

School inspection handbook

Handbook for inspecting schools in England under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended by the Education Act 2011)

This handbook provides instructions and guidance for inspectors conducting inspections under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended). It sets out what inspectors must do and what schools can expect, and provides guidance for inspectors on making their judgements.

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Introduction

1. This handbook describes the main activities undertaken by inspectors conducting inspections of schools in England under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended) from September 2014. It also sets out the judgements that inspectors will make and on which they will report. This handbook now forms the single key resource for the inspection of schools under section 5, except for the additional detailed guidance on safeguarding provided in 'Inspecting safeguarding in maintained schools and academies'.¹
2. The handbook has two parts.
 - Part 1: How schools will be inspected
This contains instructions and guidance for inspectors on the preparation for and conduct of school inspections.
 - Part 2: The evaluation schedule
This contains guidance for inspectors on judging the quality of education provided by the schools they inspect, and provides an indication of the main types of evidence they collect and analyse.

¹ *Inspecting safeguarding in maintained schools and academies* (140143), Ofsted, July 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140143.

Part 1: How schools will be inspected

Before the inspection

Inspectors' planning and preparation

3. The lead inspector must prepare for the inspection by gaining a broad overview of the school's recent performance and how this may have changed since the last section 5 inspection. The outcomes of this preparation must be summarised on evidence forms (EFs).
4. Inspectors must use all available evidence to develop an initial picture of the school's academic performance. Planning for the inspection must be informed by analysis of:
 - the previous inspection report
 - the findings of any recent Ofsted survey and/or monitoring letters
 - responses from Parent View,² Ofsted's online survey available for parents³
 - issues raised by, or the findings from, the investigation of any qualifying complaints⁴ about the school (inspectors do not investigate individual complaints but they must consider any wider issues raised by the complaint)⁵
 - information available from the provider information portal⁶
 - the executive summary and areas for development of the most recent Ofsted inspection report on the relevant local authority's child protection arrangements; this may be either as a stand-alone inspection or as part of the wider inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers
 - information on the school's website, including its statement on the use of the pupil premium,⁷ the statutory sharing with parents of

² <https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

³ 'Parents' refers to mothers, fathers and/or carers.

⁴ Ofsted has specific powers (under section 11A-C) of the Education Act 2005 (as amended) to investigate certain complaints known as qualifying complaints. Further guidance is available in *Complaints about Ofsted: guidance for parents* (080113), April 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/complaints-ofsted-about-schools-guidance-for-parents.

⁵ Further guidance for inspectors on obtaining complaints and concerns about a school in preparation of an inspection can be found in *Inspector guidance for obtaining complaints and concerns information held by Ofsted in preparation for school inspections* (130128), Ofsted, 2013; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/complaints-procedure-raising-concerns-and-making-complaints-about-ofsted.

⁶ The provider information portal (PIP) displays a high level view for Ofsted inspectors of information about providers we inspect and regulate.

⁷ Throughout this document, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support.

curriculum information (so the lead inspector can start to assess the breadth and balance of the school's curriculum and whether it is likely to promote preparation for, and an appreciation of life in modern Britain), the special educational needs (SEN) information report, and other information for parents⁸

- data from RAISEonline, including attendance and exclusions, the school data dashboard,⁹ the sixth form performance and assessment (PANDA) report, the Level 3 Value Added (L3VA) data and available data about success rates, and progress in English and mathematics
 - academy funding agreements, including any specific information about curriculum and governance.
5. There may also be other relevant information that is in the public domain and reported in the press. Inspectors should therefore conduct a brief internet search as part of their pre-inspection planning to see whether there are any safeguarding or other issues - for example governance - that may need to be followed up during inspection. When evaluating the effectiveness of a school's safeguarding procedures, inspectors should also ask whether there have been any safeguarding incidents since the last inspection of the school. Inspectors should record the school's response.
 6. The lead inspector should prepare and distribute brief joining instructions for the inspection team. These should include:
 - essential information about the school and the timings for the inspection
 - a brief analysis of the pre-inspection information, including important areas to be followed up
 - an outline of inspection activity for the first day – for example, planned lesson observations and any meetings with pupils or staff; this will be finalised once on site.
 7. Lead inspectors should deploy their inspection team members as they see fit. All members of the inspection team must contribute to the evaluation of each of the four key judgements and any early years and/or sixth form provision and come to a collective view about the quality of the education provided by the school.

⁸ Information for schools about information required on a school website is available at www.education.gov.uk/schools/toolsandinitiatives/cuttingburdens/a00208330/faqs-about-changes-to-school-information-regulations.

⁹ <http://dashboard.ofsted.gov.uk/>. (Guidance on the use of the school data dashboard is also available on this link.)

8. Ofsted may schedule concurrent inspections of schools with collaborative arrangements that share important aspects of their provision (such as schools with a shared sixth form or an inclusion unit). Inspectors should make sure that they communicate with each other in advance of and during the inspection. They should ensure that sufficient consideration is given to the emerging judgements about the linked provision they are inspecting.
9. The inspection of boarding or residential provision in a school is undertaken by one or more social care inspectors. Contact between the education and social care inspectors should take place on the preparation day. Guidance on pre-inspection activity and notification arrangements for integrated inspections is set out in 'Conducting inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools'.¹⁰

Safeguarding

10. It is **essential** that inspectors are familiar with the content of the following key documents:
 - the Department for Education's statutory guidance for schools¹¹ and colleges,¹² 'Keeping children safe in education',¹³ 2014
 - 'Keeping children safe in education: information for all school and college staff',¹⁴ DfE, 2014
 - 'Working together to safeguard children',¹⁵ 2013.
11. The statutory guidance for schools and colleges, 'Keeping children safe in education', came into force on 3 April 2014. The guidance sets out the responsibilities placed on schools and colleges to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It replaces 'Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education'.

¹⁰ *Conducting inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools* (100180), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100180.

¹¹ It applies to all schools (whether maintained, non-maintained or independent), including academies and pupil referral units, governing bodies and headteachers of maintained schools (including aided and foundation schools). It does not include maintained nursery schools.

¹² It applies to further education colleges and sixth-form colleges, and relates to young people under the age of 18, but excludes 16–19 academies and free schools (which are required to comply with relevant safeguarding legislation by virtue of their funding agreement).

¹³ *Keeping children safe in education*, Department for Education, 2014; www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education.

¹⁴ *Keeping children safe in education: information for all school and college staff*, Department for Education, 2014;

www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education

¹⁵ *Working together to safeguard children*, Department for Education, 2013; www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children

12. In the event of concerns or queries the following telephone number is available to inspectors:
 - Ofsted helpline (0300 123 4234).
13. In the event of an ongoing incident coming to light during the inspection, reference should be made to 'Inspecting safeguarding in maintained schools and academies', which contains guidance on what to include in the inspection report.

Inspection of religious education and collective worship

Schools with a religious character

14. If a school (including an academy) is designated as having a denominational religious character, then denominational religious education, school ethos and the content of collective worship are inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 (see chart below). The inspectors who conduct **section 48 inspections** are appointed by the school's governing body, or the foundation governors in a foundation school, having consulted with persons prescribed in regulations (normally the appropriate religious authority). The inspectors are normally drawn from the relevant faith group's section 48 inspection service, although not all faiths have their own inspectors organised in this way. Section 48 inspections should be approximately every five years.
15. In schools with a religious character, section 5 inspectors may comment on educational issues such as the contribution of assemblies to pupils' personal and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, or the quality of teaching in any subjects, including religious education (RE). In the case of schools without a religious character or voluntary aided or voluntary controlled/foundation schools, academies that were previously voluntary controlled/foundation schools and free schools that are designated as having a religious character, where RE is being provided in line with the locally agreed syllabus, RE is inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 and the RE syllabus.

Voluntary aided (VA) schools, academies whose predecessor was a VA school, free schools, and entirely new academies	Voluntary controlled (VC)/ foundation schools and academies whose predecessor was a VC/foundation school
<p>Section 5 inspectors do not inspect the content of denominational RE, but may visit the lessons and assemblies to evaluate teaching, spiritual, moral, social, cultural development, etc. They may also inspect any RE that is provided in line with the locally agreed syllabus following a request from parents.</p>	<p>Section 5 inspectors look at RE as part of the curriculum unless RE is provided in line with the designation following a request from parents.</p>
<p>Section 48 inspectors inspect the denominational content of RE, collective worship and the school's denominational ethos.</p>	<p>Section 48 inspectors inspect collective worship and the school's denominational ethos. Where the RE is provided in line with the designation, this will also be inspected by the section 48 inspectors.</p>
<p>Governors are responsible for deciding the content of the RE syllabus in line with the trust deed or designation. They may appoint all teachers on the basis of religious beliefs.</p>	<p>RE should follow the locally agreed syllabus unless parents request a denominational one. Governors may appoint up to 20% of teachers to teach the denominational curriculum.</p>

16. The relationship between section 5 and section 48 inspections is governed by a protocol between Ofsted and signatory faith group inspectorates.
17. The Ofsted lead inspector should check the section 48 arrangements and:
 - if a section 48 inspection is occurring at the same time, the section 5 report should simply mention that a section 48 inspection also took place under the 'information about the school' section; evidence from the section 48 inspection should not be used in a section 5 report
 - if a section 48 inspection has been carried out since the previous section 5 inspection, inspectors should inform themselves of any key issues raised but should not use its evidence in their own inspection
 - if no section 48 inspection by a suitable person has taken place, the lead inspector should check the arrangements; if governors have not arranged for a section 48 inspection, then inspectors should conclude that they have failed to meet a key expectation.

Schools without a religious character

18. Schools, including academies, that are not defined as having a religious character must conform to the legal requirements for non-faith schools:
- RE in maintained schools (except voluntary aided, those with specific trust requirements and voluntary controlled/foundation schools whose parents request denominational RE) should be based on the locally agreed syllabus established by the local Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE). RE should reflect the religious traditions in Britain, which are, in the main, Christian, while taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Britain. It also means that a school or academy without a religious designation must not provide an RE syllabus (or any other) to pupils by means of any catechism or formulary that is distinctive of any particular religious denomination.
 - Academies may, but are not required to, follow the locally agreed RE syllabus. Alternatively, they can devise their own syllabus, but it must be in line with the legislation that underpins the locally agreed syllabus as mentioned above. Non-faith academies must provide collective worship that is wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character. Inspectors should note any requirements of their funding agreements.
 - A school can reflect the religious backgrounds represented in its community in its collective worship and RE, as long as the majority of provision is broadly Christian. Alternatively, the family backgrounds of some or all pupils may lead the headteacher and governing body to conclude that broadly Christian collective worship is not appropriate. The headteacher can apply to the local SACRE to have the broadly Christian requirement disapplied and replaced by collective worship distinctive of another faith. The headteacher should consult the governing body before doing so. Academies should apply to the Secretary of State via the Educational Funding Agency (EFA).

Separately registered childcare provision

19. Early years or childcare provision of more than two hours that is **not managed by the governing body** must normally be registered with Ofsted. Where provision managed directly by a **school governing body** includes care for children under three years old, or where no child attending is a pupil of the school, it must be registered by Ofsted and is not inspected under section 5.

