



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

INTEGRATED HANDBOOK - FRAMEWORK

(For inspectors and schools)

(Published September 2012)

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SECTION A – THE WORK OF THE INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is a body approved for the purpose of inspection under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002. As such, ISI reports to the Department for Education (DfE) on the extent to which schools meet statutory requirements. ISI is the agency responsible for the inspection of schools in membership of the Associations of the Independent Schools Council (ISC). ISI inspects all provision run by the Proprietor of a school, including registered Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and boarding provision.

ISI inspections of independent schools are required to:

- report to the DfE the extent to which ISC schools comply with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended (referred to as the 'regulatory requirements');
- where applicable, report to Ofsted on compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 including the Early Years Foundation Stage;
- where applicable, report to the DfE the extent to which schools meet their statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children for which the school provides accommodation (in practice whether the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (2013) are met);
- assure ISC Associations that their member schools maintain the quality of provision expected;
- help schools to improve, and inform parents of the quality of schools.

ISI inspection is for the benefit of the pupils in the schools and seeks to improve the quality and effectiveness of their education and of their care and welfare. Inspection also provides objective and reliable reports on the quality of schools and, by placing reports in the public domain, makes the information available to parents, ISC Associations, government and the wider community. In this way, it helps schools, their staff and governors/proprietors to recognise and build on their strengths and to identify and remedy any weaknesses.

Registration with DfE and Ofsted

All independent schools in England must be registered with the Department for Education (DfE). In addition, independent schools offering provision for children under the age of 'rising three' must register their provision on Ofsted's Early Years Register to meet the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006.

Inspection principles

ISI inspections:

- report on the fulfilment of aims and the distinctiveness of each school;
- provide independent and objective reports to inform parents, schools and ISC Associations;
- support school development and improvement;
- take account of any self-evaluation by those inspected;
- include clear and helpful oral feedback to schools;
- incorporate the principle of 'peer review';
- are carried out by those with sufficient and relevant professional training and first-hand experience;
- report on the extent to which regulatory requirements are met.

Quality assurance measures are employed at each stage to ensure that these principles are met and to identify areas for further improvement.

Code of conduct for inspectors

Inspectors are required to adhere to the *Code of conduct* set out below. They should uphold the highest professional standards in relation to all who are involved in the process before, during and after the inspection.

Inspectors should:

- carry out their work with professionalism, integrity and courtesy;
- evaluate the work of the school objectively;
- report fairly and without favour;
- communicate clearly and objectively;
- act in the best interests of the pupils at the school;
- respect the confidentiality of information received and judgements made before, during and after the inspection;
- at all times adhere to the requirements outlined in the *Inspection Handbooks* and associated guidance;
- pay close regard to legal requirements for safeguarding the welfare of children.

Guidelines for schools

Those involved in inspection should:

- treat inspectors with professionalism, integrity and courtesy, and take all reasonable steps to facilitate their work in school;
- provide open and objective information on the school and communicate clearly in response to questions;
- co-operate with inspectors in the best interests of the pupils at the school, raising any concerns promptly in a constructive manner;
- respect the confidentiality of information about the inspection and inspectors;
- seek to understand the *Inspection framework* and to assist inspectors in fulfilling its requirements;
- respect the inspectors' need to make direct observations and to talk with staff and pupils.

Principles to ensure the quality of inspections and reports

Inspection teams must ensure that their judgements are:

- *first-hand*, in that they are based largely on direct observation of pupils' and teachers' work;
- *valid*, in that they are supported by the evidence gathered by the inspectors;
- *comprehensive*, in that they cover all the aspects of the school set out in the *ISI Inspection schedules*;
- *corporate*, in that conclusions about the school as a whole reflect the collective view of the inspection team;
- *even-handed*, in that they accurately express the correct evaluation of strengths and areas for improvement;

- *consistent*, in that the evaluations from inspection evidence do not contradict one another;
- *reliable*, in that they are based on consistent application of the evaluative criteria in the *ISI Inspection schedules*;
- *objective*, in that the aims of the school are fully and fairly judged.

Use of evidence

In order that a team's judgements may meet the quality criteria, they shall be based as far as possible on first-hand evidence and include the following activities:

- observation of lessons and scrutiny of samples of pupils' work;
- consultation with pupils;
- discussion with the chair of governors, the proprietor or governors' representative(s) and, to a limited extent, others involved in the work of the school;
- the analysis of evidence including questionnaires provided by parents and pupils;
- staff evidence and feedback;
- the analysis of documentary evidence, including performance indicators and self-evaluation;
- the consideration of any significant changes or overt progress since the last inspection.

