

PRIMARY

Inspection Guidance

September 2017

ETI: Promoting Improvement in the Interest of all Learners



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments

CUSTOMER
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of inspection is to promote the highest possible standards of learning, teaching and achievement throughout the education, training and youth sectors.

Our vision, our mission, is:

'Promoting improvement in the interest of all learners'

Further information of the work of the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) including the Charter for Inspection, ETI principles, values and standards and customer service is available on the [ETI website](#).

This handbook describes the main activities undertaken by the ETI during inspections of primary schools in Northern Ireland. It sets out the processes before, during and after the various models of inspection and lays out clearly for schools the kind of evidence and activities that inspectors use to make their evaluations and on which they report. This guidance document seeks to improve the transparency of the inspection process, promote consistency and dispel any myths around inspection. While promoting consistency, it is important for schools to be aware that this handbook is not a set of rigid inspection models and that the ETI will carry out inspections with flexibility to respond to the individual circumstances of each school.

PRIMARY INSPECTION PROCEDURES

Pre-inspection

- Inspection Services Team (IST) will notify the school of the inspection by telephone call and issue an email which contains links to the supporting documentation; this will be followed up through a telephone call by the Reporting Inspector (RI) to the principal.
- For two/three- and four-day inspections, the RI will undertake a pre-inspection visit. During the visit, the principal will brief the RI on the context of the school. The RI will meet the whole staff to outline and discuss the arrangements for the inspection. During the visit, the school staff will be made aware of the ETI's Complaints Procedure.
- For two/three- and four-day inspections, the school will be invited to nominate a senior leader to undertake the role of the representative; if this invitation is accepted, the representative must read the associated guidance and sign the confidentiality agreement.

- The school will be requested to complete associated inspection documentation¹, including the safeguarding proforma.

During the inspection

- The RI will meet with the inspection team at the beginning of the inspection to provide an overview of the context of the school and any relevant information from the pre-inspection visit.
- The RI will allocate team duties for inspectors to lead on areas under evaluation, as required.
- Inspectors will visit lessons and hold discussions with relevant members of staff as required. The arrangements for lesson observations and discussions with staff are flexible and subject to change as the inspection progresses.
- Inspectors will not usually give advance notice of visits to lessons.
- Inspectors will typically arrive at the start of a lesson and stay until the end. However, there may be occasions when inspectors observe part of the lesson only.
- Inspectors will give advance notice of discussions with members of staff. A programme of discussions may be agreed with the principal in advance and confirmed at the start of the inspection; however, it may also be subject to change as the inspection progresses.
- Lessons will be observed in order to support evaluations in the areas under focus. Typically, this will mean that the work of some teachers may be observed on more than one occasion by more than one inspector, while the work of other teachers may not be observed at all. Usually, inspectors will have a short professional exchange with the teacher at the end of a lesson observation, outlining key strengths and/or areas for improvement; however, there may be occasions when this is not possible and arrangements may need to be made to return at a more convenient time.
- Team meetings will be held with the nominated representative from the school in attendance.
- A moderation meeting will be held on the final day of inspection, during which performance levels and a conclusion for overall effectiveness will be agreed by the inspection team.

¹ Associated inspection information is available in Appendix 1.

- The RI and DRI (or another team member) will provide an oral report back to the school and representatives from the various stakeholders on the afternoon of the final day of inspection.

Post-inspection

- The school will receive a pre-publication copy of the report to check the accuracy of factual information.
- The final report will be published on the ETI website.
- For schools evaluated as having either a high level of capacity for sustained improvement or the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interests of all learners, there will typically be a sustaining improvement inspection around three years after the original inspection.
- For other schools, the ETI will engage in a formal follow-up inspection process. For schools evaluated as needing to address important areas for improvement, this will take place within 12 to 18 months; the follow-up will take place within a two-year timeframe for those schools evaluated as needing to address urgently significant areas for improvement.
- The ETI also publish additional guidance and support materials for principals, teachers, parents and governors. This additional guidance (including what follows in this document) is provided for illustrative purposes only and may vary depending on the size and context of the school and emerging findings and evidence as the inspection progresses. All inspections will, however, adhere to the protocols outlined above.

GENERAL INFORMATION

TWO/THREE-DAY PRIMARY INSPECTION MODEL

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all children, the purpose of a two/three-day primary inspection is to evaluate the:

- outcomes for children, with a particular focus on numeracy or literacy;
- quality of provision, with a particular focus on numeracy or literacy; and
- quality of leadership and management.

The ETI will evaluate these three main aspects of the life and work of the school including within the Nursery Unit/Learning Support Centre/Irish-Medium Unit/Reception provision, where applicable, and reach an overall effectiveness conclusion.

FOUR-DAY PRIMARY INSPECTION MODEL

In order to promote improvement in the interest of all children, the purpose of a four-day primary inspection is to evaluate the:

- outcomes for children, with a particular focus on numeracy and literacy;
- quality of provision, with a particular focus on numeracy and literacy; and
- quality of leadership and management.

The ETI will evaluate these three main aspects of the life and work of the school including within the Nursery Unit/Learning Support Centre/Irish-Medium Unit/Reception provision, where applicable, and reach an overall effectiveness conclusion.

The underlying operational principles include:

- the centrality of the school development plan (SDP), in terms of planning, development and self-evaluation leading to improvement;
- a focus on the children's learning experiences and their progression in learning;
- an enhanced children's voice through pastoral care discussions, with a sample of the children and the opportunity for some year 7 children to complete a confidential questionnaire²;

² The year 7 questionnaire will be piloted during 2017-18; the RI will inform the school if they are to be involved in the pilot, not all schools will be involved.

- an opportunity for staff and parents to provide their opinions of the quality of education provided through confidential questionnaires;
- an evaluation of the quality and impact of governance; and
- greater engagement with the school through the role of the representative and the offer of joint lesson observations on four-day inspections.

The size and composition of the inspection team will vary according to the size and context of the school. There will be a RI and deputy reporting inspector (DRI). An associate assessor (AA) is deployed on many inspections.

If the school has a Nursery Unit/Learning Support Centre/Irish-Medium Unit/Reception provision this will be reflected in the deployment of the team.

In reaching evaluations, the ETI use the characteristics of effective practice which are available in the ETI Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework publication (ISEF)³.

WHAT HAPPENS BEFORE THE INSPECTION?

Following notification of the inspection, IST and the RI will contact the principal by telephone as soon as possible to discuss the following:

- the composition of the inspection team (including the AA(s)), the date for the pre-inspection visit, confirmation of the dates of the inspection and the arrangements for reporting to the school;
- the opportunity for the school to nominate a representative, based on the information contained in the ETI The Role of the Representative During Inspection booklet. It is expected that the principal will have discussed the role of the representative with the board of governors and agreed the identity of the representative before confirming the details with the RI on the pre-inspection day;
- the requirement that the representative completes and signs the Statement of Commitment and Understanding in Appendix 1 of the booklet and presents this to the RI on Day 1 of inspection;
- the opportunity, on a four-day inspection only, for a joint lesson/session observation;
- the availability of a base room from which the inspection team can operate;

³ See link to the most recent version of the ISEF in Appendix 2.

- the distribution, without delay, of the teacher, support staff, parent/carer/guardian and year 7 children's letters⁴ regarding online questionnaires;
- the availability of the booklet, Information for Parents, Carers and Guardians, informing parents about the inspection process;
- the completion of the ETI Safeguarding Proforma which should be verified, signed and dated by the chairperson of the board of governors and the principal, and given to the RI on the pre-inspection day;
- the necessity to complete the ETI Pre-Inspection Questionnaire for Governors using the ISEF for Governors and to be given to the RI on the first day of the inspection;
- the arrangements for the inspection of a Nursery Unit/ Learning Support Centre(s)/ Irish-medium Education Unit/ Reception provision, where applicable;
- the Basic Information Sheet (BIS) to be returned to Inspection Services Team (IST); and
- the documentation to be available for the pre-inspection visit⁵.

The RI should be made aware of any issue or event which you think may affect the school or any of the staff before, or at any time during, the inspection.

The pre-inspection preparation visit

The formal pre-inspection visit will be undertaken by the RI and includes:

- a meeting with the principal to provide information on the inspection process, to discuss the priorities in the school development plan (SDP) and to enable the RI to become familiar with the school's context;
- a discussion with the principal about the outcomes for the children and the school development planning process;
- the option for the school to nominate a representative for the inspection and the option of engaging in joint lesson observations (four-day inspection only);
- agreeing the time for meeting with governors, co-ordinators and year 6 and 7 children during the inspection;

⁴ The year 7 children's questionnaire will be piloted during some inspections in 2017-18; the RI will inform the school if they are to be involved in the pilot, not all schools will be involved.

⁵ Hyperlinked list of documentation required for two/three- and four-day inspections in Appendix 1.

- agreeing the time for the report back meeting on the afternoon of the final day of the inspection and those who will be in attendance;
- briefing the staff at the end of the school day, and giving them an opportunity to ask questions; and
- reading the relevant documents, including the SDP, the school's internal assessment data and the safeguarding proforma.

The school will be requested to provide the following associated inspection documentation at the pre-inspection visit:

- current SDP, associated action plans and relevant evaluations;
- completed (signed and dated) ETI safeguarding proforma with relevant policies;
- the school's statutory assessment outcomes regarding the children's levels of progression in Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT, including records of how they are reported in the board of governors' annual report and to parents;
- with regard to non-statutory assessment, if used by staff, schools are asked to provide an analysis of the performance data which they use to track the attainment and progress of all children and the impact of any additional targeted support;
- completed BIS, including teaching staff details, assessment information, governor details and in-service training; and
- copies of teachers' timetables including specialist and/or part-time teaching staff and timetables for the interventions regarding special education needs.