The views of parents of registered pupils

20. Inspectors have a statutory duty to have regard to the views of parents. When the inspection service provider (ISP) sends confirmation of the

inspection to the school by email, this will include a letter that gives formal notification of the inspection for parents. It will also explain Parent View and how to contact inspectors. The school must make every effort and take such steps as are reasonably practicable to notify all parents of registered pupils of the inspection, using this letter. Schools should encourage parents to complete Parent View by placing a link on their website to the Parent View website:

<https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/>. Where the response rate for Parent View is low, inspectors must take steps during the inspection to gather further evidence of the views of parents. In addition, the school should be encouraged to notify parents using its own electronic systems (such as SMS messages), where available.

21. Where the inspection is conducted without notice (see below) the same process will apply.
22. The principal source of information that inspectors will use to access the views of parents is Parent View. Inspectors will also take account of the results of any surveys carried out by the school or commissioned by the school.

Notification and introduction

23. The lead inspector will normally contact the school by telephone to announce the inspection at, or just after, midday on the working day before the inspection. However, Ofsted may conduct inspections without notice. Where the inspection is conducted without notice, the lead inspector will normally telephone the school about 15 minutes before arriving on site. In this situation, the inspector will use this initial call to inform the school that the inspection is about to commence and will leave all other arrangements until arrival at the school.
24. In announced inspections, lead inspectors should bear in mind that they may not be able to make contact with the school immediately. They should reserve sufficient time to ensure that they make direct contact during the afternoon before the first day of the inspection.
25. If the headteacher is unavailable when the call is made to the school, the lead inspector should ask to speak to the most senior member of staff available. Once the lead inspector has spoken to the school and is able to confirm that the inspection will take place, s/he will inform the ISP, who will send formal confirmation to the school by email.
26. The telephone call is the first opportunity to initiate a professional relationship between the lead inspector and the headteacher. It should be short and focused on practical issues. Inspectors should not use this conversation to probe or investigate the school's self-evaluation.

27. The purpose of the lead inspector's notification call is to:
- inform the school of the inspection
 - make the school aware of its statutory duty to inform parents of the inspection, and that Parent View is the main vehicle for gathering the views of parents at the point of inspection; inspectors should remind the school that Ofsted's letter to parents containing the link to Parent View may be sent electronically as well as a paper copy sent via 'pupil post'
 - make arrangements for the inspection; this includes an invitation to the headteacher to participate in joint observations and main inspection team meetings
 - make arrangements for discussions with key staff
 - establish what the governance structure of the school or academy is,¹⁶ and make arrangements for a meeting with the chair of governors and/or representatives of those responsible for governance, and request that as many governors as possible are present at the feedback meeting
 - request either a face-to-face meeting or a telephone call with a representative from the local authority, academy chain or other relevant responsible body; this does not apply to stand-alone academy converters
 - request that, where possible, a representative from the local authority, academy chain or other relevant responsible body is present at the inspection feedback; this does not apply to stand-alone academy converters
 - request that relevant school documents are made available as soon as possible from the start of the inspection (see below)
 - provide an opportunity for the school to ask any questions
 - establish whether the school has any pupils who attend off-site alternative provision, either on a full- or part-time basis. Inspectors must ask the school about the registration status of any alternative providers that they use. Any provider of alternative provision must be registered as an independent school if it caters full-time for five or more pupils of compulsory school age, or one such pupil who is looked-after, or has a statement of special educational needs or disabilities (SEND)

¹⁶ This can be checked with the headteacher as part of the call. Where multi-academy trusts (MATs) have delegated responsibility to local governing bodies, this should be set out in a statement of delegation. Academies should also set out their governance structure in their annual statement of accounts, which can generally be accessed through the DfE performance tables site. Inspectors should clarify where responsibility lies and who they should talk with during the inspection, especially where a school is part of a MAT.

- establish whether the school has an off-site unit run by the school or in partnership with other schools
 - establish whether the school is either providing support for other schools or receiving it; if so, inspectors should include this information, giving the names of the school(s), in the 'school context' section of the report. This should include any such activity over the previous 12 months.
28. If the school has a special educational needs resource base delegated to it, or the local authority maintains direct responsibility for the period of time when the pupils in the provision are within mainstream classes at the school being inspected, the resource base must be inspected and inspectors must consider evidence about the resourced provision when making judgements about the school overall.
29. The lead inspector should obtain specific information about any resource base during the initial contact with the school, including:
- the number of pupils and the range of the needs catered for by the specially resourced provision, together with pupils' timetables, including when they are taught within mainstream classes (with and without support) and when they receive specialist support in separate resourced provision
 - the type/s of language/communication systems used; if the specialist provision is for deaf pupils, it is important to establish whether a British sign language interpreter is required when meeting with the pupils (the lead inspector should contact the ISP as soon as possible if this support is needed)
 - staffing arrangements and details of any outreach services provided by the resourced provision.
30. Inspectors should also request that the following information is made available at the start of the inspection:
- a summary of any school self-evaluation (if not already provided to the lead inspector)
 - the current school improvement plan
 - school timetable, current staff list and times for the school day
 - any information about pre-planned interruptions to normal school routines **during the inspection**
 - the single central record that summarises the checks and vetting of all staff working with pupils
 - all logs that record exclusions, pupils taken off roll, incidents of poor behaviour and racist incidents

- records and analysis of bullying, including racist, disability and homophobic bullying
- a list of referrals made to the designated person for safeguarding in the school and those that were subsequently referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer, along with brief details of the resolution
- up-to-date attendance records
- records of the evaluation of the quality of teaching, but inspectors should not expect to see records of graded lesson observations
- information about the school's performance management arrangements, including the most recent performance management outcomes and their relationship to salary progression; inspectors should make it clear that this must be provided in an anonymised format
- documented evidence of the work of governors¹⁷ and their impact
- any reports of external evaluation of the school, including any review of governance or pupil premium.

Requests for deferral or cancellation

31. If a school requests a deferral of its inspection, the lead inspector must immediately make Ofsted aware by contacting the Ofsted helpline number provided above at paragraph 12. Ofsted will decide whether this should be granted in accordance with its published policy on the deferral of inspections. The deferral policy makes clear that the absence of the headteacher is not normally a reason for deferring an inspection. If a school is within six months of confirmed closure, but the headteacher does not request a cancellation at the point of contact, the lead inspector should call the duty desk to highlight this and get advice as to whether the inspection should still be carried out. A decision will be made on a case by case basis.

During the inspection

The start of the on-site inspection

32. Inspectors must show their identity badges on arrival and ensure that the headteacher (or other senior member of staff) has been informed of their arrival.
33. The lead inspector should meet briefly with the headteacher and/or senior leadership team at the beginning of the inspection to:
 - introduce any team inspectors

¹⁷ 'Governors' refers to those responsible for governance in a school.

- make arrangements for a longer meeting at a convenient time with the headteacher to discuss the school's self-evaluation and other relevant matters
 - confirm arrangements for meetings with representatives of those responsible for the governance of the school and with key staff
 - confirm arrangements for providing feedback after lesson observations (see paragraphs 45 and 46)
 - request information about staff absence and other practical issues
 - ascertain whether there are particular reasons why any teachers should not be observed, for example where they are subject to performance management procedures
 - ensure that the headteacher is aware that Ofsted's evidence from lesson observations, whether joint or otherwise, should not be used as evidence in capability/disciplinary proceedings or for the purposes of performance management.
34. Where there is more than one inspector, a short team meeting should take place to clarify inspection activities, the initial areas to be explored and individual roles and responsibilities.

Gathering and recording evidence

35. Inspectors must spend as much time as possible gathering evidence on teaching and learning, observing in lessons, scrutinising work (including in pupils' books and folders), talking to pupils about their work, gauging both their understanding and their engagement in learning, and obtaining pupils' perceptions of typical teaching.
36. Inspectors must record their evidence clearly and legibly on evidence forms (EFs), ensuring that all relevant sections of the form are completed for all evidence-gathering activities. This includes records of analyses of data and the evidence that underpins key judgements. EFs should also be used to summarise the main points of discussion when feeding back to leaders and governors. Where an external review of governance and/or of the school's use of the pupil premium is recommended, these must also be recorded and coded on an EF.
37. EFs may be scrutinised for the purposes of retrieval and quality assurance monitoring and in the event of a complaint. It is important that inspectors record accurately the time spent gathering the evidence recorded on the EF. Inspectors should highlight or identify any information that was provided 'in confidence'.

Lesson observations

38. The key objectives of lesson observations are to inform the evaluation of the overall quality of teaching over time and its contribution to learning

and achievement, and to assess the behaviour and safety of pupils and the impact of leadership and management in the classroom. When inspectors carry out observations in lessons, **they should not grade the quality of teaching for that individual session** or indeed the overall quality of the lesson. Where there is sufficient evidence, inspectors will grade the other key judgements: achievement; behaviour and safety; and leadership and management. For short observations, inspectors might not award grades.

39. Inspectors must not advocate a particular method of planning, teaching or assessment. They will not look for a preferred methodology but must record aspects of teaching and learning that they consider are effective, and identify ways in which teaching and learning can be improved.
40. Through lesson observations and subsequent discussions with senior staff and teachers, inspectors should ensure that they:
 - judge the accuracy of teachers' and leaders' evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning
 - gather evidence about how well individual pupils and particular groups of pupils are learning, gaining knowledge and understanding, and making progress, including those who have special educational needs, those who are disadvantaged¹⁸ and the most able
 - collect sufficient evidence to support detailed and specific recommendations about any improvements needed to teaching and learning, behaviour and safety, and leadership and management.
41. Inspectors will not expect teachers to prepare lesson plans for the inspection. However, they will use the evidence gathered from lesson observations to help judge the overall quality of the school's curriculum.
42. Lead inspectors should use their professional judgement to plan appropriate observations. For example, inspectors may engage in:
 - short visits to a number of lessons, spending a few minutes in each
 - short observations of small group teaching, for example of phonics
 - lesson observations of more than 25 minutes, during which they may observe activities and talk with pupils about their work
 - tracking a class or specific group of pupils to assess their experience of a school day or part of a school day – inspectors may identify a class or classes that contain one or more pupils from the specific groups identified in the pre-inspection analysis. In this way, the

¹⁸ Throughout this document, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support.

experience, progress and learning of these pupils can be judged within the context of other pupils' experience.

43. Joint observations carried out with the headteacher and/or senior staff may be part of lesson observation within any of these approaches. Not all teachers will necessarily be observed. This will be the case in most secondary school and large primary school inspections.
44. The lead inspector should share the lesson observation strategy with the inspection team and ensure that the school clearly understands the rationale for it. Lesson observations should cover a range of subjects, key stages and ability groups. The school should not normally be informed in advance about the lessons to be observed.