Types of inspection

The *Inspection schedules* follow a single format. Integrated inspections include inspection of school, Early Years Foundation Stage and boarding welfare requirements, where applicable. An interval of up to six years between integrated inspections can occur when the school meets criteria set out by the DfE. If a school is inspected at a longer interval than three years then additional Intermediate inspections of Registered Early Years Foundation Stage and boarding requirements will take place. The DfE can request an inspection of a school at any time.

Separate arrangements apply to the inspection of schools outside England.

Scale and requirements of inspections

Inspection teams are constructed to provide appropriate coverage of the *Inspection schedules*. They have regard to the school's educational character and priorities, including boarding and the Early Years Foundation Stage where relevant.

Integrated inspections are led by a professional reporting inspector (RI), supported by a number of team members, depending on the size, organisation and location of the school. Inspectors are in the school for a total of four days, beginning with an initial day in which the RI focuses on the school's compliance with Regulations, and followed by the team visit that looks in more detail at the other aspects of the school's work. Co-ordinating inspectors for the Early Years Foundation Stage and boarding will be allocated where applicable and other specialist inspectors may be added depending on the nature of the setting. From time to time, ISI reviews the requirements for different schools. All inspectors and schools must declare any connectivity that might, or might appear to, compromise the integrity of the inspection. Failure to declare connectivity is regarded as a serious breach of the *Code of conduct*.

All-age schools have teams with appropriate experience for their preparatory/junior and senior sections. Depending on the size of the preparatory/junior and senior sections, the reporting inspector may be supported by an assistant reporting inspector. Similar support may be necessary in schools with split sites and in some more complex schools.

Schools with a single DfE registration will be allocated one reporting inspector unless the school has previously made an arrangement with ISI for a second reporting inspector because sections of the school belong to different ISC Associations. In that situation separate reports will normally be issued. In the case of separate DfE registrations, separate reports must be issued.

Reporting on inspections

Oral feedback

The corporately agreed findings will be reported to the school orally just before the end of the inspection.

Written report

The reporting inspector has the responsibility for drafting the written report on the basis of the team's agreed findings.

The report will include judgements and related explanation in accordance with the *Inspection schedules*. The school will have the opportunity to point out any factual errors in the draft report in the **third** week after the end of the inspection. Copies of the published report must be sent to the school within **four** weeks of the end of the inspection. The report will be placed on the ISI website within **two** weeks of its issue to the school.

On receiving the final report, the school must send a copy to each parent and legal guardian and make copies available to any who request it. In the latter case, the school may defray the cost of printing and postage.

SECTION B – THE INSPECTION SCHEDULES

Where criteria below apply only to the Early Years Foundation Stage or boarding, these are set out in italics.

In non-registered Early Years Foundation Stage settings, inspection findings are included under each aspect as appropriate and according to the criteria set out therein. Where the school's Early Years Foundation Stage setting is registered, the report will be a separate section as indicated.

The responses of pupils and parents to questionnaires are incorporated into the most appropriate section of the report. General points should be incorporated into the sections on personal development (pupil responses) and leadership and management (parental responses).

Any failure to comply with regulations must be stated clearly in the appropriate section of the report. Further guidance for reporting inspectors is provided in the *Integrated Handbook – Regulatory requirements*.

PART 1 – INTEGRATED INSPECTIONS

INTRODUCTION

The report includes the following.

- (a) A table setting out basic information about the school.
- (b) A list of inspectors.
- (c) A short paragraph detailing the evidence used in reaching the inspection findings.
- (d) A preface explaining the role of ISI and the coverage of the inspection.
- (e) The evaluation scale.

1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

[This section is agreed with the school. It is entirely factual and includes a statement of year group nomenclature.]

- (i) The school's aims, distinctive features and structure of governance.
- (ii) Its type, location and history. *If applicable, brief information on the nature of the Early Years Foundation Stage (including any applicable exemptions) and/or boarding provision.* Make clear whether the school is specially organised for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or whether it has a substantial focus on this area.
- (iii) Any significant changes in the nature of the school since its last inspection. No mention is made of changes in numbers on roll.
- (iv) The numbers of pupils on roll and the age range (briefly and with significant features of the school's structure).
- (v) Information on the ability of the pupils (using standardised data and in accordance with ISI guidance), gender, ethnicity and background. No prediction is made of likely attainment scores in national tests or examinations.
- (vi) The numbers of pupils requiring support for special educational needs and/or disabilities and for English as an additional language, and the broad nature of those needs.