A possible outline of the day for a pre-inspection visit is detailed below. Please note that all timings are approximate and for guidance only; ETI is content to be guided by the school.

Pre-inspection day	Activity
9:00 am	RI arrives at the school.
Short meeting with principal	<p>Discuss the administration of the inspection, including the role of the representative, the arrangements (if the school wishes to participate) for any joint lesson/ session/ activity observation(s)* and the times and arrangements for meetings.</p> <p>Principal to outline the strengths and areas for development in the outcomes, provision and leadership and management in school.</p> <p><i>*4 day inspection only</i></p>
RI reading time	<p>Review of the following school documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • current SDP and associated action plans; • relevant whole-school evaluation; • qualitative and quantitative performance data; and • safeguarding proforma and associated documentation and evidence.
Discussion with the principal	Discuss the context of the school, school development planning process, the quality of the care and welfare, and safeguarding and the financial management.
Staff briefing	Briefing, and question and answer session.

Discussion with the principal

The following areas will form the basis of the leadership meeting with the principal on the pre-inspection day.

Context

The principal outlines briefly the context of the school and agrees with the RI the wording of the context paragraph for the inspection report.

- Is the school involved in any shared education partnerships with other schools? Is there any evidence of the impact/benefit this is having on the children/ community?

School development planning process

- How does the school ensure that self-evaluation is rigorous, effective and leads to improvement in the quality of the leadership and management, provision and the outcomes for all of the children?
- What are the outcomes for the children in the school? How are the outcomes for the children tracked and monitored? Are there any differences in numeracy/ literacy; gender, free school meals (FSM), patterns regarding special educational needs? How are the outcomes used to inform future improvement actions?
- How effectively is the management of the human, financial and material resources matched to the children's needs and priorities? For example, targeting social need (TSN), Looked after Children, newcomers and travellers.
- How has the school aligned staff development with the priorities identified in the SDP? What impact has this had on staff capacity, the quality of learning and teaching and the children's outcomes? How have members of the senior leadership team (SLT) monitored the impact of the teacher professional learning?

Quality of the care and welfare, and safeguarding

- Discuss particular aspects within and issues (if any) emerging from the completed safeguarding proforma.
- How does the school's ethos reflect a culture of safeguarding vigilance and the school's Code of Conduct? How do you know that all of your staff share the values held within your mission statement (SDP requirement 1)?

- What is the impact, on the outcomes for children, staff and parents, of the strategies used to promote and manage (i) health and well-being (ii) child protection (iii) attendance, and (iv) good behaviour and discipline of the children (SDP requirements 2c and 2e)?

Financial management

- Is there effective financial stewardship in line with the Department of Education's (DE) expectations to ensure the finances are well managed and used appropriately for long-, medium- and short-term priorities? Is the school budget within a 5% deficit/surplus?

During the visit, the school staff will be made aware of the ETI's Complaints Procedure.

INFORMATION ABOUT CHILDREN'S PROGRESS

As part of our inspection evidence base, the ETI considers and evaluates a wide range of qualitative and quantitative information. The school is requested to provide an analysis of the performance data which they use to track the attainment and progress of the children. This may include, for example, assessment portfolios / e-portfolios and any other significant assessment information, including the school's statutory assessment outcomes regarding the children's levels of progression in Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT. This may include also records of interventions and progress made through small group or individual support led by classroom assistants.

QUESTIONNAIRES USED AS PART OF PRIMARY INSPECTION

Parental, support staff and teacher questionnaires

The ETI provides an opportunity for parents, teaching and support staff to complete a confidential online questionnaire prior to the inspection. You will receive a copy of the letters for distribution to parents and staff which contain the relevant detail to enable them to register and complete the online questionnaire specific to your school.

The RI will report the outcomes of the questionnaire returns to the principal and to a representative of the governors; the RI will discuss any matters that arise in the returns.

If you have any queries about the distribution of parental or staff questionnaires please contact IST.

If the school is to be involved in the pilot of the year 7 children's online questionnaires, the RI will discuss with the school the necessary arrangements to facilitate this process.

Year 7 children's online questionnaire (pilot)

As part of the inspection process, the ETI seeks to take account of the views of all stakeholders, including the children. Until now, the children could already contribute to the inspection process in a number of ways; for example, during an inspection, inspectors meet with a group of children from year 6 to talk about how the children and the school work together to help the children learn and keep safe.

From September 2017, in order to find out about the views of more of the children, the ETI has developed a children's online questionnaire. A number of selected schools will be provided with a link to the questionnaire by IST. The year 7 children will log on to the online questionnaire link using their school's C2k email address. Completion of the questionnaire will take approximately 20 minutes.

The RI will provide the school with a summary of the views of the children in a confidential manner. The children are not required to give their names within the questionnaire and their responses will remain anonymous.

In line with the school's policies for safeguarding, if any child is concerned about something, he/she should talk to their teacher or someone they know in school who will listen and be able to help them.

THE ROLE OF THE REPRESENTATIVE ON PRIMARY INSPECTIONS

Shortly after notification of inspection, the RI will request that the school identify a senior member of staff to represent it before, during and after the inspection. The representative will manage the inspection process within the school and will normally be the principal, a vice-principal or a member of the senior leadership team. This role is offered on a voluntary basis and a school may decide not to nominate a representative; furthermore, a representative is free to choose to attend only parts of meetings, as they see fit. It is expected that the representative will attend the oral report back on the last day of the inspection.

Further detail on the role of the representative is contained within the Role of the Representative document in Appendix 1.

PRIMARY INSPECTION OUTLINES: 2/3- AND 4-DAY MODELS

Primary inspections are conducted over two, three or four days, depending on the size and context of the school.

2-day Primary inspection (illustration):

Day one	Activity
	Team arrival; introductions. Short team briefing, chaired by RI
9.15am (onwards)	Lesson observations. Scrutiny of documentation.
	Care and welfare, and safeguarding discussions with group of year 6 children.
	Meeting with the principal and the chair of the governors.
After school	Meetings are held between inspectors and the literacy/numeracy co-ordinator, special education needs co-ordinator and designated teacher.
	Team meeting attended by the role of the representative present (if applicable).
Day two	Activity
Morning	Lesson observations. Scrutiny of documentation. Literacy or numeracy discussions with group of year 7 children. All lesson visits and discussions with staff are concluded by lunchtime. All evidence that the school wishes the inspection team to consider should be made available before lunchtime.
Afternoon	Moderation meeting. Team meeting chaired by the RI, attended in full or part by the representative, to collate and discuss the findings from the inspection and to moderate and agree the key strengths and areas for improvement against the indicators outlined in the ISEF. Performance levels will be agreed for the core areas of the inspection, namely outcomes for children, quality of provision and leadership and management. The overall effectiveness conclusion for the school will also be agreed. An additional inspector, with responsibility of quality assurance, may attend the moderation meeting as part of the ETI quality assurance process.
	Report preparation by the RI, DRI and team members.
	Oral report. RI and DRI report orally the key findings of the inspection to the principal, senior leaders, chair/representative of the governors, representative of the employing authority and other relevant stakeholders (in agreement with the RI).

3-day Primary inspection (illustration):

Day one	Activity
	Team arrival; introductions. Short team briefing, chaired by RI.
9.15am (onwards)	Lesson observations. Scrutiny of documentation. Care and welfare, and safeguarding discussions with group of year 6 children. Meeting with the principal and the chair of the governors.
After school	Meetings are held between inspectors and the literacy/numeracy co-ordinator, special education needs co-ordinator and designated teacher.
	Team meeting attended by the role of the representative present (if applicable).
Day two	Activity
Morning	Lesson observations. Scrutiny of documentation. Literacy or numeracy discussions with group of year 7 children.
Afternoon	Team meeting attended by the role of the representative present (if applicable).
Day three	Activity
Morning	Lesson observations. Scrutiny of documentation. All lesson visits and discussions with staff are concluded by lunchtime. All evidence that the school wishes the inspection team to consider should be made available before lunchtime.
Afternoon	Moderation meeting. Team meeting chaired by the RI, attended in full or part by the representative, to collate and discuss the findings from the inspection and to moderate and agree the key strengths and areas for improvement against the indicators outlined in the ISEF. Performance levels will be agreed for the core areas of the inspection, namely outcomes for children, quality of provision and leadership and management. The overall effectiveness conclusion for the school will also be agreed. An additional inspector, with responsibility of quality assurance, may attend the moderation meeting as part of the ETI quality assurance process.
	Report preparation by the RI, DRI and team members.
	Oral report. RI and DRI report orally the key findings of the inspection to the principal, senior leaders, chair/representative of the governors, representative of the employing authority and other relevant stakeholders (in agreement with the RI).

4-day Primary inspection (illustration):

Day one	Activity
	Team arrival; introductions. Short team briefing, chaired by RI.
9.15am (onwards)	Lesson observations. Scrutiny of documentation. Care and welfare, and safeguarding discussions with group of year 6 children. Meeting with the principal and the chair of the governors.
After school	Meetings are held between inspectors and the literacy/numeracy co-ordinator, special education needs co-ordinator and designated teacher.
	Team meeting attended by the role of the representative present (if applicable).
Day two	Activity
Morning	Lesson observations. Scrutiny of documentation. Literacy or numeracy discussions with group of year 7 children.
Afternoon	Meetings are held between inspectors and the co-ordinators (as required).
	Team meeting attended by the role of the representative present (if applicable).
Day three	Activity
Morning	Lesson observations. Scrutiny of documentation. Literacy or numeracy discussions with group of year 7 children. All lesson visits and discussions with staff are concluded by lunchtime. All evidence that the school wishes the inspection team to consider should be made available before lunchtime.
Afternoon	Team meeting attended by the role of the representative present (if applicable).
Day four	Activity
Morning	Moderation meeting. Team meeting chaired by the RI, attended in full or part by the representative, to collate and discuss the findings from the inspection and to moderate and agree the key strengths and areas for improvement against the indicators outlined in the ISEF. Performance levels will be agreed for the core areas of the inspection, namely outcomes for children, quality of provision and leadership and management. The overall effectiveness conclusion for the school will also be agreed. An additional inspector, with responsibility of quality assurance, may attend the moderation meeting as part of the ETI quality assurance process.
Afternoon	Report preparation by the RI, DRI and team members.
	Oral report . RI and DRI report orally the key findings of the inspection to the principal, senior leaders, chair/representative of the governors, representative of the employing authority and other relevant stakeholders (in agreement with the RI).

