

POST-PRIMARY INSPECTION GUIDANCE

January 2017

ETI: Promoting Improvement in the Interest of all Learners



Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
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and other commissioning Departments



CONTENTS

General information	1
What happens before the inspection:	3
- The pre-inspection preparation visit	4
- Preparation of the inspection overview document	5
The preparation and use of data	6
Questionnaires used as part of the inspection	7
The role of the representative	7
The post-primary inspection	8
Inspection of care and welfare	12
Guidance on ETI meetings with learning support co-ordinator/SENCO	13
Inspection of subject areas	15
Meeting with the governors	17
Curriculum and careers	18
Guidance on ETI meetings with middle leaders/managers	19
Key information that should be provided – summary	22
Post-inspection	23
Partial inspections	23
Frequently asked questions	24

General information

This guidance is for the Education and Training Inspectorate's four day inspection of post-primary schools. In order to promote improvement in the interest of all pupils, the purpose of a four-day post-primary inspection is to evaluate:

- outcomes for learners;
- the quality of provision for learning;
- leadership and management and its capacity to effect and sustain improvement.

The post-primary model of inspection is subject to continuous evaluation and review.

The underlying operational principles include:

- the centrality of the school development plan (SDP), in terms of planning, development and self-evaluation leading to improvement;
- an opportunity for the school to provide its own evaluation of the outcomes for pupils, and the quality of learning and teaching;
- a strong focus on the pupils' learning experiences and their progression in learning;
- an enhanced pupil voice through pastoral care discussions, with a sample of the pupils and the opportunity for some pupils to complete a confidential questionnaire¹;
- 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.

¹ The pupil questionnaire will be piloted during some inspections between January and May 2017; the RI will inform the school if they are to be involved in the pilot (not all schools inspected will be involved).

The roles and responsibilities on a typical post-primary team include:

Team members	Responsibilities
Reporting inspector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plans and manages the inspection • briefs the school, including the teaching and non-teaching staff • maintains regular communication with the school, including clarification of any queries • deploys the inspection team • leads the evaluation of strategic leadership, capacity to effect and sustain improvement and outcomes for learners • chairs all team meetings and the moderation meeting • deals with any issues or matters arising • confirms completion of safeguarding proforma
Deputy reporting inspector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assists with all aspects of the inspection • leads on the evaluation of the quality of the provision (for learning) • contributes to the evaluation of senior and middle leadership • liaises with the inspection team to oversee the provision for pupils with additional learning needs (SEN)
Curriculum and CEIAG inspector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leads on the evaluation of the curriculum and careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG)
Mathematics specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leads on the evaluation of mathematics and numeracy • contributes to the evaluation of the provision for pupils with additional learning needs
English specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leads on the evaluation of English and literacy • contributes to the evaluation of the provision for pupils with additional learning needs
Other subject specialist(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluates specialist subject(s)/area of provision • contributes to the evaluation of the provision for the care and welfare of the pupils
Associate assessor(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contributes to the evaluation of areas within their professional experience and expertise (more than one AA may be deployed on parts or all of the inspection)
Representative (voluntary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a senior leader from the school • manages the inspection process from within the school • attends the appropriate full inspection team meetings, including the moderation meeting and the oral report back at the end of the inspection.

All team members contribute to the evaluation of care, welfare, safeguarding and support.

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

all inspections. On most inspections, English and literacy and mathematics and numeracy are inspected. The inspection will also include the inspection of one or more specialist subjects or areas of school work (such as a learning support unit or the provision for SEN).

If the school has a Learning Support Centre/Unit or Irish Medium Unit, or a high proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register, this will be reflected in the deployment of the team.

In reaching evaluations the ETI uses the quality indicators which are available in the ETI Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework publication².

What happens before the inspection?

Following notification of the inspection, Inspection Services Team (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 arrangements for the inspection of subject areas and other aspects of the work of the school to be included in the inspection;
- the availability of the Post-Primary Inspection Guidance booklet on the ETI website and other relevant guidance materials and leaflets ;
- the option for the school to nominate a representative for the inspection and the associated guidance³ for this role which is on the ETI website;
- the availability of a base room for the inspection team;
- the distribution, without delay, of the teacher, support staff and parental/guardian letters regarding online questionnaires;
- the completion of the ETI safeguarding proforma which should be signed and dated by the chairperson of the board of governors and the principal, and given to the RI on the day of the pre-inspection visit (where possible) or before day 1 of the inspection;
- the availability of The Inspection Guidance for Governors⁴ booklet including the necessity to complete the ETI pre-inspection questionnaire for governors using the Quality Indicators for use in the Self-evaluation of Governance 2013 available on the ETI website;

² <http://tinyurl.com/ISEF-Post-Primary>

³ <http://tinyurl.com/Role-Representative>

⁴ <http://tinyurl.com/Guidance-Governors>

- the role of the school, supported by C2k, in preparing the relevant statistical information on the secondary school information disc (SSID) and the completion of the evaluation of the outcomes for learners pro forma⁵;
- the decision about whether to include lesson observations in religious education (RE), and associated actions;
- clarification of the materials to be made available to support the evaluation of the provision for pupils with additional learning needs;
- the completion of the inspection overview document⁶, including a written evaluation of the quality of learning and teaching in the school; and
- the confirmation of the other documentation to be prepared/available for the pre-inspection visit.