2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL

(a) Main findings

- (i) Significant strengths or weaknesses contributing to the judgements in each aspect (academic and other achievements, personal development, and governance, leadership and management), including any failure to comply with Regulations.
- (ii) The school's response to the recommendations of the previous inspection (including Ofsted early years or boarding inspections where applicable) and any significant changes in the quality of education or care.

(b) Action points

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

The report EITHER (a) states that the school meets all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, as amended, OR (b) specifies which Regulations the school did not meet at the time of the inspection. The Regulations are specified as necessary under the Parts of the Independent School Standards Regulations (ISSRs). Any failure to implement the Equality Act 2010, including provision for special educational needs and/or disabilities, is also reported.

If a Regulation is not met, the report states the action which must be taken to meet it.

Where applicable, any regulatory shortcomings in the Early Years Foundation Stage for children aged three to five are included in this section. If such a shortcoming is the same as one of the Independent School Standards Regulations, no separate mention is made. Any regulatory failings related to registered provision are included at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage section of the report.

Where applicable, any regulatory shortcomings in relation to the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools are included in this section. If such a shortcoming is the same as one of the Independent Schools Standards Regulations, the NMS reference is included alongside that for the ISSR.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

In addition to rectifying any failings specified in (i) above, the school is advised to make certain other improvements.

Any recommendations specific to the Early Years Foundation Stage or Boarding are clearly identified.

3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning

Inspection criteria

- (i) Pupils are well educated in accordance with the school's aims.
- (ii) The pupils' all-round achievement is based on suitable levels of knowledge, understanding and skill in curricular and extra-curricular activities: for example, in speaking, listening, reading, writing, logical and independent thought, creativity, the application of mathematics and ICT, and physical activity. The range of significant achievements is noted: in scholarships, competitions, academic distinctions, music,

speech and drama examinations, sporting success, organisational capability, Open University courses, published articles, research, and so on in the context of the school.

The achievements of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are with reference to their individual needs and the type of school they attend, and their success may be in their contribution and involvement to activities rather than external examinations.

- (iii) (a) Pupils reach acceptable levels of **attainment** in any national tests or public examinations, including any trends over time AND/OR as judged by available evidence from the demands of the curriculum, the destinations of leavers, and performance in lessons, written work and curriculum interviews.

(b) Pupils make suitable **progress** as indicated by lesson observation, work produced, curriculum interviews, quality of teaching and any standardised measures of progress. Different groups of pupils (including boys and girls, the most able, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or English as an additional language, and different ethnic groups) make appropriate progress.
- (iv) Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and their involvement in activities; they acquire competence in skills for learning.
- (v) *In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children:*
 - (a) *enjoy their learning and achieve well in what they know, understand and can do (for example, in communication, reading, writing and use of numbers) and make good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities (including those with SEND, EAL or other groups, as appropriate);*
 - (b) *are active learners, explore, investigate and concentrate, and are able to work independently, think critically and be creative.*

(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision

Inspection criteria

- (i) The curriculum is effective in its coverage of the requisite areas of learning.
- (ii) It is suitable for all ages, abilities and needs and supports the aims of the school.
- (iii) It is sustained by a suitable range of extra-curricular activities and of links with the community.
- (iv) *In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the educational programmes help all children to reach expected levels of development, considering the needs of the children attending, and how effectively those needs are met.*

(c) The contribution of teaching

Inspection criteria

- (i) Teaching is effective in promoting pupils' progress and supports the aims of the school.

[Emphasis is placed on the most significant factors promoting progress and it is considered whether it:

- (a) is well planned and based on an accurate understanding of pupils' needs, and marking and assessment are constructive;

- (b) employs methods which demonstrate good subject knowledge, management of time and use of available resources;
 - (c) fosters interest and independence, supports pupils with particular learning needs (for example those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, English as an additional language or the most able) and offers sufficient challenge to all pupils including the most able;
 - (d) makes the provision set out in any statements of special educational needs.]
- (ii) *In the Early Years Foundation Stage, staff engage and motivate the children and have high expectations supported by the assessment and planning processes; they are knowledgeable about how to promote learning and development and use good quality resources.*