The purpose of the oral report is to afford the principal and chairperson the opportunity to seek clarification, where necessary, about the main inspection findings. The representative should be in attendance at the oral report back. The representative will have attended the team and moderation meetings and should already be very clear about the evidence used to make the evaluations.

It should be noted that: performance levels and the overall effectiveness conclusion shared during the moderation meeting with the school's inspection representative are confidential and subject to quality assurance. As such, they should not be shared with anyone else between the moderation meeting and the oral report.

The performance levels and overall effectiveness conclusion fed back at the oral report back are provisional, and subject to moderation as part of the ETI's moderation and quality assurance process. They are not final until the report is published.

The RI will mediate to the principal any changes to performance levels or overall effectiveness conclusion, as a result of any additional moderation and quality assurance. The final inspection report will contain only a summary of the key evaluations and findings rather than the finer detail shared and discussed during the moderation meeting and final oral report.

At the oral report, the provisional overall effectiveness conclusion will be shared with the school. This will indicate clearly to the school:

- the capacity of the school for sustained improvement; and
- the nature and timing of follow-up activity.

Following the report back, the school should begin work on any area(s) for improvement identified. Further detail on any post-inspection activity can be found in the ETI document

A brief summary of the key performance levels and the overall effectiveness conclusion will be left with the school. This document should be regarded as confidential to the staff and board of governors until the final report is published.

In exceptional circumstances where it is not possible to report the key findings on day four, the oral report back may be rescheduled after consultation with the Managing Inspector/Assistant Chief Inspector with responsibility for primary inspections.

Post-inspection

Approximately four weeks after the inspection, you will receive a final, quality-assured pre-publication copy of the inspection report for the purposes of a checking the accuracy factual information.

This is the final opportunity to draw any inaccuracies in factual information to the attention of the RI. This procedure is intended to avoid any factual information being reported inaccurately within the published report. You are not being asked to comment on the evaluations or findings within the report. In the interests of publishing the report as quickly as possible, the school should ensure that all factual inaccuracies are identified and reported at this stage, as this is the only opportunity to do so.

The final inspection report is published within six weeks of the inspection.

INSPECTION OF CARE AND WELFARE, AND SAFEGUARDING

It is important to note that all members of the inspection team contribute to the evidence base for the evaluation of care and welfare throughout the school. The arrangements for safeguarding will be included in the inspection and reported on.

The ETI's role is to inspect, validate, evaluate and report, based on the first-hand evidence available during inspection on aspects (c) and (e) of the Schedule to the School Development Plan Regulations.

On full inspections, the ETI evaluates first-hand the care and welfare, and safeguarding using, for example, lesson observations, conversations with children/staff and observations of interactions between adults and children across the school. The ETI also determines whether the school is monitoring and reviewing, at least annually, safeguarding and welfare. Schools are recommended in the DE Circular 2017/04 (Para 4.2) to use the ETI's safeguarding proforma to underpin this process.

During sustaining improvement inspections (SII), monitoring inspections (MIn) and baseline monitoring inspections (BMIn), where there is insufficient first-hand evidence to make an evaluation of the arrangements for safeguarding, for example, as the result of industrial action by staff, the ETI review and report on the school's evidence of assurance that safeguarding reflects or reflects broadly the Department of Education's (DE) guidance.

Prior to the inspection, the designated teacher (DT), principal and chair of the board of governors will be asked to complete the ETI's safeguarding proforma which should then be verified and signed by both the principal and the chair of governors. The

completed proforma should be presented to the RI on the pre-inspection day with the relevant policies and evidence.

A time will be arranged, during the inspection, to talk to the DT, principal and chair of the board of governors about the information contained in the completed safeguarding proforma. The discussion with the DT will centre on the nature and organisation of the safeguarding training for all staff and the preventative curriculum for safeguarding e.g. anti-bullying, online safety, Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) and Relationships and Sexuality (RSE) programmes.

Special educational needs

The inspection team will evaluate the quality of the special education provision, at whole-school and class level, and the impact of intervention programmes and individual education plans on the children's learning and well-being.

The inspection of the arrangements for the children who require additional support in aspects of their learning will include the following:

1. All team members will gather evidence and provide evaluative comment regarding the provision for these children as part of any lesson observations undertaken, through scrutiny of work in the children's books and of the teachers' planning, including the use of individual education plans (personal education plans).
2. A member of the inspection team will meet with the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO); this meeting will focus on the outworking of the arrangements for the support of these children.
3. Where possible during the inspection, a small sample of withdrawal classes may be observed.
4. During the inspection, inspectors will visit lessons to evaluate the learning experiences of children identified as requiring additional support with their learning.

INSPECTION OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

The ETI's aim is to obtain a comprehensive overview of the quality of the learning and teaching in the school. To this end, it is important that the school timetables are accurate. 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 typically, on average, one or two classroom visits during the inspection. During class visits, inspectors may engage with classroom assistants to discuss their role in supporting individual or groups of children. We will observe children at work and will engage with them at an appropriate opportunity during the lesson. Typically, inspectors will arrive at the start of a lesson and stay until the end; however, it is important for teachers to continue their lessons in line with usual practice and not to defer a lesson until an inspector arrives. There may be occasions when inspectors observe the beginning or end of a lesson only.

Documentation to be available in each classroom during the inspection

- Teacher's usual planning file, including previous planning and evaluations of the learning and teaching.
- Class assessment information.
- Individual education plans including any evidence of tracking and reviews of progress.
- Books showing children's work across the curriculum (to include two samples each for high, average and low achieving children in literacy, numeracy and World Around Us).
- Evidence of the children's use of and progress in ICT.

In most instances, at or towards the end of an observed lesson, the member of the inspection team will share briefly with 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. Should more serious issues arise from observations of learning and teaching, the inspector will discuss these with the teacher and principal at the earliest available time before the oral report back. Throughout the inspection, the ETI will meet with the principal/representative to provide emerging key findings on the quality of the outcomes for children, the quality of provision for learning and the leadership and management in the school.

MEETING WITH PRINCIPAL AND CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

The meeting with the governors is an opportunity for the RI to seek the views of the governors and evaluate the effectiveness of the governance of the school. The RI will collect the completed governors' self-evaluation proforma from the principal on

the first day of the inspection. The meeting will take place at a pre-arranged time during the inspection and should last no longer than 45 minutes. The meeting will be attended by the principal, the chair of governors (or representative, however, not the teacher representative on the board of governors), the RI and another member of the inspection team.

Following a brief introduction, the RI will:

- explain the purpose of the meeting, namely to take account of the views of the governors about the life, work and performance of the school, including their evaluation of the effectiveness of the governance of the school;
- explain and answer questions on the nature of the inspection and the report;
- seek governors' views about their different roles in the governance of school, including safeguarding;
- discuss the impact and effectiveness of the school development planning process on the outcomes for learners and on the quality of the provision;
- discuss the role of leadership and management, at all levels, to effect improvement; and
- report back to governors the summary of the various questionnaire returns.

The RI will seek governors' views on their role typically in the following areas.

However, please note that this is neither a checklist nor a definitive list of prompts.

- What is your role in the school development planning process, including your involvement in identifying the priorities; monitoring the progress; and impact of the action plans?
- How well do the children perform academically, personally and socially? Are these outcomes good enough? How are children supported in overcoming barriers to learning e.g. attendance, behaviour, special educational or social and emotional needs? How does the school meet the additional needs of gifted, newcomer or traveller children?
- How do you, as a governing body, assure yourselves that all DE requirements regarding child protection and safeguarding are in place? What oversight do the governors have of policies and procedures, case recording and the impact on practice? Have there been any recent safeguarding incidents/issues: what did you learn from them?

- Can you provide an example of how the governors have provided support or challenge to the principal, staff or the school?
- How do you encourage positive working relationships at all levels? Is there sufficient regular contact between the board of governors, staff, children and parents?
- How do you plan in the short- and longer-term to ensure that the budget facilitates the needs of the children including accommodation?

At the end of the inspection, the ETI report will include a confidence level regarding governance.

GUIDANCE ON ETI MEETINGS WITH MIDDLE LEADERS/ CO-ORDINATORS

A time will be arranged to meet with the relevant co-ordinators, for example, literacy, numeracy, designated teacher, special educational needs co-ordinator (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 outcomes for the children.

Guidance for the meeting

- The meeting is designed to last no longer than 30 minutes.
- The co-ordinator should provide relevant, supporting documentary evidence, selected from existing documentation and signposted to relevant sections.
- Other meetings with the co-ordinator are possible should either the inspectors or the co-ordinator request them during the inspection. The purpose for and content of any further discussion should be made clear.

Areas for discussion

The following areas are for guidance only and should not be considered as a prescriptive list. The inspection team will ask important questions emerging from lines of inquiry.

- The co-ordinator's processes for monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision and the outcomes for the children.

- The improvements in learning/teaching/outcomes, because of the monitoring and evaluating, including the analysis of the school's range of data.
- The impact that the school has made in addressing high, low and potential underachievement. This discussion will include how the school knows that target groups and intervention programmes are making a sustained difference to the children's attainment.

SUMMARY OF THE KEY INFORMATION THAT SHOULD BE PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Documentation to be returned to Inspection Services Team (IST):

- basic information sheet (BIS).