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 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 SDP and to enable the RI to become familiar with the school's context;
- a discussion with the principal about the arrangements for the lesson observation visits on day 1 of the inspection, including the option of joint lesson observations⁷;
- the option for the school to nominate a representative for the inspection;
- finalising arrangements for the principal's short input on the morning of day 1;
- agreeing the time for meeting with governors at the end of school on day 2 of the inspection;
- agreeing the time for the report back meeting on the afternoon of day 4 of the inspection and those who will be in attendance;
- meeting with a group of pupils;

⁵ <http://tinyurl.com/Evaluation-Outcomes-Learners>

⁶ <http://tinyurl.com/PP-Inspection-Overview> as an alternative, the school may wish to use part of the SDP documentation.

⁷ <http://tinyurl.com/Joint-Lesson-Observations>

- holding discussions with key members of the senior leadership team about their roles and responsibilities;
- meeting with the heads of subject departments (including learning support co-ordinator and head of CEIAG) to be inspected, as time permits;
- meeting with the chair of governors (or his/her representative), if available;
- finalising arrangements for a suitable base room for the ETI team and access to the school's documentation supporting the school development planning process ;
- briefing the staff at the end of the school day, and giving them an opportunity to ask questions;
- reading the relevant documents, including the SDP; and
- collecting the completed and verified key inspection documentation, including:
 - the inspection overview document (if applicable)⁸;
 - the evaluation of outcomes for learners proforma⁹ (statistical information);
 - the governance self-evaluation proforma;
 - the safeguarding proforma; and
 - the representative's statement of commitment and understanding proforma (if relevant).

Preparation of the inspection overview document

You are asked to prepare an inspection overview document (a suggested template is provided) which will enable you to demonstrate your actions to effect improvement and help to inform and guide the inspection. The ETI will accept this document in any format the school wishes to present, including the presentation of parts of the current SDP.

Using the SDP, please provide a concise, up-to-date summary evaluation of the school's priorities (as identified from previous developments), actions being taken currently and the evidence available.

You should include an evidence-based evaluation of the quality of learning and teaching and assessment in the school (in the quality of provision section). The ETI will compare this with the collated evidence from the lesson observations during the inspection.

The overview document should outline concisely what the school's priorities are, how the school arrived at these, and how the school knows if progress is being made.

⁸ <http://tinyurl.com/PP-Inspection-Overview>; as an alternative, the school may wish to use part of the SDP documentation.

⁹ <http://tinyurl.com/Evaluation-Outcomes-Learners>

The overview should also direct the RI, DRI and team members to the other relevant documents that need to be considered in the inspection.

In order for the RI to brief effectively the inspection team with sufficient detail, it is vital that the (inspection overview document) is completed by the end of the pre-inspection visit.

The preparation and use of data

In the inspection notification letter, the school is asked to complete the statistical table document, agree and sign off the data and send to the RI via IST. C2k will engage with the school to assist them with this process.

The normal procedure is for the SSID files to be uploaded by C2k at least one week before the inspection to the C2k Exchange where the ETI can access them. The school does not need to send the SSID to the RI.

It is the responsibility of the senior leaders in the school to ensure that the data is accurate and complies with the various agreed rules, for example, around pupils deemed to be ineligible for inclusion in the public examination data and the removal of pupils who have repeated GCSE examinations such as English and mathematics.

It is expected that schools, on a regular basis as part of their self-evaluation process, access and use for benchmarking purposes the data that is kept in SIMS and from which the SSID is compiled.

If the SSID is ready at the time of the pre-inspection visit, the RI will endeavour to check whether it is accurate and contains the necessary data. During the inspection, it is not unusual for discrepancies in data to arise. In these instances, when the RI and the school have agreed the source of, or reason for, any discrepancies in the data it is up to the school to make the relevant changes to the SSID files and email a final version to the RI for inclusion in the data tables in the published report.

The school should not need to go back to C2k to amend the data.

The ETI reporting of data is consistent across the schools inspected and the outworking of this can be seen by accessing the most recently published post-primary reports on our website.

