



Providing Inspection Services for

Department of Education
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure



PRIMARY INSPECTION

GUIDANCE FOR CO-ORDINATORS, TEACHERS AND SUPPORT STAFF

2015-16

GENERAL INFORMATION

During the inspection, the inspection team will evaluate the following key areas of provision:

1. Achievements and Standards;
2. Provision for Learning; and
3. Leadership and Management.

A key consideration will be the extent and effectiveness of the processes used by the school to monitor and evaluate its provision. This will include an evaluation of the school's own process of self-evaluation leading to improvement.

The purposes of inspection are:

- to assess and report on the wide range of provision which makes up the education and training provision within Northern Ireland;
- to inform the Department of Education of the quality of provision and standards attained and, as a result, help to shape policy and development;
- to seek to promote the highest possible standards of learning and teaching throughout the education system in Northern Ireland; and
- to assist the school in its work by identifying strengths and any areas for improvement, which will enhance the quality and effectiveness of learning and teaching and contribute to the raising of the children's attainments.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE INSPECTION?

We will evaluate three main aspects of the life and work of the school.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND STANDARDS - we evaluate:

- the children's overall standards and achievements in literacy/bi-literacy (in Irish-medium settings) and/or numeracy, including those children with additional learning needs;
- the children's motivation and attitude to learning;
- the children's acquisition and application of skills and concepts including thinking skills and personal capabilities; and
- if applicable, the children's achievements and standards in the Nursery Unit/ Learning Support Centre/ Irish-Medium Unit.

PROVISION FOR LEARNING - we evaluate:

- the quality of the learning environment; including the quality of the immersion environment in Irish-medium settings;
- the quality of the working relationships and children's behaviour throughout the school;

- teachers' planning;
- whole-school planning and guidance as appropriate;
- how the work addresses the needs and abilities of all of the children;
- samples of the children's previous and current work;
- the quality and effectiveness of the learning and teaching;
- the children's progress and attainment data, including the marking of the children's work; and
- if applicable, the provision for the children in the Nursery Unit/ Learning Support Centre/ Irish-Medium Unit.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT – we evaluate:

- the effectiveness of the school's leadership and management at all levels, including the impact of the work of the co-ordinators and governors;
- the effectiveness of the school development planning processes, specifically, the quality of self-evaluation leading to improvement in learning and teaching;
- if applicable, the leadership and management of the Nursery Unit/Learning Support Centre/Irish Medium Unit;
- safeguarding procedures;
- links with the parents and community, including provision for Shared Education; and
- health and safety matters, where appropriate.

PRACTICALITIES FOR TEACHERS

PRE-INSPECTION VISIT: The Reporting Inspector (RI) will make arrangements to visit the school prior to the first day of the inspection. The purpose of this visit is for the RI to meet with the principal and discuss the context of the school, the achievements and standards of the children and the school development planning process. The RI will arrange to meet with all of the teaching staff at the close of the school day to outline the inspection process and to address any queries you may have.

PLANNING: It will help us if any planning notes used to inform learning and teaching in the short-, medium- and long-term are made available to us in the classrooms.

CHILDREN WORKING: We will observe children at work and will engage appropriately with them in class. We will look at children's books and other relevant work across the curriculum. In addition, if there is some work from last year that you feel we should see, tell us about it and leave samples for us. We also observe individuals or small groups working with, for example, teachers (including peripatetic or outreach) or classroom assistants.

CLASS VISITS: Our aim is to obtain a comprehensive overview of the quality of the learning and teaching in the school. To facilitate flexibility in making the most effective use of our classroom visits, it will not be possible for us to provide timetables of our visits. Teachers, including part-time and substitute teachers, should

expect, on average, two or three classroom visits during the inspection but all classrooms may not be visited an equal number of times. During class visits, inspectors may engage with classroom assistants to discuss their role in supporting individual or groups of children. It would be helpful if the following documentation was made available in each classroom during the inspection: teacher's planning file, including previous planning and evaluations of the learning and teaching; current individual education plans (IEPs); two sets of books showing work across the curriculum for two children within the highest, middle and the lowest ability range for each class; and, class assessment information.

TIMETABLE CHANGES: We may request that you change the timing of a lesson on a particular day. A timetable change will only happen with the full agreement of the teacher. If you wish to make any changes, please inform us through the principal/representative.

DOCUMENTATION: We will look at the documentation currently in use and relevant to the inspection. The School Development Plan (SDP), school policies, curriculum planning and assessment documentation, performance data and any other relevant documentation for the areas being inspected should be made available to us.

CO-ORDINATORS: Time will be arranged to meet with the relevant co-ordinators (for example, literacy, numeracy, safeguarding and pastoral care, SENCO). The purpose of the meeting is for the co-ordinator to demonstrate how targets are identified and how the impact of the subsequent actions is evaluated, and has led to improvement in the leadership and management, the quality of provision for learning and the achievements and standards of the children. (Appendix 1)

DESIGNATED TEACHER FOR CHILD PROTECTION: Prior to the inspection, the DT/principal should complete the ETI Safeguarding Proforma which should then be verified and signed by both the principal and the Chair of Governors. This form should be made available to the RI on the first day of the inspection. Time will be arranged during the inspection to talk to the DT about the information contained in the completed Safeguarding Proforma.