Documentation to be available for the pre-inspection preparation visit:

- current SDP, associated action plans and relevant evaluations;
- completed (signed and dated) ETI safeguarding proforma with relevant policies;
- the school's statutory assessment outcomes regarding the children's levels of progression in Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT, including records of how they are reported in the board of governors' annual report and to parents;
- with regard to non-statutory assessment, if used by staff, schools are asked to provide an analysis of the performance data which they use to track the attainment and progress of all children and the impact of any additional targeted support;
- BIS; and
- copies of teachers' timetables including specialist and/or part-time teaching staff and timetables for the interventions regarding special educational needs.

Documentation to be available in the base room during the inspection:

- SDP and associated action plans;
- special educational needs register and details of the arrangements for special educational needs;
- samples of individual education plans to show the tracking of children's progress;

- special educational needs policy, literacy/numeracy policy, assessment policy and ICT policy;
- whole-school scheme/planning/lines of progression for literacy/numeracy;
- samples of year 2, 4 and 7 books left in the base room (to include two samples of literacy, numeracy and World Around Us for high, average and low achieving children in each of these classes);
- access to any e-portfolios of children's work across the curriculum/samples of children's progression in ICT across the key stages;
- evidence of self-evaluation by literacy/numeracy co-ordinators (e.g. book scoops, lesson observations, co-ordinator's evaluations of teachers' planning);
- the school's analysis and use of data, statutory and non-statutory, at whole-school, class and individual level;
- school prospectus;
- annual report of the board of governors (most recent copy) and completed questionnaire from the board of governors;
- years 6 and 7 class lists; and
- samples of children's assessment records and end-of-year reports to parents.

Documentation to be available in each classroom during the inspection:

- teacher's planning file, including previous planning and evaluations of the learning and teaching;
- class assessment information;
- individual education plans including any evidence of tracking and reviews of progress;
- books showing children's work across the curriculum (to include two samples each for high, average and low achieving children); and
- evidence of the children's use of and progress in ICT.

POST-INSPECTION

- The school will receive a pre-publication copy of the report to check the accuracy of factual information.
- The final report will be published on the ETI website.
- There will be inspection follow-up activity; if the school has been evaluated as having either a high level of capacity for sustained improvement or the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interests of all children, this will typically be in the form of a sustaining improvement inspection around three years after the original inspection.
- For other schools, the ETI will engage in a formal follow-up inspection process. For schools evaluated as needing to address important areas for improvement, this will take place within 12 to 18 months; the follow-up will take place within a two year timeframe for those schools evaluated as needing to address urgently the significant areas for improvement.

GENERAL INFORMATION: SUSTAINING IMPROVEMENT INSPECTION

Background

After a school has been evaluated through inspection, by the ETI, as having a high level of capacity for sustained improvement, or the capacity to identify and bring about improvement⁶, ETI will monitor the school's continuing action to sustain and effect improvement; a sustaining improvement inspection (SII) will be used for this purpose.

Typically, schools that were evaluated as having a high level of capacity for sustained improvement or the capacity to identify and bring about improvement⁷ will receive a SII three years after their last inspection; however, there may be occasions when ETI deem a different model of inspection to be more appropriate.

The SII gives the school the opportunity to demonstrate to ETI that it continues to act effectively to sustain and effect improvement through its school development planning and underpinning self-evaluation processes. The model enables ETI to identify and affirm good practice in self-evaluation leading to improvement.

The inspection will be conducted by the District Inspector (DI) as RI, wherever possible, and an Associate Assessor (AA). The inspection will take place over two days. The AA normally attends for one day. The RI will keep the principal updated on the arrangements as the inspection progresses.

At the beginning of the SII, the RI, in discussion with the principal, will identify one or two lines of inquiry linked to the priorities identified in the SDP⁸ and will evaluate how the quality of safeguarding has been sustained or improved.

The line(s) of inquiry must be substantive and, in the case of a school evaluated previously as having the capacity to identify and bring about improvement⁹, may include confirming that an area(s) for improvement identified, at the time of the last inspection, has been addressed.

6 *In inspection reports prior to July 2015, the equivalent overall effectiveness outcome was denoted by outstanding, very good or good.*

7 *In inspection reports prior to July 2015, the equivalent overall effectiveness outcome was denoted by outstanding, very good or good.*

8 *The Education (School Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland (2010) Schedule for Regulations.*

9 *Prior to 2015, the equivalent overall effectiveness conclusion was denoted by good.*

During the SII, there will be a scrutiny and discussion of a specific sample of school self-evaluation documents as part of the SDP process and of first-hand data analysis related directly to the line(s) of inquiry. This will include the school's evaluation of: the outcomes for learners; the quality of learning and teaching; and, leadership and management at all levels. Typically, this will involve discussions with relevant staff members and be informed by lesson observations. The purpose of the lesson observations is to provide the school with an opportunity to present first-hand evidence of the impact of improvement work. The SII will include a review of the school's evaluation of safeguarding.

What is the focus of the sustaining improvement inspection?

While the ETI will focus on priority area(s) of development and the school's evaluation of safeguarding, ETI's prime interest lies in the strength and effectiveness of the school's capacity to effect and to sustain improvement. The purpose of reviewing the line(s) of inquiry is to determine the extent to which the school is able to illustrate the impact of how its teachers and leaders (supported and challenged by its governors) use first-hand evidence to reflect on, evaluate and act on to sustain and bring about improvement in their own practice. It is this capacity for self-evaluation leading to improvement which ETI will inspect and report upon primarily.

How will a sustaining improvement inspection work?

Notification

- Schools will receive telephone and email notification two working days prior to the SII by the IST¹⁰.
- Further guidance on the inspection process will be provided by IST at the time of notification.
- Where possible, the RI will also make contact with the principal of the school by telephone, prior to the commencement of the inspection; this should enable any queries to be clarified.
- The principal should inform the chair of the board of governors that the SII is taking place and make arrangements for the chair or a representative to be at the report back at the end of day two, at approximately 3:30 pm.
- If available, a base room should be provided for the RI.

¹⁰ There may be occasions, for example, school/public holidays where the notification period will be more than two working days from the Inspection Services Team (IST).

- The Complaints Procedure is available on the ETI website.

The inspection

The following inspection activities may take place over the course of the inspection.

- On the first morning, the RI, in discussion with the principal, will identify and agree (a) line(s) of inquiry linked to the priorities identified in the SDP¹¹. Normally, evaluation of the line(s) of inquiry will lead to an analysis of: learning and teaching; action to promote improvement; and, outcomes for learners.
- At the meeting, the RI and principal will discuss:
 - the outcomes for learners, including the data trends since the last inspection;
 - how the SDP priority areas were identified;
 - the key staff involved and their role throughout the school development planning process;
 - the ongoing monitoring and evaluation strategies used to measure and evaluate the impact of actions to effect improvement;
 - the school's evaluation of how successful it has been to effect improvement in the children's learning and attainment; and
 - the safeguarding proforma.
- The agreed line(s) should demonstrate to the ETI the capacity of the school to effect continued and sustained improvement or its capacity to identify and bring about improvement.
- The RI will agree a programme for the inspection with the principal; this programme, however, may change as the inspection activity progresses.
- The school should make available existing documentation relating to relevant aspects of development, a copy of the SDP, teachers' planning, available data and learners' work.
- In addition, the school should provide a copy of the completed safeguarding proforma¹² signed by the chair of the board of governors and the principal; any issues identified will be followed up by the RI.

¹¹ *The Education (School Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland (2010) Schedule for Regulations.*

¹² *Safeguarding proforma.*

- Lesson observations will be selected through discussion between the principal and the RI; the school may wish to identify particular sessions that best demonstrate the improvements in learning and teaching.
- The RI will scrutinise the documentation, including the school's internal and external performance data and the quality of the learners' work.
- The RI will arrange meetings with key staff, including the principal, members of the senior leadership team, as necessary.
- The RI will present an oral report to the principal and chair of the board of governors¹³, if available, at the conclusion of the inspection.

The quality of arrangements for safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding will be included in the inspection and reported on during a SII. The ETI review and report on the school's evidence of assurance that safeguarding reflects and reflects broadly the DE's guidance.

The ETI also determine whether the school is monitoring and reviewing, at least annually, safeguarding and the children's welfare. Schools are recommended in the DE Circular 2017/04 Guide for Schools (Para 4.2) to use the ETI's safeguarding proforma to underpin this process.

- The ETI child protection/safeguarding proforma is a key piece of evidence and is designed to help schools establish the extent (ideally on an annual basis) to which they comply with child protection/safeguarding requirements and how their arrangements reflect best practice in all aspects of safeguarding learners.
- The completed proforma will indicate to the RI the extent to which the school reflects or reflects broadly (based on its own self-assessment) the guidance issued by the DE and Section 2(c) School Development Planning Regulations (2010).
- Schools should note that the signed and dated safeguarding proforma will be held by ETI as a record of the school's evaluation of safeguarding at the point of inspection.
- Should any serious safeguarding issues arise during the course of the inspection, the line(s) of inquiry may change to that of safeguarding. If a school does not provide sufficient assurance that the arrangements for safeguarding reflect or

¹³ Or another representative of the governors if the chair is unavailable.

reflect broadly the DE's guidance, the ETI will return within six weeks to evaluate the progress in addressing the arrangements for safeguarding.

Documentation

There is no requirement for the school to create additional documentation for the inspection. The key documents required will be:

- the SDP and associated action plans;
- a list of staff and classes;
- a copy of the completed child protection/safeguarding proforma signed and dated by the chair of the board of governors and the principal;
- long-term (whole-school) and medium-term (year group or class) planning;
- performance data (qualitative or quantitative data) which forms part of the development plan evaluation and review indicating that the actions taken are leading to improvement for the learners including interventions for individuals or small groups of learners;
- individual education plans or personal learning plans;
- timetables for each class/session and any intervention groups; and
- samples of work which demonstrate that the actions taken are leading to improvements in the outcomes for learners. The ETI team may also look at classwork, work in books or portfolios or work on display.