Questionnaires used as part of the post-primary inspection

The ETI provides an opportunity for parents and 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. Sample parental¹⁰, teaching¹¹ and support staff¹² questionnaires can be accessed on the ETI website.

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

If the school is to be involved in the pilot of the pupil questionnaires, the RI will discuss with the school the necessary arrangements to facilitate this.

Role of the representative on post-primary inspections

The ETI believes that a strong partnership approach to inspection, namely working with those we inspect collaboratively and in a transparent manner, helps organisations recognise and understand the improvements that need to be made in the interest of the learners.

The ETI welcomes the participation by the principal or a senior leader of the school (the representative) in almost all aspects of the inspection as a way of affording the school the opportunity to contribute more fully the inspection process and the evaluation outcomes.

To build further on the principles of collaboration and transparency, 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.

As the inspection proceeds, the RI and the inspection team will keep the representative fully informed of the emerging findings along with the underpinning evidence used to support the inspection team's evaluations. The inspection team will ensure that the representative is aware of any issues that are emerging, with a particular emphasis on any areas of the organisation's provision or work which have been identified as having important or significant areas for improvement. The representative will be invited to attend inspection team meetings and the moderation meeting. The representative will not contribute to the final discussions and decisions on specific performance levels or overall conclusion, but will be able to direct the inspection team to documentation and/or individuals where additional evidence may be obtained.

In order to be able to undertake fully and effectively the role, the representative should be:

¹⁰ <http://www.eti.gov.uk/sample-parents-questionnaire-2015.pdf>

¹¹ <http://tinyurl.com/Sample-Quest-Teach-Support>

¹² <http://tinyurl.com/Sample-Quest-Teach-Support>

- in a senior management position within the school, with full and immediate access to the principal;
- a positive advocate for the school throughout the inspection process;
- knowledgeable about the school's curriculum, operational arrangements and quality systems, in particular the development planning, self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes;
- trusted by, and have good relations with, the staff at all levels;
- confident enough to engage constructively with the inspection team to help them reach accurate evaluations;
- able to take actions or make decisions as necessary to ensure the smooth running of the inspection; and
- a key member of staff to be involved in improvement planning after the inspection.

Further detail on the role of the representative is available on the ETI website¹³.

Post-primary inspection

Post-primary inspections take are conducted over four days.

Day 1 (illustration):

Day 1	Activity
	Team arrival; introductions.
Period 1 (or before)	Short 'meet and greet' by principal (maximum 15 minutes) Short team briefing, chaired by RI. Subject specialists commence the inspection of individual subjects; this may involve a meeting with the head of department (HoD)/subject leader or co-ordinator early in the day.
Period 1 (onwards)	Lesson observations involving the remaining team members, usually excluding the RI. The principal or another senior leader will be provided with the opportunity to undertake some joint lesson observations with a member of the inspection team. RI commences meetings with the principal and other senior leaders and the scrutiny of documentation. RI or other team member selects pupils for inclusion in pupil discussions on days 2 and/or 3.

¹³ <http://tinyurl.com/Role-Representative>

Last period (or part of)	Team meeting, attended by representative. Main agenda item is the learning insight profile.
After school	Meetings are held between specialist inspectors and heads of department, co-ordinators, middle leaders and staff with whole-school responsibilities.

Day 2 (illustration):

Day 2	Activity
Morning	Pupil discussions take place.
Morning/afternoon	Lesson visits and discussions/meetings with key staff continue. DRI meets with learning support co-ordinator (SENCO). DRI/AA meets with a representative group of middle leaders. Team meeting during last period (or part of the last period), attended by the representative.
After school	RI and DRI (or AA) meet with representatives of the board of governors. Meetings (only where necessary) are held between specialist inspectors and heads of department, co-ordinators, middle leaders and staff with whole-school responsibilities.

Day 3 (illustration):

Day 3	Activity
Morning	Lesson visits and discussions with key staff. During the first lesson of the day, the DRI, AA and the three subject specialists (where appropriate) will each visit a lesson, paying particular attention to the support for pupils with additional learning needs (the classes to be visited will be selected by the DRI). An inspector will meet with the senior leader with responsibility for the care and welfare of the pupils to discuss the outworking of the arrangements for the care and welfare for the pupils. RI and District Inspector (where possible) or AA meet with the

	<p>school's senior leadership team to discuss actions in response to emergent inspection messages. At the same time, the DRI meets with the rest of the team to provide support.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Feedback is provided by subject specialist inspectors to the heads of the departments inspected, in the presence of a member of the senior leadership team.</p> <p>These are completed before the end of lunchtime.</p>
Afternoon	<p>Moderation meeting</p> <p>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 ETI Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework.</p> <p>Performance levels will be agreed for the core areas of the inspection, namely outcomes for pupils, quality of provision and leadership and management. The overall effectiveness conclusion for the school will also be agreed.</p> <p>Another inspector, with responsibility for quality assurance, may attend the moderation meeting as part of the ETI quality assurance process.</p>