4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Inspection criteria

- (i) Pupils' personal qualities are developing well and in accordance with the aims of the school. Pupils:
 - (a) are confident and self-aware, appreciate non-material aspects of life (whether religious, philosophical, or other) and are emotionally mature for their age;
 - (b) demonstrate a sense of right and wrong, respect for norms of good conduct, and moral and ethical values;
 - (c) accept responsibility, contributing to the society of the school and the world beyond, helping those less fortunate than themselves through community service or fund raising, developing social, political and economic awareness;
 - (d) understand and respect other faiths and cultures, appreciating their achievements and those of the Western cultural tradition, and having harmonious relations with those from backgrounds different from their own;
 - (e) have a good standard of personal development by the time they leave the school.
- (ii) *In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make a positive contribution and develop their skills for the future, (for example, they co-operate and share, respect and tolerate each other's differences and make appropriate choices and decisions); they are well prepared for transition within the setting or into school.*

(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care

Inspection criteria

- (i) The staff provide effective support and guidance for the pupils in accordance with the school's aims.
- (ii) Relationships are positive between staff and pupils and among the pupils themselves.
- (iii) Pupils are encouraged to be healthy through developing healthy eating habits and taking regular exercise.
- (iv) The school is effective in promoting good behaviour and guarding against harassment and bullying, and it deals constructively with any unacceptable behaviour, taking due account of any related difficulty or disability.

- (v) The school has a suitable plan to improve educational access for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- (vi) The school employs effective methods to seek the views of pupils.
- (vii) *In the Early Years Foundation Stage, each child has a 'key person' who ensures each child's needs are met, and that children are helped to develop positive relationships, behave well, feel safe and learn to lead healthy lifestyles.*

(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety

Inspection criteria

- (i) The safeguarding arrangements have regard to official guidance (in *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*) and in so doing take proper account of any particular circumstance or context of the school which may indicate a need for protocols greater than the minimum legal requirements.
- (ii) All necessary measures are taken to reduce risk from fire and other hazards.
- (iii) Arrangements to ensure health and safety are effective and include provision for pupils who are ill, injured or have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- (iv) The admission and attendance registers are properly maintained, and correctly stored for the previous three years.
- (v) *In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's welfare is promoted effectively and the safeguarding of children is carefully ensured.*

(d) The quality of boarding (for schools providing boarding accommodation)

Inspection criteria

Outcomes for boarders

- (i) *The boarders' personal development is clearly promoted by their boarding experience and is apparent in qualities such as confidence, self-reliance, integrity and tolerance.*
- (ii) *Boarders enjoy being part of their community and make a positive contribution to it.*
- (iii) *Boarders have pleasant and constructive relationships with one another and with the boarding staff.*

Quality of the boarding provision and care

- (iv) *Boarders are well cared for and the boarding provision is effective in supporting their individual needs and helping them keep safe, fit and healthy.*
- (v) *Boarders benefit from suitable facilities and opportunities for recreational and developmental activities in the evening and at weekends, including sufficient self-directed time.*
- (vi) *Boarding accommodation is comfortable, secure and well-maintained.*
- (vii) *Boarders are able to maintain regular contact with their families, and the school communicates effectively with parents, carers and guardians.*

The effectiveness of arrangements for welfare and safeguarding

- (viii) *Arrangements are effective in ensuring compliance with the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, particularly in matters of safeguarding boarders' welfare, staffing, management of behaviour and prevention of bullying.*

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the boarding provision

- (ix) *Boarding priorities are clear and houses are well run, in line with the aims of the school, and with a commitment to self-evaluation and improvement.*

5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

(a) The quality of governance

Inspection criteria

- (i) The governing body/proprietor(s) provide effective oversight of all sections of the school in line with its aims and discharge their responsibilities for educational standards, financial planning and investment in staff, accommodation and resources.
- (ii) The governing body/proprietor(s) have a good insight into the working of the school and are effective in exercising their monitoring role, and providing support, challenge and stimulus for growth and improvement.
- (iii) The governing body/proprietor(s) are effective in discharging their responsibilities for statutory requirements, including the annual review of safeguarding and child protection arrangements throughout the school.
- (iv) *In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the governors' involvement is effective.*