The SII will last for two days. The following is an illustration of the activities; on all inspections the RI will agree the timetable with the principal.

Day 1

- Arrive at the school and introductions as required.
- Initial meeting with the principal.
- Review SDP for line(s) of inquiry.
- Completed safeguarding proforma provided to the RI.
- Queries clarified.
- Timetables obtained to select observations.
- Lesson observations/scrutiny of relevant documentation.
- Meetings with teachers as required, e.g. designated teacher/literacy co-ordinator/ numeracy co-ordinator¹⁴.
- Brief update meeting with the principal.

Day 2

- Brief meeting with the principal to confirm arrangements for the day and to address any issues or concerns arising from the previous day.
- Lesson observations as required.
- Scrutiny of documentation/class visits as required.
- Report writing.
- Report back to the principal and chair of the board of governors or representative of the board of governors, if available, at 3:30pm approximately (15-30 minutes maximum).

The RI will discuss arrangements for meetings and the oral report back¹⁵ with the principal as the inspection progresses. The short report will reference the outcome of the original inspection, the line(s) of inquiry, key findings, the evaluation of safeguarding at the time of the SII and a conclusion as detailed overleaf.

¹⁴ Throughout the guidance, co-ordinator should be taken to mean co-ordinator or head of department/ year/key stage, etc.

¹⁵ The Inspection performance outcome is subject to moderation through the ETI's quality assurance process and is not final until the report is published. The RI will mediate any changes, as a result of moderation, to the principal.

The report

If the school continues to demonstrate a high level of capacity for sustained improvement or capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all learners, the ETI will report accordingly. If during the SII, the ETI identify an area for improvement which the school has the evident capacity to address, it will report accordingly. The outcome of the SII will inform the timing and extent of future inspection activity.

If a school does not demonstrate sufficiently to the ETI that it has sustained its capacity for improvement, and/or if performance has declined, the ETI will report accordingly and the school's next full inspection will be brought forward with an appropriate degree of urgency commensurate with the degree of risk determined by the ETI.

Should any serious safeguarding issues arise during the course of the inspection, the focus may change to that of safeguarding. This may include identification of an area related to safeguarding in circumstances where the RI deems it necessary to report on such issues, for example, where a safeguarding disclosure¹⁶ is made to a member of the ETI team by a member of staff or a child or there are obvious breaches of online safety. This may trigger a six week follow-up visit.

Conclusion

Either

In the case of a school evaluated as **outstanding or very good** in the last inspection:

[Insert name of school] continues to demonstrate a high level of capacity¹⁷ for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will continue to monitor how the school sustains improvement.

Or

[Insert name of school] has not demonstrated sufficiently the high level of capacity for sustained improvement; this will be reflected in the future arrangements for inspection of the school.

¹⁶ If a disclosure is made, the RI will follow the procedures outlined in 'Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults: A Code of Good Practice for Members of Inspection Teams'.

¹⁷ From September 2015, the overall effectiveness of a school evaluated previously as outstanding/very good/good are evaluated as having a high level of capacity for sustained improvement/capacity to identify and bring about improvement.

In the case of a school evaluated as **good** in the last inspection:

Either

[Insert name of school] continues to demonstrate the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will continue to monitor how the school sustains improvement.

Or

[Insert name of school] has not demonstrated sufficiently the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners; this will be reflected in the future inspection arrangements for the school.

If arrangements for safeguarding are unsatisfactory¹⁸, reference will be made to a six week followup visit.

The outcome should remain confidential to the staff and board of governors until the report is published on the ETI website. The outcome is provisional, subject to moderation as part of ETI's quality assurance process and is not final until the report is published; the RI will mediate any change of outcome, as a result of moderation, to the principal. The key findings and any areas for improvement outlined orally, and the exact wording thereof, may be subject to change under ETI's quality assurance and editing processes.

¹⁸ Or the school does not provide evidence of assurance that the arrangements reflect or reflect broadly the DE's guidance.

GENERAL INFORMATION: MONITORING INSPECTION

Background

Key stakeholders generally agree that inspections by the ETI should be more proportionate to risk with more frequent, shorter inspection activities where that is appropriate. As a consequence, the ETI aims to visit schools (outside of the full inspection or follow-up process) formally approximately every three years either as a Sustaining Improvement Inspection (SII) or Monitoring Inspection (MIn). This is in addition to the incidental district visits undertaken by District Inspectors.

From January 2017, schools that were evaluated as having the capacity¹⁹ to identify and bring about improvement or better will have a SII. They will receive a SII within approximately three years of the previous inspection.

Schools not having a full inspection, follow-up inspection or SII will have a MIn that will determine the type and timescale of the next inspection activity.

Schools that have full inspections will be inspected under current arrangements (with some minor amendments from January 2017) with the appropriate follow-up activity if required.

What is the focus of the monitoring inspection?

The aim of the MIn is to evaluate the extent to which the leadership and management of the school uses self-evaluation effectively to inform the school development planning process to bring about improvement. The inspection will focus on: action to promote improvement and its impact on learning and teaching; outcomes for learners; and, the school's evaluation of safeguarding. Together these evaluations and the outcome of the inspection will inform future inspection activity as part of ETI's risk-based approach.

How will the monitoring inspection work?

Notification

- Schools will receive telephone and email notification two working days prior to the MIn by the IST²⁰.

¹⁹ The overall effectiveness conclusions changed in September 2015.

²⁰ There may be occasions, for example, school/public holidays where the notification period will be more than two working days from the Inspection Services Team (IST).

- Further guidance on the inspection process will be provided by IST at the time of notification.
- It is anticipated, where possible, that the RI will also make contact with the principal of the school by telephone, prior to the commencement of the inspection; this should enable any queries to be clarified.
- The principal should inform the chair of the board of governors that the MIIn is taking place and make arrangements for the report back at the end of day two at approximately 3:30pm.
- If available, a base room should be provided for the RI.
- The Complaints Procedure is available on the ETI website.

The inspection

- The inspection will be conducted by the DI, wherever possible, in the role of RI.
- The inspection will take place over two days.
- The RI will review the school's statutory assessment outcomes regarding the children's levels of progression in Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT, including records of how they are reported in the board of governors' annual report and to parents.
- With regard to non-statutory assessment, if used by staff, schools are asked to provide an analysis of the performance data which they use to track the attainment and progress of all children and the impact of any additional targeted support.
- The RI, in consultation with the principal, will identify and agree one or two lines of inquiry from the SDP. Normally, (a) line(s) of inquiry will support the evaluation²¹ of learning and teaching; action to promote improvement; and outcomes.
- The RI will present an oral report to the principal and chair of the board of governors²², if available, at the conclusion of the inspection. This will provide: an evaluation of the key aspects of the inspection; an evaluation of the school's safeguarding arrangements; the outcome; and, an outline of the next inspection activity for the school.
- A short report will be published on the ETI website.

²¹ This will be informed by the school's evaluation of learning and teaching, and outcomes.

²² Or another representative of the governors if the chair is unavailable.

The quality of learning and teaching

- A sample of lesson observations should be chosen by the RI in consultation with the principal based on the priorities within the SDP.

Action to promote improvement

- The three-year school development plan and the associated action plans will be evaluated and discussions will take place with the principal and relevant senior and middle leaders.

Outcomes for learners

- Lesson observations.
- Scrutiny of learners' work.
- Performance data (qualitative and quantitative) held by the school and also the school's evaluation of the outcomes attained by the children.
- Discussions with some groups of children.

The quality of arrangements for safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding will be included in the inspection and reported on during a MI. The ETI reviews and reports on the school's evidence of assurance that safeguarding reflects or reflects broadly the DE's guidance.

The ETI also determines whether the school is monitoring and reviewing, at least annually, safeguarding and the children's welfare. Schools are recommended in the DE Circular 2017/04 Guide for Schools (Para 4.2) to use the ETI safeguarding proforma²³ to underpin this process.

- The ETI child protection/safeguarding proforma is a key piece of evidence and is designed to help schools establish the extent (ideally on an annual basis) to which they comply with child protection/safeguarding requirements and how their arrangements reflect best practice in all aspects of safeguarding children.
- The completed proforma (signed and dated by the chair of governors and principal) will indicate to the RI the extent to which the school (based on its own

²³ ETI Safeguarding proforma (2017/18): Guidance for the Review and Evaluation of Safeguarding and Child Protection.

annual review) reflects or reflects broadly the guidance issued by the DE and Section 2(c) School Development Planning Regulations (2010).

- Schools should note that the signed and dated safeguarding proforma will be held by ETI as a record of the school's evaluation of safeguarding at the point of inspection.
- Should any serious safeguarding issues arise during the course of the inspection, the line(s) of inquiry may change to that of safeguarding. If the school does not provide sufficient assurance that the arrangements for safeguarding reflect or reflect broadly the guidance from the DE, the ETI will return to the school within six weeks to evaluate the progress in addressing the arrangements for safeguarding.

Documentation

There is no requirement for the school to create additional documentation for the inspection. The key documents required will be:

- the SDP and associated action plans;
- a list of staff and classes;
- a copy of the completed child protection/safeguarding proforma signed and dated by the chair of the board of governors and the principal;
- long-term (whole-school) and medium-term (year group or class) planning;
- performance data (qualitative or quantitative data) which forms part of the development plan evaluation and review indicating that the actions taken are leading to improvement for the learners including interventions for individuals or small groups of learners;
- individual education plans or personal learning plans;
- timetables for each class/session and those for any intervention groups; and
- samples of work which demonstrate that the actions taken are leading to improvements in the outcomes for learners.