Day 4 (illustration):

Day 4	Activity
Morning	<p>RI/DRI meet; team members write for issue.</p> <p>Team meets to collate, agree and edit report.</p>
Afternoon	<p>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).</p> <p>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</p>

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 *What Happens After an Inspection?*¹⁴

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 4, the oral report back may be rescheduled after consultation with the managing

¹⁴ <http://tinyurl.com/WHAI-Primary>

	inspector/assistant chief inspector with responsibility for post-primary inspections.
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Post-inspection:

Post-inspection	Activity
Inspection report	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The final inspection report is published six weeks after the inspection.</p>

Inspection of care and welfare

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.

Care and Welfare:

Prior to the inspection, the principal/chair of governors will be asked to complete and sign the safeguarding proforma¹⁵ and give it to the RI; where possible this should be made available to the RI on the day of the pre-inspection visit. Any issues arising with regard to the safeguarding of the pupils will be followed up by the inspection team.

Also prior to the inspection, parents and staff of the school will be given the opportunity to complete an online questionnaire. A summary of the responses to the parental and staff questionnaires, including any written comments, will be reported orally to the principal and representatives from the governors by the RI during the inspection.

¹⁵ <http://tinyurl.com/Safeguarding-PP-EOTAS-Spec>

The evidence for the evaluation of the care and welfare of the pupils will be gathered by the team at all stages of the inspection, including lesson observations, discussions with staff and pupils and scrutiny of relevant documentation. Any issues that have the potential to impact adversely on the care and welfare of the pupils will be followed up by the inspection team.

On day 1, the pupils to be included in the discussions with inspectors will be selected; the principal will be asked to make the necessary arrangements to facilitate these meetings. On the morning of day 2 (where possible), meetings will take place with groups of pupils. The groups will be comprised of: pupils from year 8, 9 & 10; years 11 & 12; and years 13 & 14. Typically these meetings with pupils last for around 20 to 30 minutes.

Members of the inspection team may visit an assembly or registration classes.

Special Educational Needs:

The inspection of the arrangements for the pupils 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 pupils as part of any lesson observations undertaken, through scrutiny of work in the pupils' books and of the teachers' planning, including the use of individual education plans (personal education plans).
2. The DRI will meet with the leader(s), typically the learning support co-ordinator (SENCO), with responsibility for the co-ordination of the provision and support for pupils with additional needs across the school; this meeting will focus on the outworking of the arrangements for the support of these pupils.
3. Where possible during the inspection, a small sample of withdrawal classes may be observed.
4. Over the three days, inspectors will visit lessons to evaluate the learning experiences of pupils identified as requiring additional support with their learning.
5. At some stage during the morning of day 3, the DRI will engage in a professional dialogue with the learning support co-ordinator (SENCO) to discuss the emergent findings with regard to the outworkings of the support for pupils with additional learning needs.

The information required to assist in the evaluation of the provision for SEN can be found towards the end of this document.

Meeting between the learning support co-ordinator/SENCO and ETI

The following lines of discussion are used typically by inspectors.

To what extent are pupils' needs identified and appropriate provision put in place?

- Are procedures and practices compliant with relevant legislation and guidance documentation?
- What is the process of identification of need (involvement of parents; effectiveness of referral system; use of data/assessments)?
- What is the impact of the school's policy for SEN and the SEN register on the pupils?
- How is the SEN register maintained and reviewed?
- What are the interventions outside of the classroom, how are they prioritised and what is the impact?
- What provision is in place for pupils accessing EOTAS placements as per guidance?
- How do you know the needs of the pupils being met in the classroom?

To what extent are pupils who require additional support with their learning participating in school life, progressing well and attaining in line with their ability?

- How pro-active is the school in creating an inclusive ethos which is supported by its pastoral care arrangements?
- How well do pupils identified with SEN progress and achieve?
- What is the school's policy and practice in analysing and monitoring the attainment of pupils identified with SEN?

To what extent do senior and middle leaders ensure that pupils identified as having SEN are participating in school life, progressing well and attaining in line with their ability?

- How do senior and middle leaders monitor, evaluate and review the impact of SEN initiatives?
- Does continuing professional development for staff take place, specific to SEN? What is the impact of this?
- How well is capacity of all staff to support pupils with additional learning needs being built within the school?
- Are links established with other whole-school co-ordinators, including literacy, numeracy and careers, to meet the needs of the pupils on the SEN register?
- How is the specific budget for SEN spent on meeting the needs of the pupils identified through the SEN register?
- How effective has the leadership been in raising outcomes for pupils on the SEN register?