(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians

Inspection criteria

- (i) At all levels of responsibility, the leadership and management of the school are effective, in accordance with the aims of the school and in their discharge of their delegated responsibilities, particularly those for policy implementation and the safeguarding of pupils.
- (ii) Leadership and management provide clear educational direction, as reflected in the quality of the pupils' education and the standard of their personal development.
- (iii) Leadership and management are effective in self-evaluation, setting priorities and ensuring that they are achieved.
- (iv) Management at all levels is successful in securing, supporting, developing and motivating sufficient high quality staff and ensuring they are suitably trained for their roles in meeting the needs of all children, safeguarding, and welfare, health and safety.
- (v) *In the Early Years Foundation Stage,*
- a) *the safeguarding of children is carefully ensured in a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment;*
 - b) *there is an ambitious vision and clear priorities for improvement that are driven by effective systems for self-evaluation;*
 - c) *the educational programmes are effectively monitored, and supervision of staff is regularly carried out; this leads to continuous professional development for identified needs;*

- d) *the setting has made good progress since the previous inspection.*
- (vi) Parents are satisfied with the education and support provided for their children and with the quality of communication with the school.
- (vii) The school maintains a constructive relationship with parents in accordance with its aims, and handles any concerns with care in accordance with published procedures.
- (viii) Parents have good opportunities to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children.
- (ix) Parents of pupils and of prospective pupils are provided with the required information about the school.
- (x) Parents receive clear and useful reports about their children's work and progress.
- (xi) In the Early Years Foundation Stage, partnerships with parents/carers and others secure appropriate interventions for those children who need them, and engage parents in their children's learning and progress.

6. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (registered settings only)

- (a) *How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend.*
- (b) *The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being.*
- (c) *The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision.*
- (d) *The overall quality and standards of the early years provision.*

Any non-compliance with statutory requirements for registered provision is stated in an 'Action point' following this Early Years Foundation Stage section. This is also the place for recording full compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 (in relation to children under the age of three).

PART 2 – INTERMEDIATE INSPECTIONS OF REGISTERED EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE PROVISION

Intermediate inspections of Early Years Foundation Stage provision evaluate the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Statutory Framework published by the Department for Education (DfE) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended. Ofsted are the regulator for registered Early Years Foundation Stage provision and ISI reports in accordance with the judgements and criteria determined by Ofsted.

INTRODUCTION

The report includes the following.

- (a) A table setting out basic information about the school.
- (b) A list of inspectors.
- (c) A preface explaining the role of ISI and the coverage of the inspection.
- (d) A short paragraph detailing the evidence used in reaching the inspection findings.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

[This section is agreed with the school and is entirely factual.]

- (i) The school's aims, distinctive features and structure of governance.
- (ii) Its type, location and history. Information on the nature of the Early Years Foundation Stage, including details of any applicable exemptions.
- (iii) Any significant changes in the nature of the school since its last inspection. No mention is made of changes in numbers on roll.
- (iv) The numbers of pupils on roll and the age range (briefly and with significant features of the school structure).

SUMMARY

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

The report EITHER (a) states that the school meets all the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 (Early Years Foundation Stage) OR (b) specifies the requirements the school did not meet and the action which must therefore be taken.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

In addition to rectifying any failures specified in (i) above, the school is advised to make certain improvements.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

- (a) *How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend.*
- (b) *The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being.*
- (c) *The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision.*
- (d) *The overall quality and standards of the early years provision.*

PART 3 – INTERMEDIATE INSPECTIONS OF BOARDING WELFARE

Intermediate inspections of boarding welfare focus primarily on whether the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (NMS) are met. The report therefore concerns whether the school meets these Standards and does not contain judgments on wider provision or outcomes for boarders.

INTRODUCTION

The report includes the following.

- (a) A table setting out basic information about the school.
- (b) A list of inspectors.
- (c) A preface explaining the role of ISI and the coverage of the inspection.
- (d) A short paragraph detailing the evidence used in reaching the inspection findings.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

[This section is agreed with the school and is entirely factual.]

- (i) The school's aims, distinctive features and structure of governance.
- (ii) Its type, location and history. Information on the nature of the boarding provision.
- (iii) Any significant changes in the nature of the school since its last inspection. No mention is made of changes in numbers on roll.
- (iv) The numbers of pupils on roll and the age range (briefly and with significant features of the school structure).

SUMMARY

(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements

The report EITHER (a) states that the school meets all the requirements of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools, OR specifies the requirements that the school did not meet and the action which must therefore be taken.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

In addition to rectifying any failures specified in (i) above, the school is advised to make certain improvements.

(iii) Progress since the last inspection (boarding only)

A paragraph detailing whether the recommendations from the last inspection have been implemented.

THE QUALITY OF BOARDING

- (a) Boarding provision and care.
- (b) Arrangements for welfare and safeguarding.
- (c) Leadership and management of the boarding provision.

The National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools will be grouped under the headings above, and will be the main focus for this inspection.