Feedback and discussion with teachers and other staff

45. With the exception of joint observations, where feedback is given by the headteacher or senior member of staff, inspectors must offer feedback to teachers. In many cases, it may be more effective for inspectors to provide an evaluation of strengths and areas for improvement to teachers at programmed times. Therefore, feedback may, at the discretion of inspectors, take a variety of forms, such as one to one, with groups of observed teachers, or to whole staff groups.
46. When giving feedback to teachers following lesson observations, inspectors should not provide an overall grade for the lesson or for the quality of teaching (numerically or in words). If asked, inspectors should provide feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of what they have observed. Inspectors must ensure that this feedback does not constitute a view about whether the teacher is a 'good' teacher or otherwise, or indeed whether the quality of teaching itself was 'good' or otherwise, as neither of these will be graded. The feedback given is provided in confidence and staff should be clearly advised that it may not be used by the school for performance management purposes.

Participation of the headteacher or senior staff in joint lesson observations

47. The lead inspector should invite the headteacher or a senior member of staff to take part in joint lesson observations. After a joint observation, the inspector and headteacher or senior member of staff must discuss their views about the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning they have observed. This might include observing the headteacher or other senior member of staff feeding back to the observed teacher. The inspector should observe the feedback, as this may provide evidence about the standard of discussion about teacher practice in the school and the effectiveness of the school's arrangements for professional development and performance management. If the headteacher or senior member of staff offers a written record, the

inspector should consider this. Any differences in the analysis of the lesson and judgements of achievement or behaviour should be discussed. This will also enable the inspector to:

- assess the quality of the school's evaluation of teaching
 - collect evidence in order to make specific recommendations about further improvements to teaching and learning
 - discuss the effectiveness of the school's performance management arrangements and professional development programme for teaching staff
 - help the headteacher to understand the evaluations inspectors are making of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and how teaching might be improved.
48. The lead inspector should be mindful not to overload the headteacher and/or senior member of staff and should also be aware of the potential impact on pupils' behaviour of the presence of an additional member of staff in a classroom. The number of joint observations will be at the discretion of the lead inspector.
49. The inspector should complete an EF on the lesson observed and the feedback provided by the headteacher or senior member of staff. Any notes taken by the headteacher or senior member of staff should remain in the school; they should not be included within the evidence base for the inspection.

Inspecting the impact of the teaching of literacy including reading¹⁹

50. Literacy includes the key skills of reading, writing and oral communication that enable pupils to access different areas of the curriculum.
51. Inspectors will consider the impact of the teaching of literacy and the outcomes across the range of the school's provision. They will use the evidence they gather to inform the overall evaluation of pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching and the impact of leadership and management on raising standards. Inspectors will consider the extent to which the school intervenes to provide support for improving pupils' literacy, especially those pupils at risk of underachieving.
52. During the inspections of infant, junior, primary and middle schools, inspectors must listen to children reading; among others, they should

¹⁹ Please refer to:

Getting them reading early (110122), Ofsted 2011; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110122;
Reading, writing and communication (literacy) (110125), Ofsted 2011;
www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110125.

listen to lower-attaining pupils reading and should discuss their reading with them. Inspectors will hear the weakest readers in Key Stage 1 and later years. There may be occasions when inspectors need to hear lower-attaining pupils read in Years 7 and 8 in secondary schools. This is to find out how effectively the school is teaching reading to its weakest readers and to assess whether the pupils are equipped with the phonic strategies needed to tackle unfamiliar words.

53. Inspectors should decide which pupils they will listen to, taking into account the school's progress data on reading and other information such as lesson observations. Inspectors should hear children read from books that are appropriate to their age, including from previously unseen books.
54. Wherever possible, inspectors should listen to children reading within a classroom or in an open area with which pupils are familiar.

Inspecting the teaching of mathematics²⁰

55. When evaluating the effectiveness of a school's work in mathematics through the analysis of performance data, observations in lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work, inspectors will consider:
 - how well the school is identifying and tackling inconsistency in the quality of mathematics teaching between different groups of pupils, key stages, sets and classes, including those taught by non-specialist teachers of mathematics in secondary schools
 - how well teaching, in the mathematics lessons observed, through discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their work and by reviewing curriculum plans:
 - ensures that pupils acquire mathematical knowledge appropriate to their age and starting points, and enables them to recall it rapidly and apply it fluently and accurately, including when calculating efficiently and in applying arithmetic algorithms
 - fosters mathematical understanding of new concepts and methods
 - this includes teachers' explanations and the way they require pupils to think and reason mathematically for themselves
 - enables pupils to solve a variety of mathematical problems, applying the mathematical knowledge and skills they have been taught
 - how well pupils apply their mathematical knowledge and skills in other subjects in the curriculum, where appropriate.

²⁰ Please refer to *Mathematics: made to measure* (110159), Ofsted 2012; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110159.

Other observations

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

The use of data on inspection

57. Inspectors should use a range of data to judge a school's performance, including that found in RAISEonline, the school data dashboard, examination or key stage results where available, and internal assessments. No single measure or indicator determines judgements, particularly since much of the data may be historical and relate to pupils that have left the school.
58. The data, including that provided by the school, should be used to:
- check the accuracy of the school's assessment of pupils' progress and attainment, particularly where there are no externally marked test or examination results
 - check the robustness and accuracy of the school's self-evaluation, particularly on achievement, teaching, and behaviour and safety.
59. When considering performance data, inspectors should take account of specific groups such as looked after children and the most able.
60. Where numbers of pupils are small and achievement fluctuates considerably from year to year, inspectors should take into account individual circumstances when comparing with national figures, and should consider any available data of aggregate performance for consecutive cohorts.

New academies

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

62. When inspecting and reporting on academies, inspectors must have regard for their new legal status. Inspectors must take care not to include undue consideration of the progress and attainment in the predecessor school nor take account of the progress made by a new academy against the areas for improvement identified in the most recent inspection report of its predecessor school.
63. Although inspectors may take account of information relating to a predecessor school, either from a predecessor school inspection report or from another source such as RAISEonline, such information may only be used to inform the inspection of an academy during the period from the date on which the academy was established. However, information or data relating to a predecessor school may be used to inform the evidence base that is gathered during the inspection of the academy in order to enhance inspectors' understanding about the performance of an academy; for example, whether the academy, since its establishment has:
- improved, consolidated or is responsible for a decline in the performance of pupils using the predecessor school performance as baseline
 - tackled any areas of weakness or built on areas of strength.
64. Inspectors should make clear to academies the extent to which they can take account of the performance data that pertains to predecessor schools.
65. For the first section 5 inspection of the school since it became an academy, the report should say 'not previously inspected as an academy'. However, for the first section 5 inspection of a converter academy, this must be explained in the context section. To ensure consistency, all first section 5 inspection reports for academy converter schools must include a factual explanation in the context section that follows the example below:
- 'Kingsway Academy converted to become an academy school on 1 September 2012. When its predecessor school, Kingsway Secondary School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be satisfactory overall.'
66. By doing this Ofsted will ensure that the appropriate context is provided to readers, and that reporting is both consistent and transparent for all academy converter schools.
67. Judgements made in a predecessor report are judgements about that school. They are not judgements about a converter academy. No reference should be made to key judgements in the inspection report for

the predecessor school nor to the 'areas for improvement' from the predecessor school's inspection.

Meetings with pupils, parents, staff and other stakeholders

68. Inspectors **must** take advantage of opportunities to gather evidence from a wide range of pupils, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, those who are disadvantaged, those who are receiving other forms of support and the most able. This can be gathered, for example, in formal meetings and informally before and after school, at lunchtime and during break or play times. During informal conversations with pupils, inspectors must ask them about their experiences of learning and behaviour in the school, including bullying. When engaging with pupils in lessons, inspectors should be mindful not to disrupt the flow of teaching and any activities taking place.
69. As well as meeting pupils, inspectors should usually conduct meetings with:
 - parents (these may be informal at the start and end of the day)
 - staff
 - other stakeholders.
70. These meetings must take place without the presence of the headteacher or senior staff. In drawing on evidence from meetings with pupils, parents, staff and other stakeholders, every endeavour must be made not to identify individuals. There may, however, be circumstances in which it is not possible to guarantee the anonymity of the interviewee. Inspectors have a duty to pass on disclosures that raise child protection or safeguarding issues and/or where there are concerns about serious misconduct or criminal activity.

Meeting with governors

71. Inspectors will always seek to meet with governors, or members of the school's local board, the trustees of a multi-academy trust (where there is no local governing body) committee or other authority where schools are combined in managed groups, federations or chains, during the course of the inspection.
72. Inspectors will expect governors to know about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Inspectors will expect school governors to be familiar with, and understand, performance data, including the information that the school data dashboard presents for their school.
73. The contribution of governors to the school is evaluated as part of the judgement on leadership and management. As with the meetings between inspectors and pupils, parents and staff, meetings with

governors should take place without the presence of the headteacher or senior staff.

Reviewing evidence from registered parents and other stakeholders

74. Inspectors will review the evidence from Parent View and any other evidence from parents throughout the inspection, to ensure that all online responses received during the inspection are taken into account. Where individual parents raise serious issues, these should be followed up with the school and the school's response recorded.
75. Inspectors must also have regard to the views of pupils and staff, including those provided through the staff questionnaire, when making their judgements. Data from surveys of pupils or staff should be corroborated with other evidence where possible.
76. During integrated inspections of boarding or residential special schools, social care inspectors will take account of the views that parents have given on Parent View about the school's boarding or residential provision. Views of boarders or residential pupils and boarding staff will have been gathered through Ofsted's annual point-in-time surveys.²¹

Inspecting partnerships and off-site provision

77. Inspectors may wish to speak to key partners who work with the school. They should make every effort to telephone or meet with those institutions where pupils are taught off-site to help assess the school's quality assurance arrangements. They must evaluate the rigour with which the school monitors the attendance, behaviour, learning and progress of pupils attending alternative provision.
78. Units dealing with pupils' behaviour may exist away from the school site, but be **run by the school**. Sometimes, this provision may be shared by one or more schools. It is important to find out how this is monitored and evaluated on a day-to-day basis and over time. An inspector should visit the unit briefly to assess safeguarding procedures, the quality of teaching and how effectively the unit helps to improve pupils' behaviour, learning and attendance. The visit should be proportionate to the number of pupils who attend and the length of time they spend there. Inspectors should bear in mind that this can be full-time provision for a number of pupils over several weeks, so it is important to evaluate it thoroughly. (Note: this is not the same as off-site alternative provision that is run by another agency.)

²¹ See *Conducting inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools* (100180), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100180.

79. Where special schools or pupil referral units (PRUs) use **alternative provision**, inspectors must visit a sample of the placements during the course of the inspection, in addition to evaluating the areas outlined above. The lead inspector should ask the headteacher to provide details of all the provision used by the school or PRU. Priority should be given to visiting unregistered providers and evaluating how the school assures itself of, for example, safeguarding and attendance.

Performance management and professional development

80. Inspectors should consider how effectively senior leaders use performance management and the school's self-evaluation (if available) to focus professional development activities. This should include:
- how effectively the school is developing its middle and senior leaders and planning for succession
 - an analysis of the impact of professional development on teaching overall and on specific teachers
 - scrutiny of anonymised information on the performance management of teaching staff, and its relationship to salary progression, that is given to governors
 - information about the performance management of the headteacher
 - information provided during discussions with the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders and other staff
 - scrutiny of the school's records of how leaders and managers evaluate the quality of teaching
 - evidence of improvements in teaching over time and improvement in systems for tracking, monitoring and analysing the impact of teaching on progress
 - scrutiny of the school's records on, and evaluation of, professional development
 - an analysis of information from staff questionnaires, where available.
81. Inspectors should meet with as many newly qualified teachers (NQTs) as possible. Inspectors must assess the effectiveness of the support and professional development put in place for NQTs and other teachers who are in the early stages of their careers, particularly in dealing with pupil behaviour. This must include the quality of mentoring, and what the school has done to support their development in areas for improvement identified by initial teacher training providers.