INFORMATION ABOUT CHILDREN'S PROGRESS: Assessment portfolios/ folders and any other significant assessment information, including the school's statutory assessment outcomes regarding the children's levels of progression in Communication and Using Mathematics, will contribute to our information base. This may also include records of interventions and progress made through small group or individual support led by classroom assistants.

SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS (SEN): The inspection team will evaluate the quality of the SEN provision and the impact of intervention programmes and individual educational plans (IEP) on the children's learning and well-being.

PASTORAL CARE ARRANGEMENTS: All inspections look at the school's arrangements for Pastoral Care and Safeguarding, particularly in relation to Department of Education (DE) Circulars. The Department will collate the returns from the parental, support staff and teacher questionnaires. If requested, we will be

available to meet with any member of, for example, the Board of Governors, the staff or the parents. The findings of the teacher, support staff and parent questionnaires will be shared with the principal and with the Board of Governors. At some time during the inspection, we will talk with a group of Year 6 children. A member of the inspection team may visit the dining hall and the playground during break or lunch time to observe the children in a less formal setting and to engage with the supervisory staff regarding their role.

PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT WITH TEACHERS: In most instances, at or towards the end of an observed lesson, the member of the inspection team will relay to the teacher the key strengths and any areas for improvement evident in learning and teaching. A further discussion may be arranged at the request of either the teacher or the member of the inspection team at a mutually agreed time. Throughout the inspection, we will meet with the principal/representative to provide emerging key findings on the quality of achievements and standards, the quality of provision for learning and the leadership and management in the school.

ROLE OF THE REPRESENTATIVE: The school is invited to nominate a representative to liaise with the inspection team. This representative is usually the principal of the school and should be able to manage the inspection from the school's perspective. The RI will provide further information during the pre-inspection visit. Acceptance of this role is on a voluntary basis and schools are not obliged to nominate a representative. During the inspection, the RI, along with the inspection team, will keep the representative informed of the emerging findings together with the underpinning evidence used to support the inspection team's evaluations. The RI will ensure that the representative is aware of any issues which are emerging, with a particular emphasis on any areas of the school's provision or work that may be at risk of an evaluation which is less than good. The representative will be invited to attend a team meeting at the end of each day of the inspection. At the moderation meeting, the final decisions on specific performance levels rest with the ETI inspection team.

Finally, please make us aware, through the principal/representative, of any special events which may be taking place during the inspection, which you feel may affect your work or timetables.

REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

ORAL REPORT BACK: The RI, accompanied by a colleague, will provide an oral report back, to the principal, vice-principal (where appropriate), Chairperson of the Board of Governors and a representative(s) of the Employing Authority. We encourage those present at the report-back meeting to make a note of the key findings.

THE REPORT: The report will issue to the school and will be accessible on the ETI website.

FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURES: Guidance regarding follow-up procedures can be found in the document "What Happens After an Inspection" available on the ETI website.

APPENDIX 1

MEETING WITH CO-ORDINATORS

Purpose:

The purpose of the meeting is for the co-ordinator to demonstrate how targets are identified and how the impact of the subsequent actions is evaluated, and has led to improvement in the leadership and management, the quality of provision for learning and the achievements and standards of the children.

Guidance for the meeting:

- The meeting is designed to last no longer than 45 minutes.
- The co-ordinator should provide supporting documentary evidence, selected from existing documentation and signposted to relevant sections. It is important that the co-ordinator selects **only** the relevant documentation.
- Other meetings with the co-ordinator are possible should either the inspectors or the co-ordinators request them during the inspection.
- The following discussion points are for guidance and should not be considered as a prescriptive list.

Areas for discussion

- The area of learning is prioritised within the SDP and supported by an action plan which is focused on learning and teaching and improvement in the children's standards and achievements.
 - *How and why were these priorities identified, including the use of qualitative and quantitative data?*
 - *Are the priorities linked in any way?*
 - *Where does the action plan fit within the SDP?*
 - *In the action plan is there a clear focus on learning/teaching/raising standards?*
- The co-ordinator provides strategic leadership and clear direction to ensure high quality learning experiences for the children.
 - *How is the school targeting high, low and potential underachievement? For example, is the school using target groups, staff deployment and training, homework and after-school clubs, parent volunteers, parent workshops, volunteer intervention programmes, such as Read to Succeed, Business in the Community, Write-on, Reading Partnership?*

Additional questions -

- *How is provision structured throughout the school?*
- *How is planning agreed and implemented across the school?*
- *How are staff development needs identified / addressed?*
- *How is good practice identified and disseminated?*
- *Do you link with teachers from other schools to plan or disseminate good practice?*

- The co-ordinator uses monitoring and self-evaluation effectively to affect improvement in the provision.
 - *How effective is the range of strategies for monitoring and evaluating the provision?*
 - *What are the improvements, because of the monitoring and evaluating, in learning/teaching/standards?*
 - *How does the school know that target groups and intervention programmes are making a sustained difference to the children's achievements and standards?*