An illustration of the key activities:

Day 1

- Arrive at the school and introductions as required.
- Initial meeting with the principal.
- Review SDP.
- Agree line(s) of inquiry.
- Agree arrangements, for example, meetings and report back.
- Select relevant observations from timetables.
- Lesson observations/scrutiny of relevant documentation.
- Meetings with the co-ordinator(s) relevant to (a) line(s) of inquiry.
- The RI may also request a brief meeting with the designated teacher about the school's evaluation of safeguarding.

Day 2

- A brief meeting with the principal to confirm arrangements for the day and to address any issues or concerns arising from the previous day.
- Lesson observations.
- Scrutiny of documentation and class visits as required.
- Report writing.
- Report back to the principal and chair of the board of governors, or representative, if available, at 3:30pm approximately (15-30 minutes maximum).

The report

The report will contain: an introduction to the model of the inspection; the focus of the inspection including the line(s) of inquiry; a brief summary of key findings; an evaluation of the school's safeguarding arrangements; and, one of the two conclusions, as overleaf, that will inform the next inspection activity.

The arrangements for safeguarding will also be reported on. If arrangements for safeguarding are unsatisfactory, reference will be made to a six week follow-up inspection visit.

Conclusion

Either

At the time of inspection and for the line(s) of inquiry selected, the school is identifying and bringing about the necessary improvements in the quality of education. This will be reflected in future inspection arrangements.

Or

At the time of inspection and for the line(s) of inquiry selected, areas for improvement have been identified. This/These include(s) the need to:

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This/These will be reflected in future inspection arrangements.

The outcome should remain confidential to the staff and board of governors until the report is published on the ETI website. The outcome is provisional, subject to moderation as part of the ETI's quality assurance process and is not final until the report is published; the RI will mediate any change of outcome, as a result of moderation, to the principal. The key findings and any areas for improvement outlined orally, and the exact wording thereof, may be subject to change under the ETI's quality assurance and editing processes.

GENERAL INFORMATION: BASELINE MONITORING INSPECTION

Background

New schools, including those which have been amalgamated, will have a baseline inspection in their second year. This baseline inspection will be a Baseline Monitoring Inspection (BMIn).

What is the focus of the baseline monitoring inspection?

The aim of the BMIn is to evaluate the extent to which the leadership and management of the school uses self-evaluation effectively to inform the school development planning process to bring about improvement. The inspection will focus on: action to promote improvement and its impact on learning, teaching and outcomes for learners; and, the school's evaluation of safeguarding. In addition to this, the BMIn will include an evaluation of the extent to which the leadership and management of the school have established a clear vision, culture and ethos for the school.

Together, these evaluations and the outcome of the inspection will inform future inspection activity as part of the ETI's risk-based approach.

How will the baseline monitoring inspection work?

Notification

- Schools will receive telephone and email notification, two working days prior to the inspection, by the IST²⁴.
- Further guidance on the inspection process will be provided by IST at the time of notification.
- It is anticipated, where possible, that the RI will also make contact with the principal of the school by telephone, prior to the commencement of the inspection; this should enable any queries to be clarified.
- The principal should inform the chair of the board of governors and the employing authority (Education Authority (EA) /Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS)) that the BMIn is taking place and make arrangements for a meeting with

²⁴ There may be occasions, for example, school/public holidays where the notification period will be more than two working days from the Inspection Services Team (IST).

the chair/representative of the governors, preferably on day one, if possible; and, for the oral report back at the end of day two.

- If available, a base room should be provided for the inspection team.
- The Complaints Procedure is available on the ETI website.

The inspection

- The BMIn will be conducted usually by the DI, who will be the RI. Depending on the size and context of the school, there may be up to three team members including an Associate Assessor (AA). The inspection will take place over two days.
- At the start of the inspection, the RI (in consultation with the team and the principal) will identify and agree one or two lines of inquiry from the SDP. Typically, the line(s) of inquiry will support the evaluation of learning and teaching; action to effect improvement; success of the establishment of the new school/ amalgamation in terms of vision, ethos and relationships; and, outcomes.
- An oral report will be provided by the RI and Deputy Reporting Inspector (DRI) to the principal and the chair, or representative, of the board of governors at the conclusion of the inspection. The school may wish to invite the employing authority to the report back. The report back will provide: an evaluation of the key aspects of the inspection; the overall outcome of the inspection; and, an outline of the potential follow-on inspection activity for the school.
- A short report will be published on the ETI website. The school will receive a copy for a pre-publication factual accuracy check prior to publication.
- For schools due a BMIn, the ETI will provide an opportunity for parents, teachers and support staff to complete a confidential online questionnaire, either towards the end of their first year of provision or at the start of the second year. The IST will be in touch with the school to facilitate this at the appropriate time. The RI will report the outcomes of the questionnaire returns to the principal and chair, or representative, of the governors during the BMIn²⁵.

²⁵ If a significant issue was raised by a parent or member of staff in the questionnaire returns, this would be followed-up by the DI as a matter of urgency with the school.

What will the inspectors evaluate?

The quality of learning and teaching

- A sample of lesson observations, chosen by the RI in consultation with the principal, based on the priorities within the school development plan and the line(s) of inquiry.
- Discussions with some groups of children.

Action to promote improvement

- The three-year SDP and the associated action plans.
- Self-evaluation leading to improvement.
- Discussions with the principal, governors and senior and middle leaders as appropriate.

Outcomes for learners

- Lesson observations.
- Scrutiny of samples of children's work.
- Performance data (qualitative and quantitative) held by the school and also the school's evaluation of outcomes for learners.
- Discussions with some groups of children.

The quality of arrangements for safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding will be included in the inspection and reported on during a BMIn. The ETI reviews and reports on the school's evidence of assurance that safeguarding reflects or reflects broadly the DE's guidance.

The ETI also determines whether the school is monitoring and reviewing, at least annually, safeguarding and the children's welfare. Schools are recommended in the DE Circular 2017/04 Guide for Schools (Para 4.2) to use the ETI safeguarding proforma²⁶ to underpin this process.

- The ETI's child protection/safeguarding proforma is a key piece of evidence and is designed to help schools establish the extent (ideally on an annual basis) to which they comply with child protection/safeguarding requirements and how their arrangements reflect best practice in all aspects of safeguarding children.
- The completed proforma (signed and dated by the chair of governors and principal) will indicate to the RI the extent to which the school (based on its own annual review) reflects or reflects broadly the guidance issued by the Department of Education and Section 2(c) School Development Planning Regulations (2010).
- Schools should note that the signed and dated safeguarding proforma will be held by ETI as a record of the school's evaluation of safeguarding at the point of inspection.
- Should any serious safeguarding issues arise during the course of the inspection, the line(s) of inquiry may change to that of safeguarding. If the school does not provide assurance that the arrangements for safeguarding reflect or reflect broadly the guidance from the DE, the ETI will return to the school within six weeks to evaluate the progress in addressing the arrangements for safeguarding.

The published BMIn report will include an evaluation of the arrangements for safeguarding in the school.

Documentation

There is no requirement for the school to create additional documentation for the inspection. The key documents required will be:

- the SDP and associated action plans;
- a list of staff and classes;
- a copy of the completed child protection/safeguarding proforma signed and dated by the chair of the board of governors and the principal;
- long-term (whole-school) and medium-term (year group or class) planning;

²⁶ ETI Safeguarding proforma (2017/18): Guidance for the Review and Evaluation of Safeguarding and Child Protection.

- performance data (qualitative or quantitative data) which forms part of the development plan evaluation and review indicating that the actions taken are leading to improvement for the learners including interventions for individuals or small groups of learners;
- individual education plans or personal learning plans;
- timetables for each class/session and any intervention groups; and
- samples of work which demonstrate that the actions taken are leading to improvements in the outcomes for learners.

An illustration of the key activities:

Day 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrive at the school and introductions as required. • Initial meeting with the principal to set context. • Inspection team review the SDP and suggest (a) line(s) of inquiry. • Agree line(s) of inquiry. • Agree a sample of relevant lesson observations from timetables. • Lesson observations/scrutiny of relevant documentation. • Meetings with the co-ordinator(s) relevant to the line(s) of inquiry. • The RI may also request a brief meeting with the designated teacher about the school's evaluation of safeguarding. • Meeting with the board of governors. • ETI team meeting at end of day. • RI and DRI meet with principal to discuss emerging findings.
Day 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A brief meeting with the principal to confirm arrangements for the day and to address any issues or concerns arising from the previous day. • Lesson observations as required. • Meetings with a sample of learners. • Scrutiny of documentation and class visits as required. • Inspection team's moderation meeting and preparation for oral report back. • Report back to the principal, the chair of the board of governors, or representative, if available, and a representative of the employing authority at 3:30 pm approximately (15-30 minutes maximum).

The report

The report will contain: an introduction to the model of the inspection; the focus of the inspection including the lines of inquiry; a brief summary of key findings; an evaluation of the school's safeguarding arrangements; and, one of the two conclusions, as below, that will inform the next inspection activity.

The arrangements for safeguarding will also be reported on during the BMIn. If arrangements for safeguarding are unsatisfactory, reference will be made to a six-week follow-up inspection visit.

Conclusion

Either

At the time of inspection and for the line/lines of inquiry selected, the school is identifying and bringing about the necessary improvements in the quality of education. This outcome will be reflected in future inspection arrangements.

Or

At the time of inspection and for the line/lines of inquiry selected, areas for improvement have been identified. This/These include(s) the need to:

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This outcome will be reflected in future inspection arrangements.

The outcome should remain confidential to the staff and board of governors until the report is published on the ETI website. The outcome is provisional, subject to moderation as part of the ETI's quality assurance process and is not final until the report is published; the RI will mediate any change of outcome, as a result of moderation, to the principal. The key findings and any areas for improvement outlined orally, and the exact wording thereof, may be subject to change under the ETI's quality assurance and editing processes.

FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION PROCESS

After all two/three- and four-day model Primary inspections there will be follow-up inspection processes.

There are four overall effectiveness conclusions that have individual follow-up processes:

The school has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.

The school demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement.

The school needs to address (an) important area(s) for improvement in the interest of all the learners. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.

The school needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all learners. It requires external support to do so. The ETI will monitor and report on the school's progress in addressing the area(s) for improvement. There will be a formal follow-up inspection.

Post-inspection action plans

Where the overall effectiveness conclusion is that the school has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners, the ETI will monitor how the school sustains improvement through district visits. There is no requirement from the School Improvement Team (SIT) in the DE to draw up internal action plans.

Where the overall effectiveness conclusion is that the school demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners, following an inspection, the SIT will ask the school to draw up an internal action plan which will be monitored through district visits.

Where the overall effectiveness conclusion is that the school needs to address (an) important area(s) or address urgently the significant areas for improvement in the interest of all the learners, following an inspection, SIT writes to the school requesting

an action plan. SIT forwards the action plan to the ETI for comment. There may be ETI contact with the school at this point, for example, an optional district visit may be conducted if clarification of the action plan is required. The action plan forms the basis for the follow-up inspection process.

Whole-school interim follow-up visit and follow-up inspection procedures

There is no notification letter for interim follow-up visits; approximately two weeks before the visit, the DI contacts the school to provide notification of the interim follow-up visit and make arrangements.

Schools receive formal notification of the follow-up inspection from the IST, approximately two weeks before the inspection. The DI will usually be the RI for follow-up inspection activity.

Overall effectiveness conclusion	Address (an) important area(s) for improvement.	Address urgently the significant areas for improvement.
Interim follow-up visit	One day visit led by the DI to monitor progress. Typically, no written report left with the school unless the areas for improvement have not been addressed sufficiently.	One day visit led by the DI to monitor progress. A short written report letter is issued to the school and employing authority.
Follow-up inspection	Typically, a one day visit with up to three team members including the DI. A written report is issued and published on the ETI website.	Up to two days visit with up to three team members including the DI (depending on specialist areas). A written report is issued and published on the ETI website.
Timescale	12-18 months from original inspection.	18-24 months from original inspection.

Interim follow-up visit

At the initial phone call, the DI explains that the aim of the interim follow-up visit is to evaluate the school's progress in addressing the areas for improvement. It is a matter

for the school to demonstrate progress in taking forward the action plan(s) which may take the form of an interim evaluation. The school should be made aware that the evidence gathered during the visit, including, for example, lesson observations and discussions with key staff and children, contributes to the overall follow-up inspection evidence base. A meeting with the employing authority representative may be necessary to determine the nature, extent and impact of the support provided.

An oral report is given to the principal, the chair (or representative) of the board of governors and a representative of the employing authority. In the case of schools where the overall conclusion was to address urgently the significant areas for improvement, the support officer should also be invited, and following the oral report, these schools receive a short written report letter.

Follow-up inspection

The IST will notify the school of the inspection by email which contains links to supporting documentation and will be followed-up by a phone call. The RI, typically, the DI, will telephone the principal to confirm the details of the inspection.

The follow-up inspection builds on the evidence base from the interim follow-up visit including lesson observations and discussions. It is the responsibility of the school to provide clear, concise, robust evidence of sustained and sustainable improvement.

Following notification of the inspection, IST and the RI will contact the principal by telephone as soon as possible to discuss the following:

- the composition of the inspection team, confirmation of the dates of the inspection and the arrangements for reporting to the school;
- the arrangements for the inspection and other aspects of the work of the school to be included in the inspection;
- the availability of the Primary Inspection Guidance booklet on the ETI website and other relevant guidance materials and leaflets;
- the availability of a base room for the inspection team;
- the distribution of the teacher, support staff, parental/carer/guardian letters regarding online questionnaires, if required and related to the original inspection;
- the arrangements for meeting the governors during the inspection; and
- the decision about whether to include lesson observations in religious education (RE), and associated actions, if relevant to the original inspection.

At the end of the follow-up inspection, an oral report is given to the principal, the chair, or representative, of the board of governors and a representative of the employing authority. In the case of a school where the overall effectiveness conclusion had been that the school needs to address urgently significant areas for improvement, the support officer should also be invited to the report back meeting. The school receives a pre-publication of the follow-up inspection report which is then published on the ETI website.

Following-up on other units

If, during the original inspection, the quality of the provision in a unit had been evaluated as less than good, there will be a specialist follow-up inspection regardless of the overall effectiveness conclusion of the whole school.

Overall effectiveness conclusion	High level of capacity for sustained improvement and capacity to identify and bring about improvement.	Address (an) important area(s) for improvement.	Address urgently the significant areas for improvement.
Following-up on specialist units	<p>One day visit from a specialist inspector to re-evaluate the provision approximately 12-18 months after the original inspection.</p> <p>There will be an oral report back to the principal, but no written report will be published.</p>	<p>Follow-up by specialist team member(s) as part of the overall inspection.</p> <p>Follow-up inspection within 12-18 months after the original inspection.</p>	<p>Follow-up by specialist team member(s) as part of the overall inspection.</p> <p>Follow-up inspection within 18-24 months after the original inspection.</p>

PARTIAL INSPECTIONS

In some instances, for example, inclement weather, or other unique circumstances, the ETI may not be able to complete all aspects of an inspection. Such instances are dealt with by the ETI on a school-by-school basis, and it is important for the principal, the RI and IST to stay in contact throughout the inspection process.

The underlying protocols adhered to by the ETI in these situations are:

- the ETI will endeavour to complete as much of the inspection as possible;
- the principal (or chair of the board of governors if the principal is unable to be involved) should liaise with the RI, including the provision of information around the extent of any ongoing problems or issues; and
- the ETI will require access to:
 - the SDP and all related school documentation including the planning and action plans, whole-school policies for literacy, numeracy, ICT, pastoral care and safeguarding (including the completed safeguarding proforma), learning, teaching and assessment;
 - groups of children for the care and welfare, and safeguarding discussions; and
 - samples of the children's written work.
- the ETI will consider the inspection as complete and publish a report outlining the progress made on the inspection and any available evaluations, including the adequacy of the school's arrangements for safeguarding; and
- where there is insufficient evidence to reach an overall effectiveness conclusion, the school will be considered a high priority for future inspection.

Further detail around the arrangements specific to individual schools will be provided through the RI and IST.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Primary inspections

1. Do we have to change our timetables if the RI asks?

The RI may need to agree changes with the school in order to gather information about a certain skill or line of inquiry, or to optimise the coverage of the inspection. It would be helpful if the school were able to accommodate these requests, although the ETI will try to minimise them.

2. Do I stop the principal release teacher or a part-time teacher/tutor coming to the school during the inspection days?

Inspectors need to see the school operating as it does normally; it would not be appropriate to make staff changes just for inspection.

3. I am a principal of a very small school with a full-time teaching commitment, and need to attend the meeting with the chair of the governors and the ETI. How will the ETI accommodate this meeting alongside the observation of my teaching?

The ETI understands fully the demands upon teaching principals during inspection. It is important that these issues are discussed early on with the RI, so that suitable arrangements may be made.

4. If a member of staff contacts the school close to the inspection to say that s/he is sick and cannot attend the inspection, what do I do?

Staff can be absent for a number of reasons. Please continue to make the school's normal cover arrangements and inform the RI as soon as possible through the Inspection Services Team (IST) before the inspection or in person during the inspection. Where a substitute teacher is employed, s/he should be informed that s/he will be observed by a member of the ETI team.

5. If I think the team has not seen something important, what do I do?

The RI will welcome any supporting evidence during the course of the inspection and within the timescale as indicated in this handbook.

6. If we have something special scheduled in the school during the inspection, should I let the RI know?

Yes, absolutely; please ensure that the RI is informed on the pre-inspection visit. The team will do their best to see the area that has been identified though it may not be possible for the inspectors to accommodate all requests. If the school or the RI feels that the event could have a detrimental impact on the process of the inspection, for example, it involves a proportionately large number of the children, then the RI and the principal should discuss this and determine the best course of action to ensure the effective running of the inspection from the school's viewpoint.

7. Will the evaluations be affected if I don't have statutory requirements in place?

Yes. Failure to meet statutory requirements, particularly in relation to care and welfare, and safeguarding, school development planning or curriculum provision will affect the outcome of the area under inspection and the overall effectiveness level for the school.

8. Do I choose the children for the inspection team to meet?

No. You will be advised by the RI of the children the inspectors will wish to meet. You will be asked to provide a list of the year 6 and/or 7 classes and the RI will choose randomly up to 8 children. If for any reason you think that a child should not attend the care and welfare, and safeguarding discussion, for example, due to a recent close family bereavement or serious illness, please discuss this with the RI. It is useful for principals to include a wide representative range of children; for example, children who are at Stage 5 on the Code of Practice, those who have recently joined your school or those who are newcomers to Northern Ireland. Please also indicate School- or Eco-Council members, if applicable.

9. Do I need to make sure that the team has a selection of children's books from all classes/learning areas for high, average and low achieving children?

Yes. Access to children's work is a critical part of the evidence base upon which evaluations on standards of work are made.

The teachers are requested to provide the team with a selection of books from each class – usually two samples from high, average and low achieving children. Please indicate on each pile to which category the books belong. A range of

literacy and numeracy books is useful; and, if you can also provide evidence of connected learning, for example, in the World Around Us, Music or Art, this would be appropriate. In addition, you may wish to leave a selection of evidence from other media sources, for example, tablets, displays, project work, photographs and other digital media. Samples of years 2, 4 and 7 books should be left in the base room.