How the headteacher or representative is involved in the inspection

82. The lead inspector should meet the headteacher periodically throughout the inspection to:

- provide an update on emerging issues, including initial general findings about teaching and learning, and to enable further evidence to be provided
 - allow the headteacher to raise concerns, including those related to the conduct of the inspection or of individual inspectors
 - alert the headteacher to any serious concerns.
83. The outcomes of all meetings with the headteacher should be recorded on EFs.
84. The lead inspector must ensure that the executive headteacher, where such arrangements exist, is invited to make a contribution to the inspection.

Team meetings held during the inspection

85. The inspection team should meet briefly at different points during the course of the inspection. In particular, the team should:
- meet briefly at lunchtime on day one
 - meet at the end of day one to discuss emerging findings (the headteacher should be invited)
 - meet at the end of day two to finalise judgements and identify areas for improvement (the headteacher should be invited)
 - record the outcomes of all team meetings on EFs.
86. If, by the end of day one, there is evidence that the school may be judged as 'inadequate', the lead inspector should alert the headteacher to this possibility. It **must** be emphasised that final judgements are not made until the final team meeting at the end of day two.

Reaching final judgements

87. Inspection activity, including observations of teaching and learning, should continue throughout the second day. The team should also ensure that time is set aside to complete any feedback to staff and to prepare for the final team meeting and the final feedback. There should also be sufficient time planned for the team to meet, to consider the evidence available and make final judgements. Final judgement grades should be recorded and key points for feedback should be identified as the meeting progresses.

Providing feedback to the school

88. Following the end of the inspection, there must be a feedback meeting that should include the headteacher, the chair of the governing body and at least one other governor, wherever possible. The feedback

meeting should include as many representatives from the governing body, or those responsible for governance, as possible. In the case of an academy with no delegated governance functions, the feedback meeting should include at least one representative of the board of trustees from the multi-academy trust, where possible. It is for the lead inspector to decide, following discussion with the headteacher, whether other senior staff should be present. A representative from the local authority and/or the designated responsible body should be invited by the headteacher.

89. The lead inspector should explain to those present that the purpose of the feedback session is to share the main findings of the inspection and recommendations for improvement. The lead inspector must make clear that inspection outcomes are restricted and confidential to the relevant senior personnel (as determined by the school) and that they must remain so until the school receives the final report. Governors and local authority representatives may seek clarification about the judgements. An EF should be completed by an inspector summarising the key points raised at the feedback and how these were addressed.
90. In the event that the headteacher has declined or has been unable to take up the opportunities to engage with the inspection team, the lead inspector should prepare a more extended formal feedback meeting. In such circumstances, the lead inspector should inform the headteacher of the main findings in advance of the extended formal feedback meeting.
91. Where the school is judged as requires improvement, inspectors should indicate that Ofsted has published a report, 'Getting to good: how headteachers achieve success',²² that sets out the strategies used in schools that have moved from satisfactory to good or outstanding. Inspectors should also direct schools to the guidance on 'Monitoring visits and support for schools that require improvement'.²³
92. Before leaving, the lead inspector must ensure that the school is clear:
 - about the grades awarded for each key judgement
 - that the grades are provisional and may be subject to change as a result of quality assurance procedures or moderation and must, therefore, be treated as restricted and confidential to the relevant senior personnel (as determined by the school); they must not be shared under any circumstances; information about the inspection outcomes should only be shared when the school receives a copy of the final inspection report

²² *Getting to good: how headteachers achieve success* (120167), Ofsted, 2012; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120167.

²³ *Monitoring visits and support for schools that require improvement in order to become good or outstanding* (120319), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120319.

- that the main findings of the inspection and the main points provided orally in the feedback, subject to any change, will be referred to in the text of the report
- about the recommendations for improvement, and the reasons for recommending an external review of governance and/or an external review of the use of the pupil premium
- that, on receipt of the draft report, it must ensure that the report remains restricted and confidential to the relevant senior personnel (as determined by the school) and that the information contained within it is not shared with any third party or published under any circumstances
- that it is invited and encouraged to complete the post-inspection survey
- about the implications of the school being placed in a category of concern where this is relevant
- whether, where a school requires special measures, newly qualified teachers may be appointed²⁴
- about the procedure for making a complaint about the inspection.

Integrated inspections of education and boarding or residential provision

93. In boarding or residential special schools, the social care inspector begins to inspect in the afternoon of the preparation day of the inspection and must use 'boarding time' during the first evening to talk to young people in the boarding or residential accommodation.
94. Lead inspectors are advised to consider the timing of team meetings in schools with residential provision so that the social care inspector is available to join those meetings. It is important that their findings contribute to all key and overall judgements about the school.
95. Inspectors must work closely together to plan sufficient time to discuss their findings throughout the inspection. The lead education inspector should join the social care inspector during boarding time so that they can gain a full picture of provision at the school. This is particularly important in assessing behaviour and safety and the strength of the links between the day school and boarding provision. Further details can

²⁴ In the case of an academy made subject to special measures, the lead inspector will make a recommendation on whether or not the academy may appoint newly qualified teachers.

be found in 'Conducting inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools'.²⁵

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

96. The inspection of education in a school that is also registered as a children's home may take place as a stand-alone inspection of the education provision or be aligned with the full inspection of the children's home.²⁶ Where possible, Ofsted will attempt to align both inspections so that inspectors may work together and share evidence.
97. Where the education inspection takes place as a stand-alone event, inspectors must read the most recent education and children's home reports on the preparation day. They must make themselves aware of any current issues concerning children's welfare that may affect aspects of the school inspection, and ensure that they take these into consideration during the inspection.
98. Where the education and children's homes inspections are aligned, the education and social care inspectors should work together to share evidence, for example about outcomes. Further details are provided in the 'Non-association independent school inspection handbook'.²⁷

Schools causing concern

99. All schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be inadequate (those that have serious weaknesses or require special measures) will be deemed to be in a formal category of concern. Schools judged as requires improvement are not deemed to be causing concern.

Procedures for judging a school as inadequate

100. If, by the end of the first day of the inspection, the lead inspector thinks it is possible that the school's overall effectiveness is inadequate and that it will be judged to have serious weaknesses or to require special measures, s/he must ring Ofsted's Schools causing concern helpdesk.

²⁵ *Conducting inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools* (100180), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100180.

²⁶ All registered children's homes will have at least two inspections in a year. At least one of these will be a full inspection, and the children's homes may also be subject to an interim inspection. All inspections are conducted in line with the *Inspection of children's homes, Framework for inspection from April 2014* (100195), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100195.

²⁷ *Non-association independent school inspection handbook* (140053), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/non-association-independent-school-inspection-handbook

101. To ring the helpdesk, inspectors should use the hotline number 0300 123 4234 (and choose option 1). When the call is answered, the lead inspector should use the following form of words: 'I am an inspector leading an inspection in a school and I would like to talk to the schools causing concern duty HMI'. The lead inspector will be asked for her/his name and the name and unique reference number (URN) of the school, and will then be put through to the duty HMI, with whom s/he will be able to talk through the evidence to support the inspector(s) in reaching an emerging judgement. The judgement is of course not confirmed at this point. The inspector should record the key points of the conversation on an evidence form.
102. During the second day of the inspection, the lead inspector may contact the helpline again to discuss emerging findings. When the inspection team has made the final judgement and if it is that the school has serious weaknesses or requires special measures, the lead inspector must telephone the helpline prior to the oral feedback and use the form of words indicated in the previous paragraph. The lead inspector should be prepared to explain briefly the reasons and underpinning evidence for the judgement.

Serious weaknesses

103. A school is judged to require significant improvement where it has serious weaknesses because one or more of the key judgements is inadequate (grade 4) and/or there are important weaknesses in the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, normally, leaders, managers and governors have been assessed as having the capacity to secure improvement.

Special measures

104. A school requires special measures if:
- it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and
 - the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.²⁸

Informing a school that it is deemed to be causing concern

105. If a school is deemed to require special measures or has been judged to have serious weaknesses or is being removed from a category of concern, inspectors must use the following words during the feedback, indicating that the overall effectiveness judgement is subject to

²⁸ As set out under section 44 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended).

moderation by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and, in the case of special measures, agreement by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI).

- Where the school has serious weaknesses:

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

- Where the school requires special measures:

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

- When an inspection team judges that a school which was previously subject to special measures no longer requires special measures:

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

- When an inspection team judges that a school previously judged to have serious weaknesses no longer has serious weaknesses:²⁹

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

Implications for a school causing concern

106. If a school is judged to be causing concern, the timescale for publication of the report is extended so that the judgements can be moderated and, in the case of those schools judged to require special measures, confirmed either by HMCI or a Regional Director on his behalf.

107. Schools judged to have serious weaknesses will be subject to monitoring and provided with support and will normally be inspected within 18 months of the most recent section 5 inspection.

²⁹ This also applies to schools given a notice to improve before 1 September 2012.

108. Schools judged to require special measures will be subject to regular monitoring and provided with support. The timing of the next section 5 inspection will be determined by the rate of improvement of the school, but will normally take place no later than 24 months after the section 5 inspection at which the school was judged to require special measures.

Reporting on evidence or allegations of child abuse

109. On a very small number of occasions, inspectors may come across evidence or ongoing allegations of child abuse within a school. Inspectors should consult 'Inspecting safeguarding in maintained schools and academies'.³⁰ Inspectors should not attempt to investigate the incident.

After the inspection

Arrangements for publication of the report

110. For schools judged as requires improvement, good or outstanding, the ISP will forward the report to the school for a factual accuracy check shortly after the end of the inspection. A letter will accompany the draft report to remind the school that the draft report is restricted and confidential to the relevant personnel (as determined by the school) and that the information contained within it should not be shared or published under any circumstances. A similar letter will accompany the draft report for schools judged as inadequate.
111. Schools judged as requires improvement, good or outstanding will normally be given one working day to respond and provide any comment on the draft report. The lead inspector will respond to the school's comments about factual accuracy.³¹
112. Schools judged as requires improvement, good or outstanding will normally receive an electronic version of the final report within 15 working days of the end of the on-site inspection.
113. For schools judged as inadequate, the ISP will forward the report to the school for a factual accuracy check shortly after the end of the inspection (the draft report is restricted and confidential, as outlined in paragraph 92). The school has five working days to respond. The lead inspector will respond to the school's comments about factual accuracy.

³⁰ *Inspecting safeguarding in maintained schools and academies* (140143), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140143.

³¹ If there should be a grade change or the text of a report has been subject to significant amendments made after the school has completed its factual accuracy check, the lead inspector should talk this through with the headteacher.