Inspection of subject areas

Virtually all inspections include a specialist subject focus on English and literacy and mathematics and numeracy. During 2016/17, the inspection of at least one other specialist subject or area of the school's work will normally be included as part of the inspection evidence base. In schools where there is a high proportion of pupils on the SEN register, or a learning support unit, this may be treated as the third subject.

The RI will inform the school which subjects are to be included in the inspection shortly after the school receives its inspection notification letter. Normally, only one other specialist subject will be inspected as well as English and mathematics.

The inspection of specialist subjects will involve usually the following inspection activity.

Stage	Inspection activity
Pre-inspection	<p>Specialist inspectors access teacher timetables to plan observation visits and meetings.</p> <p>Inspectors also access the SSID data to analyse trends in the pupils' achievements in public examinations and to benchmark these against similar schools in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Teachers and middle and senior leaders have the opportunity to attend a whole-staff briefing delivered by the RI in advance of the inspection. There is the opportunity for HoDs/subject co-ordinators, teachers and other staff to ask questions or seek clarification about any aspect of the inspection process.</p>
Day 1 (illustration)	<p>The specialist inspectors will commence the inspection of the individual subjects or whole-school areas (for example the provision for pupils identified with additional learning needs).</p> <p>The specialist inspectors will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undertake lesson observations across the key stages; • scrutinise departmental documentation including departmental development or action plans, self-evaluation documentation, departmental reviews including examination data analysis, schemes of work, any folders/materials stored in the virtual learning environment, cross-curricular planning documents, assessment and marking policies, minutes of meetings, assessment data and subject-specific personal/individual education plans; • meet with the HoD/subject co-ordinator, probably at the start and end of the school day; and • hold informal discussions with pupils and scrutinise

	<p>samples of their work</p> <p>On some inspections, particularly in larger schools or departments, the specialist inspector may be accompanied by another inspector or an AA.</p>
Day 2 (illustration)	<p>The specialist inspectors will continue to gather subject-specific evidence and follow up on any lines of enquiry from day 1. They will continue to observe lessons, scrutinise documentation and talk with key staff.</p> <p>The inspection work related to the specialist subjects is typically completed by the end of day 2.</p>
Day 3 (illustration)	<p>On the morning of day 3, the specialist inspectors contribute to the whole-school evaluation of the support for pupils who require additional help with their learning (until break-time/mid-morning) and the arrangements for the care and welfare of the pupils.</p> <p>Specialists meet with DRI to collate and moderate findings.</p> <p>Before the end of lunchtime, the specialist inspector will hold a professional dialogue with the HoD/subject co-ordinator, along with a member of the senior leadership team, to provide brief feedback on the strengths and areas for improvement for the subject area.</p> <p>On occasion, the RI, DRI or other team member may also attend this professional dialogue. The specialist inspector will report an overall performance level for the subject or area of provision inspected, and the level and timing of any follow-up activity.</p>
Afternoon	<p>Inspection team moderation meeting, chaired by the RI and attended by the representative.</p>
Post-inspection	<p>In the sections on outcomes for learners and quality of provision, the published report will contain concise, high-level summary evaluations about the subjects/areas of provision inspected.</p> <p>Where the work of a subject/area of provision area is evaluated to have important, significant or urgent areas for improvement, this may be reported on in the main areas for improvement for the school; in these instances, there will be a follow-up inspection activity.</p>

Meeting with the 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 meeting normally takes place towards the end of day 2 of the inspection. The RI will be accompanied by another team member.

Following a brief introduction, the RI will:

- explain the purpose of the meeting, namely to take account of the views of the governors on 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;
- report back to governors the summary of the various questionnaire returns; and
- discuss the content of the pre-inspection questionnaire¹⁶ where it has been completed by the governors.

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

1. Pupil progress

This will include discussion around:

- the information received by governors about the progress made by the pupils;
- statistical trends over recent years, benchmarking and how the school's performance compares with other schools;
- the progress and performance of pupils on free school meals and those with special educational needs;
- the performance of individual subjects/departments;
- the school ethos and the role of pastoral care in raising standards; and
- the promotion of high expectations, positive attitudes towards, and value of, learning.

2. Main challenges facing the school

This will include discussion around:

- the school development planning process, consultation and identification of priorities;
- challenging underperformance and supporting improvement;

¹⁶ <http://tinyurl.com/Guidance-Governors>

- the provision of a relevant curriculum to meets the needs and aspirations of the pupils, as well as levels of collaboration across the area learning community; and
- support for pupils with free school meal entitlement and those with additional learning needs.