10. Will the inspectors meet with all area of learning co-ordinators?

The ETI team will meet with the core co-ordinators as relevant to the focus of the inspection including literacy and/or numeracy, the SENCO and the designated teacher for safeguarding and child protection. Depending on the size of the school, there may not be time to meet with other co-ordinators: the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators should be in a position to discuss standards and achievements and the special educational needs provision throughout the school. If there are curriculum teams in the school, it may be possible to arrange a group meeting. The RI will discuss this in detail and make arrangements with the principal at the pre-inspection visit.

Those invited to meet inspectors should be prepared to refer them to the most recent and relevant documentation and evidence of the impact of the SDP on the quality of learning and teaching, and the outcomes which the children attain.

11. The principal is absent on sick leave. Will the inspection go ahead?

Yes - the inspection will proceed with the members of senior staff who are available.

12. My school/ year class is planning a trip on the day of the inspection. What should I do?

If the trip involves only one or two classes, then the inspection will proceed. If the whole school or the majority of classes are not on school premises for most of the day, then the inspection may be rearranged. If agreed, the IST will inform the RI and further dates will be arranged.

13. I am a teaching principal and I have class responsibility on a certain number of days during the inspection. What do I do?

If you are a teaching principal, the ETI would appreciate if you could rearrange your teaching principal cover to allow you to be released from the classroom on the first day of the inspection. If this is not possible at short notice, the inspection

will proceed, but please leave a copy of the SDP that the RI can scrutinise on the first morning and make decisions on the key focus of the inspection.

14. I have several members of staff or a co-ordinator on long-term leave of absence from work. What do I do if the RI chooses their area(s) of responsibility as (a) line(s) of inquiry for the inspection?

The ETI would recommend that a school does not ask any member of staff who is absent to come into school for the duration of the inspection. The principal and other senior staff members should be aware of the actions taking place in the school to promote improvement and the RI will discuss these with the staff who are available.

15. My school has a nursery unit, learning support centre, Irish medium unit. Will the unit be included in the Sustaining Improvement Inspection (SII), Monitoring Inspection (MIn) or Baseline Monitoring Inspection (BMIn)?

In all likelihood, the focus chosen from the SDP will impact on the work of the whole school including units, therefore the unit should expect to be included in the inspection.

16. What documentation do co-ordinators need to have available for a SII inspection?

Throughout the inspection, there will be ongoing professional dialogue between the members of the school community and the RI. One or more of the co-ordinators or a curriculum team may be asked to meet with the RI on the afternoon of the first day of the inspection to explain more fully the actions that have been taken to bring about improvement for the learners. The co-ordinator may wish to bring evidence of action plans, evaluations, performance data, classroom observations and/or learners' work to the meeting, but this is at the discretion of the co-ordinator. Please note that the information provided should be the recent or current work of the co-ordinator.

17. What documentation do teachers need to have available for a SII inspection?

Teachers should have available their long-term (whole-school) and medium-term (year group or class) planning. Individual education plans or personal learning plans should also be available and class performance data, where available. The RI may wish to see the learners' work in books, files, displays, electronic devices and/or photographs. Teachers should not single out particular books for

inspection – the RI will scrutinise the work of the learners while in the classroom from whatever is available. If time allows, the RI may ask for evidence of work to be brought to the base room for further inspection.

The documentation required should be in regular use by the school and not prepared for the inspection.

18. Do I need to send any documentation to the RI in advance of a SII inspection?

No, the RI will look at the documentation on arrival in the school and throughout the inspection.

19. The safeguarding proforma is not completed or is partially completed. Will this affect the outcome of the inspection?

The care and welfare of the learners is paramount, therefore, if the school cannot demonstrate with first-hand evidence that all the requirements for safeguarding have been completed by the school, this will be reflected in future inspection arrangements. Please discuss any outstanding areas of development in the proforma with the RI. Should any serious safeguarding issues arise during the course of the inspection, the focus may change to that of safeguarding. This may trigger a six week follow-up visit with the issue of a standard safeguarding letter and will be reflected in future inspection arrangements.

20. Will the RI observe all teachers in the school in a SII inspection?

The RI, in discussion with the principal, will choose the lessons which best demonstrate the impact of the actions taken to bring about improvement. This may be in one area of learning or within one key stage or across units and key stages.

21. There are short-term, temporary teachers in school. Will they be observed?

Any teacher in school during the inspection may be observed. Please let the RI know if the school has Beginning or Early Professional Development teachers and the name of the teacher tutor.

22. Will each teacher receive feedback on their lesson after observation?

In line with the usual practice during inspection, the inspector will have a brief discussion with the teacher before leaving the room or if this is not convenient, at an arranged time later in the day. The inspector will discuss the main strengths

of the lesson and any area(s) identified for improvement. The collated evidence of the standards of learning and teaching will be provided to the principal at report back. Should more serious issues arise from learning and teaching, the inspector will discuss these with the teacher and the principal at the earliest available time before the oral report back.

23. I have a staff meeting planned for the first day of the inspection. Will I postpone it?

The RI and inspectors may need to speak with the principal and some of the key co-ordinators during the afternoon of the first day. Do not postpone your staff meeting, but in consultation with the RI, consider if the agenda can be arranged to facilitate any meetings required by the RI.

24. What if the chair of the board of governors is not available for the oral report back?

If the chair is not available, then the deputy chair or a designated member of the governing body may attend. If a representative of the governors is not available the oral report back will proceed with the principal.

25. May the vice-principal and/or other senior teachers and other members of the board of governors attend the oral feedback on day two?

The oral feedback will be relatively short and will indicate future inspection arrangements. The key messages will be provided to the principal and chair of governors who in turn may inform the school community of the outcome. Outcomes remain confidential to the school until the report is published.

26. How do I request the postponement of an inspection?

Inspections are postponed only in the most exceptional circumstances. The chair of the board of governors can write to the Chief Inspector requesting the postponement of an inspection. The Chief Inspector will consider this request and provide a prompt, written response to the chair.

Appendix 1

HYPERLINKED LIST OF DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FOR TWO/THREE- AND FOUR-DAY PRIMARY INSPECTIONS:

- [Basic Information Sheet](#);
- [Pre-inspection Questionnaire for Governors](#);
- [Safeguarding proforma](#); and
- [Role of the Representative](#).

HYPERLINKED LIST OF SUPPORT MATERIAL AVAILABLE FOR ALL TYPES OF PRIMARY INSPECTIONS:

- [Inspection Self-Evaluation Framework for Primary;](#)
- [Inspection Self-Evaluation Framework for Governors;](#)
- [Information for parents, carers and guardians;](#)
- [Joint Lesson Observation Guidance \(if relevant\);](#)
- [Complaints Procedure;](#) and
- [What Happens After an Inspection?](#)

Appendix 3

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL INSPECTION

Independent school initial registration inspection

In Northern Ireland, the term 'independent school' means a school at which full-time education is provided for learners of compulsory school age and which receives no Government funding.

Article 30 of the Education (NI) Order 1996 refers to:

"The Department of Education does not legislate currently for independent schools in relation to pastoral care or welfare and protection of children i.e. Circular 1999/10 (Pastoral Care in Primary Schools) and 2003/13 Welfare and Protection of Pupils Education and Libraries (NI) Order 2003 refer only to grant-aided schools".

However, in ensuring the safety, care and welfare of learners it is appropriate for independent schools to be aware of the legislation for purposes of best practice.

The (initial) registration inspection²⁷

The purpose of this inspection is to determine if the school can be recognised and confirmed as 'an adequate and appropriate setting' to function as a school, and can therefore be registered and gain status as an independent school to appear on the DE register of independent schools. The objective of inspecting Independent schools is essentially to ascertain whether the child's welfare is adequately safeguarded and promoted while s/he is accommodated by the school.

This includes ensuring that efficient and suitable instruction is being provided for the number, age, sex and ability of the children, assure that the child protection procedures are implemented fully and to ensure the accommodation provided is satisfactory for the

27 As a result of the initial registration inspection and/or the re-registration inspection if required, most schools will be confirmed by the DE as having independent school status. Some of these schools will remain independent and will not want grant aid. In any case, the smaller schools, because of their low number of children, do not qualify.

Other schools, especially Irish-medium schools, will remain temporarily voluntary, but will move to become established as grant-aided once they have achieved viable numbers of children. This change of designation will entitle them to recurrent funding. (NB If a school applies for grant-aided status, the application will be considered by Area Policy & Planning Team (APPT) (previously known as Development Branch) who will set out the criteria to be fulfilled, for instance, the schools must apply to meet the full requirements of the NIC.)

number, age and sex of the learners, and meets fully health and safety requirements. The inspectors will seek evidence from the school to show that the premises have been checked and approved by the Fire Authority.

Formal inspection (after the registration inspection)

Key aspects of this type of inspection are to:

- ensure that the child protection procedures are implemented fully through a discussion (of the ETI safeguarding proforma) with the designated teacher, the designated governor and chair of the board of governors/designated member of the management committee;
- ascertain that all adults/staff have been vetted through AccessNI. Independent schools do not have access to the Education Authority policies and training for safeguarding and child protection. The policies, procedures and training may be provided by the overview organisation or other external agencies;
- verify that, while independent schools are not obliged to offer the Northern Ireland Curriculum (NIC), there is a curriculum/programme of study which is suitably relevant and balanced to meet the basic educational needs of all children;
- check the qualifications of the teachers (NB. it is not compulsory, as yet, for teachers in independent schools to be fully qualified but the number and nature of qualifications will be stated clearly in the context of the report);
- ensure that the accommodation meets at least minimum standards and that the premises meet the required health and safety standards;
- decide whether there is sufficient equipment/resources; and
- monitor the attendance.

Safeguarding

In general, the procedures that are used in all school inspections should be applied to independent schools.

PRIMARY **Inspection Guidance**

September 2017