114. Schools judged to be inadequate will normally receive an electronic version of the final report within 28 working days of the end of the on-site inspection.
115. Once a school has received its final report, it is required to take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that every registered parent of a registered pupil at the school receives a copy of the report within five working days.³² After that time, the report will be published on Ofsted's website.

The evidence base for the inspection

116. The evidence base for the inspection must be retained for the period of time specified in Ofsted's 'Handling and retention of inspection evidence' guidance.³³

Quality assurance and complaints

How are inspections quality assured?

117. Responsibility for assuring the quality of the inspection and the subsequent report lies with Ofsted. The lead inspector is expected to set clear expectations for the team and ensure that those expectations are met. The lead inspector must ensure that all judgements are supported by evidence and that the way in which the inspection is conducted meets the expected standard.
118. All inspections are subject to internal quality assurance and some are quality assured by HMI and/or senior ISP managers. When an external quality assurance visit is scheduled, the lead inspector should explain clearly the purpose and likely format of the visit during the initial telephone conversation with the headteacher.

What happens if a school has a concern or complaint during the inspection?

119. If a school raises a concern or complaint during the course of an inspection, the lead inspector should seek to resolve it. It is often easier to resolve issues on the spot and this helps to avoid formal complaints later.
120. The publication of an inspection report will only be delayed by a complaint where there are exceptional circumstances.

³² Under section 14(4)© of the Education Act 2005 (as amended).

³³ *Handling and retention of inspection evidence (100122)*, Ofsted, 2010; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100122.

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

121. The evaluation schedule sets out the sources of evidence and grade descriptors that guide inspectors in judging the quality of education provided by the schools they inspect. The schedule is not exhaustive and does not replace the professional judgement of inspectors. Inspectors make their judgements by using professional expertise to interpret the evidence in the light of the guidance and within the context of each school.
122. The evaluation schedule must be used in conjunction with the guidance set out in Part 1 of this document – ‘How schools will be inspected’. Inspectors must interpret grade descriptors in relation to pupils’ age, stage and phase of education.

Judging overall effectiveness: the quality of education provided in the school

123. Inspectors must judge the **overall effectiveness** of the school; this is the **final and overarching judgement** and it is explained in the next section.
124. Inspectors should **first** make the key judgements on:
- the behaviour and safety of pupils at the school
 - the quality of teaching in the school
 - the achievement of pupils at the school.
125. In coming to each of these key judgements, inspectors will also draw on evidence from inspection of any **early years or sixth form provision** and consider its impact.
126. Inspectors should then judge **the effectiveness** of any early years or sixth form provision. For either (or both) cases, inspectors must report a numerical grade and write sections in the inspection report that summarise the key findings and explain the effectiveness grading. Early years and sixth form provision grades may be higher or lower than the overall effectiveness grade; inspectors should explain any variation between the grades in the report text. The early years and sixth form provision grades may not determine, but could influence, the key judgements, including on leadership and management, and in turn the school’s overall effectiveness.
127. Inspectors then make the key judgement on the quality of leadership in and management of the school. In making this judgement, inspectors must take into proportionate account any significant issues in the quality

of early years or sixth form provision that may reflect on the quality of leadership and management of the school as a whole.

128. Before making the final judgement on the overall effectiveness, inspectors must also evaluate:
- the effectiveness and impact of the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
 - the extent to which the education provided by the school meets the needs of the range of pupils at the school and in particular the needs of:
 - pupils who have a disability for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010
 - pupils who have special educational needs.
129. Inspection is primarily about evaluating how well individual pupils benefit from the education provided by their school. It is important to test the school's response to individual needs by observing how well it helps all pupils to make progress and fulfil their potential. It may be relevant to pay particular attention to the achievement of:
- disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs
 - those with protected characteristics, including Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children,³⁴ as defined by the Equality Act 2010
 - boys
 - girls
 - the highest and lowest attainers
 - disadvantaged pupils, including:
 - looked after children³⁵
 - pupils known to be eligible for free school meals – a school is unlikely to be judged outstanding if these pupils are not making at least good progress
 - those attending alternative provision.

³⁴ Pupils with protected characteristics and other groups of pupils may include: pupils for whom English is an additional language; minority ethnic pupils; Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils; lesbian, gay and bisexual pupils; transgender pupils; young carers; and other vulnerable groups.

³⁵ In April 2014, eligibility for pupil premium funding was extended to looked after children who have been looked after for one day or more and children who were adopted from care or left care under a Special Guardianship Order or a Child Arrangements Order.

130. In judging the school's overall effectiveness, inspectors consider whether:

- the standard of education is good (grade 2), or exceeds this standard sufficiently to be judged outstanding (grade 1)
- the school requires improvement as it is not a good school because one or more of the four key judgements requires improvement (grade 3) and/or there are weaknesses in the overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- the school is inadequate (grade 4) and, if so, whether it has serious weaknesses or requires special measures.

Defining spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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

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

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

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

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

- use of a range of social skills in different contexts, including working and socialising with pupils from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds
- willingness to participate in a variety of communities and social settings, including by volunteering, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively
- acceptance and engagement with the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; the pupils develop

and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

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

- understanding and appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage and that of others
- understanding and appreciation of the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of their preparation for life in modern Britain
- knowledge of Britain's democratic parliamentary system and its central role in shaping our history and values, and in continuing to develop Britain
- willingness to participate in and respond positively to artistic, sporting and cultural opportunities
- interest in exploring, improving understanding of and showing respect for different faiths and cultural diversity, and the extent to which they understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity, as shown by their tolerance and attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities.

Reviews of governance and/or use of the pupil premium

135. Where governance is judged to be ineffective, inspectors should include an external review of governance in their recommendations for improvement. The form of words to be used in the report under 'What the school should do to improve further' is:

'An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.'

136. It is for the school to decide how this review will take place, and to commission and pay for it. Such reviews aim to be developmental and do not represent a further inspection. Full details on what might be the form and nature of such reviews can be found on the following link: www.gov.uk/reviews-of-school-governance.

137. Where the inspection report identifies specific issues regarding the provision for disadvantaged pupils, inspectors should recommend an external review on the school's use of the pupil premium. The form of words to be used is:

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

138. In such instances, inspectors should advise that the school seeks support from an independent, external system leader with a track record of accelerating disadvantaged pupils' achievement. Full details on what might be the form and nature of such reviews can be found on the following link: www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-reviews.
139. Although inspectors may recommend either a review of the use of the pupil premium or of governance, it is expected that there will be many cases where inspectors will judge it appropriate to recommend both an external review of governance and an external review of the school's use of the pupil premium.
140. The review's impact will be assessed and reported on by inspectors conducting subsequent monitoring visits and the next section 5 inspection. If the governing body has not undertaken a review by the time of the next section 8 or section 5 inspection, inspectors may take account of this when evaluating the progress made by the school.

Grade descriptors – overall effectiveness: the quality of education provided in the school

Note: These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach that relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team. The exception is that teaching must be outstanding for overall effectiveness to be outstanding.

The quality of any early years or sixth form provision should be taken into account as explained in paragraphs 126 and 127.

Outstanding (1)

- Teaching is outstanding and, together with a rich, relevant, broad and balanced curriculum, contributes to outstanding learning and achievement, significant growth in pupils' knowledge, and excellent attitudes to learning. Exceptionally, achievement may be good and rapidly improving.
- Pupils and particular groups of pupils have excellent educational experiences at school and these ensure that they are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
- There is excellent practice that ensures that all pupils have high levels of literacy and mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills appropriate to their age.³⁶
- The school's practice consistently reflects the highest expectations of staff and the highest aspirations for pupils, including the most able, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Best practice is spread effectively in a drive for continuous improvement.
- Other principal aspects of the school's work are good or outstanding.
- The school's thoughtful and wide-ranging promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their physical well-being enables them to thrive in a supportive, highly cohesive learning community.

Good (2)

- Pupils benefit from teaching that is at least good. This leads to substantial growth in pupils' knowledge, promotes very positive attitudes to learning and ensures that pupils are achieving well.
- Pupils and particular groups of pupils have highly positive educational experiences at school that ensure that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment.
- Pupils' progress is not held back by an inability to read accurately and fluently, or to use their mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills effectively. Those pupils who have fallen behind are being helped to make substantial and sustained progress in their reading.
- The school takes effective action to enable most pupils, including the most able, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, to reach their potential.
- Other principal aspects of the school's work are likely to be at least good.
- Deliberate and effective action is taken to create a cohesive learning community through the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and their physical well-being. There is a positive climate for learning.

³⁶ Pupils whose cognitive ability is such that their literacy skills are likely to be limited make excellent progress appropriate to their age and capabilities.

Requires improvement (3)

- The school requires improvement because one or more of the four key judgements requires improvement (grade 3) and/or there are weaknesses in the overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Inadequate (4)

The school is likely to be inadequate if inspectors judge **any** of the following to be inadequate:

- the achievement of pupils
 - pupils' progress in literacy
 - the quality of teaching
 - the behaviour and safety of pupils
 - the quality of the leadership in and management of the school
- and/or
- there are serious weaknesses in the overall promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development or their physical well-being, so that pupils are intolerant of others and/or reject any of the core values fundamental to life in modern Britain.

Quality of leadership in and management of the school

141. Inspection must examine the impact of leaders at all levels, including governors, and evaluate how efficiently and effectively the school is led and managed. This should include considering the implications of any strengths or weaknesses in early years or sixth form provision. Where schools are making a contribution that seeks to improve the performance of other schools, this will be noted by inspectors but should not inform the judgement on the leadership and management.
142. Inspectors should pay particular attention to the contribution being made by the headteacher and ensure that they give sufficient credit where a headteacher is bringing about improvement in the school.
143. Many schools are cooperating as groups, federations or chains, with an overarching board and chief executive officer that assume some of the responsibilities formerly shouldered by the individual school governing body. Commonly, this infrastructure is supported by a portion of the budget of each member school. In the case of such extended management arrangements, inspectors should seek evidence of the impact of the overarching board and its staff as well as the school's local board, committee or governing body.
144. Where children's centres are managed directly by the school governing body, section 5 inspectors will need to consider the impact of any judgements about the children's centre or the services and activities offered through or by the centre that might contribute to judgements on the school's leadership and management.
145. Inspectors should be mindful of a school's obligations under the Equalities Act 2010 and, in particular, the protected characteristics. Where a school chooses, in exceptional circumstances, to segregate lessons, assemblies and other activities on the basis of, for example, gender or disability, there must be good educational reasons for doing so. The school will need to justify these reasons - for example on the basis of improved achievement for all pupils. It is important for inspectors to explore the educational reasons for any segregation and to talk to pupils about it.
146. Inspectors should consider how well leaders, managers and governors **pursue excellence, modelling professional standards in all of their work** - for example through:
- the creation of a culture of high expectations and aspirations and scholastic excellence in which the highest achievement in academic work is recognised as vitally important
 - having the highest expectations for social behaviour among the pupils and staff, so that respect and courtesy are the norm

- the rigorous implementation of well-focused improvement plans that are based on robust self-evaluation
- the consistent application of policies and procedures, in particular in relation to reading, writing, mathematics and behaviour
- the extent to which pupils, parents and staff are committed to the vision and ambition of leaders, managers and governors
- the establishment of an orderly and hardworking school community.