3. Improving quality of provision/maintaining and raising standards

This will include discussion around:

- the level of engagement with principal, senior leaders, staff and pupils;
- their role in challenging and being accountable;
- their involvement in promoting high-quality learning, teaching and assessment;
- ensuring sound financial planning; and
- the effective and efficient use of resources to meet the needs of the pupils.

Curriculum and careers

The evaluation of the curriculum and the provision for CEIAG is a very important aspect of the inspection; it will be the responsibility of one of the members of the inspection team to take the lead in the inspection of the curriculum and CEIAG.

Typically, the inspection of curriculum and CEIAG will include the following.

1. Prior to, or at the start of the inspection, the lead inspector will access and evaluate the school's most recent Entitlement Framework audit.
2. The lead inspector will meet with the member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) with responsibility for curriculum planning to:
 - discuss and evaluate the school's approach to curriculum planning and the review/self-evaluation of the relevance, balance and flexibility of the curriculum to meet the needs, interests and career goals of the pupils;
 - ascertain recent changes to the curriculum offer (including enhancement and extra-curricular) and the associated rationale for changes;
 - discuss the linkages between curriculum planning and CEIAG;
 - discuss the range of leavers' destinations and how the school analyses and uses this data to inform curriculum planning and review;
 - determine the rationale for, and effectiveness of, any level 2 provision delivered at post-16;
 - discuss proposed future changes to the curriculum, and how these are aligned with the priorities in the school development plan;
 - ascertain how the curriculum planning and monitoring processes take place and how effective they are; and
 - assess the alignment of the curriculum to government's priority skills areas and local and regional labour market information.

3. Evaluation of the quality and impact of the curriculum, staffing, resources, accommodation, and leadership and management in careers. This will involve:
 - observation of a sample of careers and/or employability lessons;
 - discussions with the teacher in charge/head of careers;
 - evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of careers advice and guidance
 - evaluation of the extent and impact of the pupils' work-related learning opportunities and workplace knowledge and experiences;
 - evaluation of the extent to which pupils acquire and apply a range of skills, dispositions and attitudes that enhance employability;
 - evaluation of the extent to which the pupils benefit from a progressive personal career planning process, across the key stages;
 - discussions around the continuing professional development opportunities for staff involved in careers;
 - discussion around the self-evaluation and development planning processes for CEIAG;
 - input to the evidence base by the ETI subject specialist inspectors; and
 - discussions with some pupil groups, particularly at KS 4 and post-16.

4. The lead inspector will meet with the member of staff with responsibility for area learning community collaboration.

5. Scrutiny of a range of documentation, including:
 - self-evaluation and action-planning documentation
 - option/subject choice documents at year 8 entry, KS 4 and post-16 and any criteria for progression from year 13 to year 14;
 - data about year 13 to year 14 progression, destinations of leavers at the end of KS 4, end of year 13 and end of year 14;
 - achievement and progression data for post-16 pupils following largely level 2 programmes of study at post-16;
 - evaluation of the extent and impact of the pupils' workplace knowledge and experiences;
 - pupils' workplace experiences at KS 4 and post-16;
 - schemes of work;
 - the numbers of pupils, over the past three years, accessing courses through other area learning community providers and the number of pupils from other providers accessing courses in the school, including subjects and at what level; and
 - SSID achievement data.

Guidance on the ETI's meetings with middle leaders/managers¹⁷

During the inspection, the work of a range of middle leaders/managers will be evaluated. As well as individual meetings between specialist inspectors and middle and senior leaders, the DRI will convene a meeting between a small number of inspectors and a representative group of middle leaders. This group will include

¹⁷ By middle managers/leaders we mean responsible post-holders such as heads of department, subject leaders, co-ordinators and heads of year.

some heads of department, co-ordinators and teachers who lead in aspects of the provision such as curriculum and the Entitlement Framework and care and welfare.

It is important to note that these are discussions with the leaders of these areas and are not 'interviews'. Inspectors are keen to hear what they do to support pupils and to help them achieve.

The focus for discussion includes/comprises the current developments and priorities for improvement in their area of responsibility, progressed through effective self-evaluation, particularly the strengths and areas for improvement in the provision and the achievements and standards of the pupils.

There is no need for any additional documentation to be produced for this meeting. The inspectors are interested in being talked through the key current documents i.e. current priorities, how they became priorities and, using first-hand evidence, what evidence there is of progress being made.

The following lines of discussion will be used by inspectors.

1. The role of middle leaders in monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning and teaching

Is good practice identified and shared?

- Are learning and teaching regularly/always discussed at departmental and other meetings?
- Do teachers have a shared understanding of pedagogy?
- Is the document being discussed a working document? How is it reviewed? Is it truly 'owned' by members of the department – how is that promoted?
- Is there a collective depository of good practice?

Is learning and teaching observed?

