

syllabus (or any other) to pupils by means of any catechism or formulary that is distinctive of any particular religious denomination.

- Academies may, but are not required to, follow the locally agreed RE syllabus. Alternatively, they can devise their own syllabus, but it must be in line with the legislation that underpins the locally agreed syllabus as mentioned above. Academies without a defined religious character must provide collective worship that is 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'. Inspectors should note any requirements of the academy's funding agreement.
- A school can reflect the religious backgrounds represented in its community in its collective worship, as long as the majority of provision is broadly Christian. Alternatively, the family backgrounds of some or all pupils may lead the headteacher and governing body to conclude that broadly Christian collective worship is not appropriate. The headteacher can apply to the local Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) to have the broadly Christian requirement disapplied and replaced by collective worship distinctive to another faith. The headteacher must consult the governing body before doing so. Academies need to apply to the Secretary of State via the Education Funding Agency (EFA).

Evaluating the quality of boarding and residential provision in schools

Where the school provides boarding or residential provision, inspectors will make the four key judgements on that provision. These judgements are made in accordance with the guidance and grade descriptors in 'Inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools – the inspection framework'.⁵⁸

If the provision does not meet one or more national minimum standards, the following standard phrase must appear as one of the recommendations in the report:

- 'The school must ensure that it meets the national minimum standards for boarding schools that have not been met'
- or
- 'The school must ensure that it meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools that have not been met.'

⁵⁸ Inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools – the inspection framework, Ofsted, March 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-framework-for-inspecting-boarding-and-residential-provision-in-schools.

Inspectors must consider the impact of the judgements on the boarding/residential provision on the judgements for the whole school. In order to do this, they will need to take account of the proportion of boarders/residential pupils in the school and the seriousness of the issues found.

For the effectiveness of leadership and management and personal development, behaviour and welfare, the numerical grades for the school and boarding should either be the same or be within one grade of each other. The report should clearly state the reasons for any differences.

Integrated inspections of education and boarding or residential provision

In boarding or residential special schools, the social care regulatory inspector begins to inspect in the afternoon of the preparation day of the inspection and must use 'boarding time' during the first evening to talk to the young people in the boarding or residential accommodation. In schools with boarding or residential provision, lead inspectors should consider the timing of team meetings so that the social care regulatory inspector is available to join them: it is important that the findings of the social care regulatory inspector contribute to judgements about the school.

Inspectors must work closely together to plan sufficient time to discuss their findings throughout the inspection. The lead education inspector should join the social care regulatory inspector on some inspection activities so that they can gain a full picture of provision at the school. This is particularly important in assessing personal development, behaviour and welfare and the strength of the links between the day school and boarding provision.

Aligned inspections of maintained and non-maintained schools or academies with registration as children's homes

The inspection of education in a school that is also registered as a children's home may take place as a stand-alone inspection of the education provision or be aligned with the full inspection of the children's home.⁵⁹ Where possible, Ofsted will attempt to align both inspections so that inspectors may work together and share evidence.

Where the education inspection takes place as a stand-alone event, inspectors must read the most recent education and children's home reports on the preparation day. They must make themselves aware of any current issues concerning children's welfare that may affect aspects of the school inspection and ensure that they take these into consideration during the inspection.

⁵⁹ All registered children's homes will have at least two inspections in a year. At least one of these will be a full inspection and the children's homes may also be subject to an interim inspection. All inspections are conducted in line with the *Inspection of children's homes – Framework for inspection from 1 April 2015*, Ofsted, May 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-childrens-homes-framework.

Where the education and children's homes inspections are aligned, the education and social care regulatory inspectors should work together to share evidence. Further details are provided in the 'Non-association independent school inspection handbook'.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ *Non-association independent school inspection handbook*, Ofsted, June 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/non-association-independent-school-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015.