147. Inspectors should consider the effectiveness of **monitoring and evaluation** and the extent to which it is shared with governors. This includes monitoring and evaluation of:

- the quality of teaching and the achievement and progress of all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, relative to other schools nationally
- the performance of the school, including, if applicable, the school's sixth form provision and/or early years provision
- the satisfaction levels of pupils and their parents
- how effectively the school uses the primary school PE and Sport Premium to improve the quality and breadth of PE and sport provision, including increasing participation in PE and sport so that all pupils develop healthy lifestyles and reach the performance levels they are capable of. The effectiveness must be recorded and coded on an evidence form, and summarised in the inspection report.

148. Inspectors should evaluate how well leaders use formative and summative **assessment** to ensure that pupils, teachers and parents know if pupils are achieving the expected standard or if they need to catch up. Inspectors should consider how well:

- assessment information, including test results, is used by leaders and governors to improve teaching and the curriculum
- leaders ensure the accuracy of assessment through internal and external standardisation and moderation
- schools adopt the best practice of working together to moderate assessment for year groups and the end of key stages, and come to a common understanding of attainment and share records at points of transfer (within the context of the revised common transfer file).

149. In evaluating the effectiveness of reporting on pupils' progress and achievements, inspectors will assess the way the school reports on the progress and attainment of pupils to parents and carers. Inspectors will consider whether reports help parents to understand how well their children are doing in relation to any standards expected and how they can improve.

150. Inspectors see a range of curricula across schools. Schools may develop their own curriculum to respond to the particular needs of their pupils and ensure that they all achieve their potential. Inspectors should verify that good teaching within a broad and balanced curriculum, accompanied by effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is helping to prepare children and young people for life in modern Britain.
151. The statutory requirement from 1 September 2014 is for maintained schools to teach the relevant national curriculum³⁷ programmes of study by the end of the key stage. (Academies and free schools do not have to teach the national curriculum.) Schools can teach the elements in the programmes of study in any order, even where they are written for separate year groups.
152. Inspectors should consider how well leadership and management ensure that the curriculum:
- is broad and balanced, complies with legislation and provides a wide range of subjects, preparing pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life in modern Britain; inspectors should not expect to see a particular range of subjects but should be alert to any unexplained narrowness in the breadth of curriculum being offered by the school
 - actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
 - focuses on the necessary priorities for ensuring that all pupils make excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics
 - promotes high levels of achievement and good behaviour
 - links to the school's system of assessment and that together they set out what pupils are expected to know, understand and do, and when
 - information about what is taught in the curriculum each year is shared with parents and carers, including by meeting the statutory requirement to make curriculum information available on the school's website
 - promotes tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith), cultures and lifestyles through the effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, including through the extent to which schools engage their pupils in extra-curricular activity and volunteering within their local community

³⁷ The national curriculum is disapplied in 2014/15 in English, mathematics and science for Years 2, 6, 10 and 11; in 2015/16 in English, mathematics and science in Year 11, and in science in Year 10; and in 2016/17 in science in Year 11.

- is effectively planned and taught
 - does not compromise pupils' achievement, success or progression by inappropriate early or multiple entry to public examinations, for example in mathematics
 - includes a balanced approach to the pupils' RE that is broadly Christian but, where required, takes account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Britain (see paragraphs 14–18)
 - includes a rounded programme of assemblies that help to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, providing clear guidance on what is right and what is wrong
 - is based at Key Stage 4 on a balance between academic and vocational courses that is appropriate for the pupils
 - fully meets the requirements of the 16–19 study programmes and takes account of course completion rates and the needs of learners.
153. Inspectors should consider how effectively pupils are grouped within lessons and across year groups. For example:
- where pupils are taught in mixed ability groups/classes, inspectors will consider whether the most able are stretched and the least able are supported sufficiently to reach their full potential
 - where pupils are taught in sets, inspectors will consider how leaders ensure that pupils in lower sets are not disadvantaged or that teachers take into account that pupils within a set may still have very different needs.
154. Inspectors should explore:
- the extent to which the school has developed and implemented a strategy for ensuring that all pupils in Years 8 to 13 receive effective **careers guidance**
 - the impact of this guidance in helping young people to make informed choices about their next steps
 - how well the school meets the needs of all vulnerable groups of pupils, including reducing the numbers who do not continue to education, employment or training
 - how well the school works with families to support them in overcoming the cultural obstacles that often stand in the way of the most able pupils from deprived backgrounds attending university.
155. Inspectors should consider how well leaders and managers demonstrate the capacity to bring about further improvement. Good intentions and an aspirational outlook or a recent change of headteacher following a period of poor leadership do not in themselves provide sufficient proof of

the capacity for further improvement. For example, inspectors should take account of:

- a track record of improvements in achievement and/or maintenance of high levels of achievement, with particular reference to disadvantaged pupils
- improvements in the quality of teaching over time or the maintenance of good and outstanding teaching
- rigorous self-evaluation that underpins actions and plans that are focused accurately on the areas requiring improvement
- how effectively the school works in partnership with other schools, early years providers, external agencies and the community (including business) to improve the school, extend the curriculum and increase the range and quality of learning opportunities for pupils
- how effectively the school engages with and promotes the confidence of parents, including how well the school gathers, understands and responds to the views of parents.

156. Inspectors should consider the quality of **middle leadership** in the school and:

- the extent to which schools are adequately developing their middle leadership
- the succession planning and development of future leaders in the school.

157. Inspectors should consider the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements to ensure that there is safe recruitment and that all pupils are safe.³⁸ This includes the:

- maintenance of the single central record and appropriate arrangements for child protection
- rigour with which pupil absence is followed up, including appropriate checks when pupils cease attending
- effectiveness with which a school identifies any pupils who may be at risk, using a case study approach based on concerns about individual pupils that may have originated either inside or outside the school
- decision-making process involved in taking pupils off roll
- action taken following any serious incident

³⁸ For full details, see *Inspecting safeguarding in maintained schools and academies*, Ofsted, 2014: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140143.

- effectiveness of the arrangements for safeguarding pupils who are educated wholly or partly off-site at a unit run by the school or at alternative provision
- approach to keeping pupils safe from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism, and what is done when it is suspected that pupils are vulnerable to these
- promotion of safe practices and a culture of safety, including e-safety.

158. When evaluating the effectiveness of leaders, managers and governors, inspectors should gather evidence about the **use of the pupil premium** in relation to the following key issues:

- the level of pupil premium funding received by the school in the current academic year and levels of funding received in previous academic years³⁹
- how the school has spent the pupil premium and why it has decided to spend it in the way it has
- any differences made to the learning and progress of disadvantaged pupils as shown by performance data and inspection evidence.

159. In reaching their judgement on leadership and management, inspectors should consider the school's use of **performance management** and effectiveness of strategies for improving teaching, including the extent to which the school takes account of the 'Teachers' Standards'.⁴⁰ This is demonstrated through:

- the effectiveness of procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, and the extent to which underperformance is tackled
- a strong link between performance management, appraisal and salary progression
- how well the headteacher/principal and, where relevant, other senior staff are managing staff performance and using the staff budget to differentiate appropriately between high and low performers; however, inspectors should not consider or report on any individual's performance or on whether the school's evaluation of the quality of

³⁹ Since April 2014, the grant allocation for looked after children must be managed by the designated virtual school head in the local authority that looks after those children, whose responsibilities are set out at: www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-virtual-school-heads-responsibilities.

⁴⁰ Academies are not required to apply the 'Teachers Standards' as part of their performance management arrangements. However, inspectors should examine closely how the academy promotes high quality teaching through its performance management and professional development arrangements.

teaching of an individual is accurately reflected in that individual's progression on the salary spine

- the coherence and effectiveness of the programme of professional development, and the opportunities provided for promotion; particular attention should be given to the extent to which professional development is based on the identified needs of staff and the induction needs of NQTs and teachers at an early stage of their career, and the involvement and impact of school leaders
- the accuracy with which best practice is identified, modelled and shared.

160. Where teachers' performance is less than good, inspectors will seek evidence that this is rigorously managed and that appropriate training and support are provided. Where teachers' performance is good, inspectors will expect to see evidence that this is recognised through the performance management process.

161. Inspectors should ask the headteacher for anonymised information about performance management, appraisal and salary progression from the last three years. Inspectors should take account of the particular concerns of those working in small schools. The information provided should include information about patterns of progression through the different salary scale points, and comparisons between subject departments and/or teachers deployed in different key stages. In all cases, the information provided:

- must be recorded in such a way that individual members of staff are not identified on inspectors' evidence forms or in inspection reports
- must not leave the school site
- must not be sent to inspectors electronically.

162. Inspectors should compare this with the overall quality of teaching and determine whether there is a correlation between the two. If there is none, they should find out why, taking into account the length of time the headteacher has been in post.

163. Examples of the information headteachers could provide include:

- the proportion of staff who progressed through thresholds over the last three years
- the proportion who did not progress through thresholds over the last three years
- a table showing for each salary point, the number of staff, points they have moved from and the number that met their performance management objectives

- the performance management information the school provides to governors
- any other relevant information with regard to the performance management process.

164. Inspectors must evaluate leaders' and managers' use of **alternative provision** through taking account of:

- how well the school identifies provision that matches pupils' needs and interests and enables them to gain appropriate knowledge and skills
- how well the school assesses the quality and safety of the provision
- the quality of information that the school gives to the alternative provider - for example about the pupil's special educational needs, behaviour and/or literacy levels
- how well the school monitors and evaluates pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour, and intervenes to support pupils where needed
- the progress that pupils make while attending alternative provision
- whether any qualifications being taken are at the appropriate level
- the quality of support that pupils receive while attending the alternative provision.

165. Inspectors should consider whether governors:

- carry out their statutory duties, such as safeguarding, and understand the boundaries of their role as governors
- ensure that they and the school promote tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith), cultures and lifestyles; and support and help, through their words, actions and influence within the school and more widely in the community, to prepare children and young people positively for life in modern Britain
- ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction, including long-term planning (for example, succession)
- contribute to the school's self-evaluation and understand its strengths and weaknesses, including the quality of teaching, and reviewing the impact of their own work
- understand and take sufficient account of pupil data, particularly their understanding and use of the school data dashboard
- assure themselves of the rigour of the assessment process
- are aware of the impact of teaching on learning and progress in different subjects and year groups

- provide challenge and hold the headteacher and other senior leaders to account for improving the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and pupils' behaviour and safety, including by using the data dashboard, other progress data, examination outcomes and test results; or whether they hinder school improvement by failing to tackle key concerns or developing their own skills
- use the pupil premium and other resources to overcome barriers to learning, including reading, writing and mathematics
- ensure solvency and probity and that the financial resources made available to the school are managed effectively
- are providing support for an effective headteacher
- monitor performance management systems and understand how the school makes decisions about teachers' salary progression , including the performance management of the headteacher, to improve teaching, leadership and management
- engage with key stakeholders
- are transparent and accountable, including in terms of recruitment of staff, governance structures, attendance at meetings, and contact with parents and carers.