- Do middle/senior leaders observe learning and teaching, other than through the Performance Review and Staff Development process?
- Are there opportunities for peer observation? How effective are they?

What other strategies are used for monitoring and evaluation?

- Do middle/senior leaders use (for example) book scoops/book looks? What has been learnt and what actions are taken?
- How are pupils' or parents' views sought and acted on in any evaluation? If so, what was learnt from this?

2. Self-evaluation and action-planning processes

How do middle managers/leaders evaluate the work of colleagues/departments and how does that inform future planning?

- Do all departments/subjects areas have action plans?

- How are the priorities decided upon? How well are they aligned to the priorities in the SDP?
- How are baseline positions identified?
- How does the self-evaluation process work? How is the impact of actions monitored and evaluated by middle managers/leaders, and by senior leaders?
- Have the prompts from the ETI Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework (or its predecessor Together Towards Improvement), Every School a Good School, Count, Read; Succeed, or any other relevant documents (for example the ETI learning insight profile) been used at department meetings and to what effect?

3. The use of data to aid monitoring and evaluation of standards and progression in learning, and to inform future planning

- How is the pupils' progress assessed, tracked and monitored?
- Is there a target-setting process? How are targets set, agreed, monitored? What is the impact of any intervention strategies for pupils?
- How is the pupils' performance in public examinations analysed?
- Is performance benchmarked against similar schools? If so, what does this show?
- Are all members of each department/area of provision aware of the department's benchmarked performance?
- Is class by class performance data shared openly?
- Does the school use standardised test results to monitor progress across the school/year groups, or simply to identify those who may require additional support? How well is the data used?
- How is underperformance identified and addressed at the different levels in the school?

4. The quality and effectiveness of the level of accountability between middle managers, senior leaders and governors

Is there appropriate accountability?

- For whom are evaluative reports produced and what happens next? What evaluative feedback is provided by senior leaders?
- Are there meetings with the principal at which the work of the department is discussed? To what extent do they lead to improvement?
- Does the SLT/principal receive a copy of the agenda and minutes of departmental meetings? What feedback is provided? Do they access pupils' assessment data in SIMS, and what do they do with this information?
- To what extent do middle leaders have contact with, and receive feedback from, the governors?

5. General

- What provision is there for pupils who need additional support with learning?
- What do you do to help parents support their child's learning?
- Do you have any links with primary schools? Transition arrangements?

Inspectors will also follow up with middle leaders areas of interest or concern which are emerging as inspection findings.

Summary of key information that should be provided by the school

The information that should be provided by the school includes:

- the inspection overview document (at the time of the pre-inspection visit);
- the signed and dated safeguarding proforma (at the time of the pre-inspection visit);
- the SDP (at the time of the pre-inspection visit);
- day 1 lesson visits/timetables;
- statistical data tables;
- governance self-evaluation proforma;
- staff timetables, hard copies as well as in the SSID;
- a school map;
- the structure of school day;
- assessment records;
- the school organisation structure and staff responsibilities;
- evidence from the self-evaluation process;
- minutes of senior leadership team meetings;
- minutes from the meetings of the board of governors;
- departmental developmental and action plans, including schemes of work;
- whole-school policies and action plans for literacy, numeracy and ICT and learning and teaching;
- outcomes achieved by pupils at stages 1 – 5 on the SEN register;
- safeguarding/child protection and pastoral care policies;
- returns from any pupil questionnaires/focus groups or evidence of their involvement in the decision-making process; and
- samples of work, as requested by subject specialists.

To support the inspection of the provision for **special education needs**, the learning support co-ordinator should collate (from existing documents) and provide:

- the school's policy for SEN;
- the SEN register (current year and previous year) and details of the arrangements for SEN;
- class lists (to include pupils on the SEN register and the stage at which they are);
- details of the pupils in receipt of access arrangements (current and previous year);
- the attainments of pupils at stages 1 to 4 on the SEN register;
- the attainments of pupils at stage 5 on the SEN register;
- details of work experience placements for pupils on SEN register (current and previous year); and
- a sample of individual education plans across the stages.

Teachers should make available to inspectors visiting classes:

- planning file (normal planning notes: for example, short-term, medium-term or longer-term planners);
- current IEPs (personal education plans);
- class assessment and tracking data; and
- samples of pupils' work across the ability range.

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 learners, 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.

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 and the RI 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 issues;
- the ETI will require access to:
 - the SDP and all related school documentation including departmental planning and action plans, whole-school policies for literacy, numeracy, ICT, pastoral care and safeguarding (including the completed safeguarding proforma), learning and teaching, assessment and so on;
 - groups of pupils for the pastoral care and safeguarding discussions; and

- the pupils' 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 conclusion evaluation, the school will be considered a high priority for a future inspection.

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

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

Does the principal always take on the role of the representative?