Grade descriptors – Quality of leadership in and management of the school

Note: These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach that relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team. There is detailed guidance on evaluating safeguarding arrangements in 'Inspecting safeguarding in maintained schools and academies'.

Outstanding (1)

- The pursuit of excellence in all of the school's activities is demonstrated by an uncompromising and highly successful drive to strongly improve, or maintain, the highest levels of achievement and personal development for all pupils over a sustained period of time.
- All leaders and managers, including those responsible for governance, are highly ambitious for the pupils and lead by example. They base their actions on a deep and accurate understanding of the school's performance and of staff and pupils' skills and attributes.
- Governors, or those with a similar responsibility, stringently hold senior leaders to account for all aspects of the school's performance.
- Excellent policies underpin practice that ensures that pupils have high levels of literacy, or pupils are making excellent progress in literacy.
- Leaders focus relentlessly on improving teaching and learning and provide focused professional development for all staff, especially those that are newly qualified and at an early stage of their careers. This is underpinned by searching performance management that encourages, challenges and supports teachers' improvement. As a result, the overall quality of teaching is at least consistently good and improving.
- The school's curriculum promotes and sustains a thirst for knowledge and understanding and a love of learning. It covers a wide range of subjects and provides opportunities for academic, technical and sporting excellence. It has a very positive impact on all pupils' behaviour and safety, and contributes very well to pupils' academic achievement, their physical well-being, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school's actions have secured improvement in achievement for disadvantaged pupils, which is rising rapidly, including in English and mathematics.
- The school has highly successful strategies for engaging with parents to the benefit of pupils, including those who find working with the school difficult.
- Senior leaders in the school work to promote improvement across the wider system including, where applicable, with early years providers to raise the proportion of children who are well prepared to start school.
- The school is adept at identifying any child at risk of harm and engaging with partners to respond appropriately. Staff model professional standards in all of their work and demonstrate high levels of respect and courtesy for pupils and others.
- Through highly effective, rigorous planning and controls, governors ensure financial stability, including the effective and efficient management of financial resources such as the pupil premium funding. This leads to the excellent deployment of staff and resources to the benefit of all groups of pupils.
- Leaders have ensured that early years and/or sixth form provision is highly effective.

Good (2)

- Key leaders and managers, including those responsible for governance, consistently communicate high expectations and ambition.
- Teaching is good and/or improving strongly as a result of accurate monitoring, effective performance management and professional development, which are closely matched to the needs of the school and staff.
- Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate, and the school's actions are carefully planned, concerted and effective.
- Well thought out policies ensure that pupils make at least good progress in literacy.
- Governors, or those in a similar position, systematically challenge senior leaders. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have improved, or previous good performance in these areas has been consolidated.
- The school's curriculum encourages a thirst for knowledge and understanding and a love of learning. It covers a range of subjects and provides opportunities for academic, technical and sporting excellence. It contributes well to pupils' academic achievement, their physical well-being and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It promotes good behaviour and a good understanding of safety matters.
- The school's actions have secured improvement in achievement for disadvantaged pupils, which is rising, including in English and mathematics.
- The culture of the school is characterised by high expectations and aspirations for all pupils.
- The school works well with parents, including those who might find working with the school difficult, to achieve positive benefits for pupils.
- Leaders ensure that staff are well trained in identifying pupils at risk of harm and responding appropriately. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.
- Governors ensure the efficient management of financial resources. This leads to the effective deployment of staff and resources.
- Leaders work effectively with early years providers and other schools to ensure children's smooth transition into school.
- Leaders have ensured that early years and/or sixth form provision is effective.

Requires improvement (3)

- Leadership and management require improvement because they are not good but are demonstrating the capacity to secure improvement in the school.

Inadequate (4)

Leadership and management are likely to be inadequate if **any** of the following apply.

- Capacity for securing further improvement is limited because current leaders and managers have been ineffective in securing essential improvements.
- Improvements that have been made are unlikely to be sustainable, are too slow or are dependent on external support.
- Self-evaluation lacks rigour and is inaccurate in its conclusions so that leadership and management do not have a realistic view of outcomes or provision.
- Leadership is not doing enough to ensure good teaching for all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The organisation of the curriculum and classes is resulting in some pupils achieving less well than they should.
- Leaders and managers are not taking sufficiently effective steps towards securing good

behaviour from all pupils and a consistent approach to discipline.

- The curriculum fails to meet the needs of pupils or particular groups of pupils, or pupils are entered for public examinations inappropriately early. Pupils' achievement, physical well-being and enjoyment of learning are significantly impaired. The range of subjects is too narrow and does not provide preparation for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in modern Britain. Too little is being done to promote the effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.
- The progress in English or in mathematics of disadvantaged pupils is falling further behind the progress of other pupils with similar prior attainment nationally or in the school.
- Poor literacy is not being tackled urgently and this is impeding pupils' progress.
- Governors are not sufficiently diligent in holding the school to account for pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching and the effective and efficient deployment of resources.
- Leaders and governors, through their words, actions or influence, undermine the promotion of tolerance of and respect for people of other faiths, cultures and lifestyles, and so do not support and help prepare pupils positively for life in modern Britain.
- The school's strategies for engaging with parents are weak and parents express little confidence in the school.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not meet statutory requirements and give serious cause for concern, or insufficient action has been taken to remedy weaknesses following a serious incident. The school fails to identify pupils at risk of harm when it might reasonably have done so.
- Leaders have neglected early years and/or sixth form provision such that it is ineffective.

The behaviour and safety of pupils at the school

166. The evidence collected for this judgement also contributes to inspectors' evaluation of the school's promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
167. Inspectors must take account of the behaviour and safety of pupils attending off-site alternative provision.
168. Judgements about behaviour and safety must not be made solely on the basis of what is seen during the inspection. Inspectors must take into account a range of evidence in order to judge both behaviour and safety over time. This evidence **must** include documentary evidence about behaviour and how poor behaviour is tackled, as well as discussions with, and observations of, pupils at informal times of the day (including break and lunchtimes and between lessons).
169. Inspectors must make a clear written judgement about behaviour and a separate clear written judgement about safety within the inspection report. Where the judgements on behaviour and on safety differ, the lower of the two will determine the overall judgement on behaviour and safety. This overall judgement is recorded in the inspection report.
170. Evaluating, judging and reporting behaviour and safety in this way enables inspectors to make a clear distinction between each area, in order that schools and parents have a clear understanding of the reported judgements. For example, where behaviour is judged as requires improvement, but the safety of pupils is judged to be good, inspectors will grade behaviour and safety as requires improvement overall, while reporting to parents within the behaviour and safety section of the inspection report that pupils are safe. Inspectors should give careful consideration to the effectiveness of the arrangements for safeguarding pupils where the judgement for safety is requires improvement or inadequate.
171. Inspectors must look at a small sample of case studies in order to evaluate the experience of particular individuals and groups, such as pupils for whom referrals have been made to the Local Authority Designated Officer (checking how the referral was made and the thoroughness of the follow-up), disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, looked after children and those with mental health needs.
172. Inspectors **must** also take account of the views expressed by pupils, including different groups of pupils, of their experiences of others' behaviour and attitudes towards them and their understanding of the importance of such attributes in school and adult life. These views must not be gathered only through formal discussions, but must include

discussions with a range of pupils at informal times. Inspectors must also take account of the views of parents, staff, governors and others.

173. If the school runs, or runs in partnership with other schools, an off-site unit for pupils whose behaviour is poor or with low attendance, an inspector should visit the unit briefly to assess safeguarding procedures, the quality of teaching and how effectively the unit helps to improve pupils' behaviour, learning and attendance.

174. When judging behaviour and safety, inspectors should consider:

- the extent to which pupils' attitudes to learning help or hinder their progress in lessons⁴¹
- pupils' attitudes to school, conduct and behaviour, during and outside of lessons and their attitudes to other pupils, teachers and other staff, including the prevalence of low-level disruption
- the school's analysis of, and response to, pupils' behaviour over time, for example incident logs and records of rewards and sanctions
- rates, patterns of and reasons for fixed-period and permanent exclusions,⁴² and whether they fall within statutory guidance and regulations on exclusions,⁴³ including the number of pupils taken off roll in the last year as a result of factors related to behaviour, safety and attendance
- any evidence of the use of 'unofficial exclusion' or any evidence that a pupil has been removed from a school unlawfully⁴⁴
- pupils' contribution and response to the culture of the school and how they conduct themselves, including: their respect, courtesy and good manners towards each other and adults, for example when moving around the school; and their understanding of how such behaviour contributes to school life, relationships, adult life and work

⁴¹ For example, inspectors may consider how quickly pupils settle at the start of lessons, whether they have the right equipment, their willingness to answer questions, whether they remain focused when working on their own, the tidiness of their work and the pride they show in its presentation, and the overall effort that they make.

⁴² This includes patterns of permanent and fixed-period exclusions for different groups of pupils; the impact on behaviour of fixed-period exclusion and the impact of the school's work to follow up and support excluded pupils; the use and impact of internal exclusion; and the typical behaviour of any pupils who are not in school during inspection

⁴³ *Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England*, Department for Education, 2012; www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion

⁴⁴ This may be the case where a child has been sent home for a disciplinary reason and it is not recorded as an exclusion, or where a pupil is removed from school for non-disciplinary reasons, such as special educational needs.

- pupils' respect for the school's learning environments (including by not dropping litter), facilities and equipment, and adherence to school uniform policies
- types, rates and patterns of bullying and the effectiveness of the school's actions to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying and harassment; this includes cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to special educational need, sex, race, religion and belief, disability, sexual orientation or gender reassignment
- the success in keeping pupils safe, whether within school or during external activities through, for instance, effective risk assessments, e-safety arrangements and action taken following any serious safeguarding incident
- the school's policy and procedures for ensuring that visitors to the school are suitable and checked and monitored as appropriate, for example external speakers at school assemblies
- the effectiveness of the school's actions to prevent and tackle discriminatory and derogatory language – this includes language that is derogatory about disabled people, and homophobic and racist language
- the extent to which pupils are able to understand, respond to and calculate risk effectively, for example risks associated with child sexual exploitation, domestic violence, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, substance misuse, gang activity, radicalisation and extremism⁴⁵ and are aware of the support available to them
- the school's response to any extremist or discriminatory behaviour shown by pupils
- overall and persistent absence and attendance rates for different groups; inspectors should compare the school's data on attendance against the national figures for all pupils and, when considering whether attendance is consistently low, should compare it with figures for the lowest 10% of schools (in 2012/13, 93.72% in primary schools and 92.46% in secondary schools)
- punctuality over time in arriving at school and at lessons
- the impact of the school's strategies to improve behaviour and attendance⁴⁶
- the views of parents, staff and governors.

⁴⁵ This also includes risks associated with e-safety, substance misuse, knives and gangs, relationships (including sexual relationships), water, fire, roads and railways.

⁴⁶ This includes the use of rewards and sanctions, the effectiveness of any additional on-site provision to support behaviour, work with parents and absence 'follow-up'.