Mostly but not always - if not the principal, the representative should be in a senior leadership position with full and immediate access to the principal. The representative should be able to take actions or make decisions as necessary and be a key member of staff involved in improvement planning after the inspection. It is expected that the representative will attend the oral report back on the last day of the inspection.

Taking on the role of representative can be a good developmental opportunity for a member of the senior leadership team. Further details about the role of the representative and who is best suited to fulfil it can be found in the ETI document *The Role of the Representative in the Inspection Process*¹⁸ on the ETI website.

The organisation may prefer not to nominate a representative. In this circumstance, the RI will continue to promote the ETI's core principles of openness and transparency and maintain good working relationships with the senior management and staff.

What do I do if a problem arises?

It is important that any concerns or issues are dealt with promptly and sensitively. In most circumstances an issue can be resolved at an informal level. In the first instance you should raise any issue with the RI as soon as possible. In the unlikely event that the concern is about the RI, then this should be raised with the DRI in the first instance. The RI/DRI, working with any member of the team as appropriate, will work to resolve the matter as soon as possible, preferably during, or immediately following the inspection.

If it has not been possible to resolve your concerns informally, you may decide to make a formal complaint. A copy of the ETI Complaints Procedure¹⁹ will have been provided as part of the inspection documentation and can be accessed on the ETI

¹⁸ <http://tinyurl.com/Role-Representative>

¹⁹ <http://tinyurl.com/Comp-Procedure>

website.

Will all teachers be visited during the inspection?

All teachers may not be visited during an inspection. Much depends upon the size of the school and also the subjects being inspected. Class visits can take place up until the lunchtime of the third day of the inspection.

What feedback will teachers receive?

All teachers will receive short feedback at the end of the lesson, or, if it is not convenient at this time (for example the inspector only stays for one lesson out of a double), at the earliest opportunity after the lesson. This will outline those aspects of the lesson which went well and also any areas for improvement that need to be considered. This feedback will typically be short as the inspectors do not want to hold up the next lesson.

What feedback will the heads of department or co-ordinators expect to receive at the end of the inspection?

Before the end of lunchtime on day 3 of the inspection, the HoD/subject co-ordinator along with a member of the senior leadership team will have a professional dialogue with the subject specialist inspector. The inspector will highlight the strengths and discuss any areas for improvement. Normally, the inspector will report an overall performance level for the subject/area of focus.

Will inspectors visit provision delivered by other providers in the ALC, such as other schools or a further education college?

Yes. It is important to inform staff from other providers who come into the school that they may be visited by an inspector. It is also important to inform pupils from other schools who attend your school that an inspection is taking place and that inspectors may visit classes.

How do I request the postponement of an inspection?

Inspections are only postponed 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.

If the principal of the school is absent during the inspection period, does the inspection still go ahead?

Yes, in almost all circumstances the inspection will go ahead as planned.

What is the best way to plan a pre-inspection day?

A possible outline of the day for a pre-inspection visit is outlined below.

Pre-inspection Day	Activity
10am	RI (and possibly DRI) arrive at school
Meeting with principal (and senior leaders) <i>1-2 hours</i>	<p>Discuss school's context, and recent and current priorities set in the SDP. Discuss roles and responsibilities of staff.</p> <p>Agreement on the arrangements for joint lesson observations and/or the participation of a representative in the inspection.</p> <p>Collection of the school's documentation: Inspection overview document; evaluation of outcomes for learners pro forma; safeguarding pro forma; and, governance pro forma.</p> <p>Status of SSID, and questionnaires for pupils, parents and staff.</p> <p>Guidance for lesson observations as arranged by school.</p> <p>Agreement of time of, and attendance at, oral report back on the last day of the inspection.</p>
Meeting with heads of departments (English, mathematics and other department/area under focus) <i>30minutes</i>	Discuss roles and responsibilities within the departments, format of inspection, and availability of support materials.
Meeting with leaders of support, and care and welfare (e.g. VP(pastoral), SENCO, Designated Teacher etc.) <i>30 minutes</i>	Discuss roles and responsibilities within the departments, format of inspection, and availability of support materials.
Meeting with curriculum and CEIAG leaders (e.g. VP (curriculum), ALC co-ordinator, head of LLW, head of careers education, etc.) <i>30 minutes</i>	Discuss roles and responsibilities within the departments, format of inspection, and availability of support materials.
Meeting with chair (or representatives) of board of governors <i>30 minutes</i>	Discuss membership and structure of board. Receipt of governance pro forma. Discuss format of inspection.
Meeting with senior pupils <i>20 minutes</i>	To hear the views of the senior pupils as to what aspects of provision should be observed by the inspection team.
Staff briefing	Presentation, and Question and Answer session.