Grade descriptors – The behaviour and safety of pupils at the school

Note: These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach that relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Outstanding (1)

- Pupils consistently display a thirst for knowledge and understanding and a love of learning, including when being taught as a whole class or working on their own or in small groups. This has a very strong impact on their progress in lessons.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are of an equally high standard across subjects, years and classes and with different staff. Incidences of low-level disruption in lessons are extremely rare.
- Parents, staff and pupils are unreservedly positive about both behaviour and safety. Pupils are keenly aware how good attitudes and behaviour contribute to school life, adult life and work.
- Pupils' behaviour outside lessons is impeccable. Pupils' pride in the school is shown by their excellent conduct, manners and punctuality.
- Pupils are fully aware of different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying, and actively try to prevent it from occurring. Bullying and derogatory or aggressive language in all their forms are very rare and dealt with highly effectively.
- Pupils' excellent conduct and behaviour reflects the school's effective strategies to promote high standards; this makes a strong contribution to an exceptionally positive climate for learning. There are excellent improvements in behaviour over time for individuals or groups with particular behaviour needs.
- All groups of pupils are safe and feel safe in school and at alternative provision placements at all times. They understand very clearly what constitutes unsafe situations and are highly aware of how to keep themselves and others safe in different situations, including in relation to e-safety.

Good (2)

- Pupils' attitudes to all aspects of learning are consistently positive, including when being taught as a whole class or working on their own or in small groups. These positive attitudes have a good impact on the progress the pupils make.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive across subjects, years, classes and with different staff.
- Pupils are properly prepared for each lesson, bring the right equipment and are ready and eager to learn.
- Pupils respond very quickly to staff's instructions and requests, allowing lessons to flow smoothly and without interruption. Low-level disruption in lessons is rare.
- There are no well-founded concerns expressed by parents, staff and pupils about behaviour and safety. Pupils understand the importance of good attitudes and behaviour in school life, adult life and work.
- There is a positive ethos in and around the school. Pupils conduct themselves well at all different times of day, including at lunchtime, attend regularly, have good attitudes and are punctual to lessons.
- Pupils take pride in their work, their appearance and their school.
- Pupils have a good awareness of different forms of bullying. There are few instances of bullying and these are dealt with effectively by the school.

- Pupils' good conduct and behaviour reflect the school's efforts to promote high standards. There are marked improvements in behaviour over time for individuals or groups with particular behavioural needs.
- Pupils are safe and feel safe in school and at alternative provision placements; they understand how to keep themselves safe in different situations.

Requires improvement (3)

- Behaviour and safety require improvement because they are not good.

Inadequate (4)

Behaviour and safety are inadequate when **any** of the following apply.

- Pupils' lack of engagement and persistent low-level disruption contribute to reduced learning and/or a disorderly classroom environment.
- A significant minority of pupils show a lack of respect and intolerance for each other or staff and a lack of self-discipline, resulting in poor behaviour around the school. Pupils exhibit negative attitudes about the value of good manners and behaviour as key factors in school life, adult life and work.
- Incidents of bullying overall or specific types of bullying are frequent and/or pupils have little confidence in the school's ability to address bullying successfully.
- Pupils or particular groups of pupils are not safe or do not feel safe at school and/or at alternative placements.
- Attendance is consistently low for all pupils or groups of pupils and shows little sign of consistent improvement.

Quality of teaching in the school

175. The most important role of teaching is to promote learning and the acquisition of knowledge by pupils and to raise achievement. It is also important in promoting the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teaching includes:

- planning for lessons and learning activities at other times in the school day
- how teachers impart knowledge to pupils, instruct them and engage them in other activities which also increase their knowledge and understanding
- the setting of appropriate, regular homework across subjects
- marking, assessment and feedback.

It encompasses activities within and outside the classroom, such as additional support and intervention. The quality of teaching received by pupils who attend off-site alternative provision should also be considered and evaluated.

176. Inspectors should not grade the quality of teaching in individual lesson observations, learning walks or equivalent activities. In arriving at a judgement on the overall quality of teaching, inspectors must consider strengths and weaknesses of teaching observed across the broad range of lessons. These must then be placed in the context of other evidence of pupils' learning and progress over time, including work in their books and folders, how well they can explain their knowledge and understanding in subjects, and outcomes in tests and examinations.

177. Inspectors should consider the extent to which the 'Teachers' Standards' are being met.⁴⁷

Observing teaching and learning

178. Ofsted does not favour any particular teaching style and inspectors must not give the impression that it does. School leaders and teachers should decide for themselves how best to teach, and be given the opportunity, through questioning by inspectors, to explain why they have made the decisions they have and provide evidence of the effectiveness of their choices. Moreover, inspectors must not inspect or report in any way that is not stipulated in the framework or this handbook. For example, they should not criticise teacher talk for being overlong or bemoan a lack of opportunity for different activities in lessons unless there is unequivocal

⁴⁷ *Teachers' Standards*, Department for Education, 2011; www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards.

evidence that this is slowing learning over time. It is unrealistic, too, for inspectors to expect that all work in all lessons will be matched to the specific needs of each individual pupil. Inspectors should not expect to see pupils working on their own or in groups for periods of time in all lessons. They should not make the assumption that a particular way of working is always necessary or desirable. Its effectiveness depends on the impact of the quality and challenge of the work set. Pupils may rightly be expected to sit and listen to teachers, which of itself is an 'active' method through which knowledge and understanding can be acquired effectively. Inspectors should not criticise 'passivity' as a matter of course and certainly not unless it is evidently stopping pupils from learning new knowledge or gaining skills and understanding. When observing teaching, inspectors should be 'looking at' and reflecting on the effectiveness of what is being done to promote learning, not 'looking for' specific or particular things. Inspectors should gather robust evidence to judge and report on how well pupils acquire knowledge, learn well and engage with lessons.

179. Inspectors must evaluate the use of and contribution made by teaching assistants. They should consider whether teaching assistants are clear about their role and knowledgeable about the pupils they support. They should also consider how well the school ensures that teaching assistants have sufficient knowledge of the subjects in which they provide support.

180. Inspectors must consider whether:

- teaching engages and includes all pupils with work that is challenging enough and that meets the pupils' needs as identified by teachers
- teachers command the respect of their classes, set out clear expectations for pupils' behaviour in line with the direction set by school leaders, start and finish lessons on time and manage teaching resources effectively
- pupils' responses, in lessons and over time, demonstrate sufficient gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding, including of literacy and mathematics
- teachers monitor pupils' responses in lessons and adapt their approach accordingly; also, whether they monitor pupils' progress over time and use the information well to adapt their planning
- teachers seek to assess the effectiveness of their own teaching and adapt accordingly
- teachers routinely give the necessary attention to the most able and the disadvantaged, as they do to low-attaining pupils or those who struggle at school
- teachers set homework in line with the school's policy and that challenges all pupils, especially the most able

- assessment is frequent and accurate and is used to set challenging work that builds on prior knowledge, understanding and skills
- information at transition points between schools is used effectively so that teachers plan to meet pupils' needs in all lessons from the outset - this is particularly important between Key Stages 2 and 3; inspectors should consider whether work in Key Stage 3 is demanding enough, especially for the most able when too often undemanding work is repeated unnecessarily
- pupils understand well how to improve their work, which goes beyond whether they know their current 'target grade' or equivalent
- teaching helps to develop a culture and ethos of scholastic excellence, where the highest achievement in academic work is recognised, especially in supporting the achievement of the most able
- teachers have high expectations of all pupils
- teaching across the school prepares pupils effectively for the next stage in their education.

181. In evaluating the accuracy of assessment, inspectors will consider how well:

- any baseline assessment, teacher assessment and testing are used to modify teaching so that pupils achieve the expected standards by the end of a year or key stage
- assessment draws on a range of evidence of what pupils know, understand and can do in the different aspects of subjects in the curriculum, for example through regular testing
- teachers make consistent judgements and share them with each other, for example within a subject, across a year group and between adjacent year groups.

182. Not all aspects of learning - for example pupils' engagement, interest, concentration, determination, resilience and independence - may be seen or be expected to be seen in a single observation.

Evaluating learning over time

183. Inspectors' direct observation must be supplemented by a range of other evidence to enable inspectors to evaluate what teaching is like typically and the impact that teaching has had on pupils' learning over time. Such additional evidence may include:

- the school's own evaluations of the quality of teaching and its impact on learning

- discussions with pupils about the work they have undertaken, what they have learned from it and their experience of teaching and learning over longer periods
- discussion about teaching and learning with teachers, teaching assistants and other staff
- the views of pupils, parents and staff
- scrutiny of pupils' work, with particular attention to:
 - whether marking, assessment and testing are carried out in line with the school's policy and whether they are used effectively to help teachers improve pupils' learning
 - the level of challenge provided, and whether pupils have to grapple appropriately with content, not necessarily 'getting it right' first time, which could be evidence that the work is too easy
 - pupils' effort and success in completing their work and the progress they make over a period of time.

Grade descriptors – Quality of teaching in the school

Note: These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach that relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Outstanding (1)

- Much teaching over time in all key stages and most subjects is outstanding and never less than consistently good. As a result, almost all pupils currently on roll in the school, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, disadvantaged pupils and the most able, are making sustained progress that leads to outstanding achievement.
- All teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils. They plan and teach lessons that enable pupils to learn exceptionally well across the curriculum.
- Teachers systematically and effectively check pupils' understanding throughout lessons, anticipating where they may need to intervene and doing so with notable impact on the quality of learning.
- The teaching of reading, writing, communication and mathematics is highly effective and cohesively planned and implemented across the curriculum.
- Teachers and other adults authoritatively impart knowledge to ensure that pupils are engaged in learning and generate high levels of commitment to learning across the school.
- Consistently high quality marking and constructive feedback from teachers ensure that pupils make significant and sustained gains in their learning.
- Teachers use well-judged teaching strategies, including setting appropriate homework that, together with clearly directed and timely support and intervention, match pupils' needs accurately.

Good (2)

- Teaching over time in most subjects, including English and mathematics, is consistently good. As a result, most pupils and groups of pupils on roll in the school, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, disadvantaged pupils and the most able, make good progress and achieve well over time.
- Teachers have high expectations. They plan and teach lessons that deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding and enable them to develop a range of skills across the curriculum.
- Teachers listen to, carefully observe and skilfully question pupils during lessons in order to reshape tasks and explanations to improve learning.
- Reading, writing, communication and mathematics are taught effectively.
- Teachers and other adults create a positive climate for learning in their lessons and pupils are interested and engaged.
- Teachers assess pupils' learning and progress regularly and accurately at all key stages. They ensure that pupils know how well they have done and what they need to do to improve.
- Effective teaching strategies, including setting appropriate homework and well-targeted support and intervention, are matched closely to most pupils' needs, including those most and least able, so that pupils learn well in lessons.

Requires improvement (3)

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not good.

Inadequate (4)

Teaching is likely to be inadequate where **any** of the following apply:

- As a result of weak teaching over time, pupils or particular groups of pupils, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, disadvantaged pupils and the most able, are making inadequate progress.
- Pupils cannot communicate, read, write, or apply mathematics as well as they should.

Achievement of pupils at the school

184. This section deals with academic achievement. Other, broader aspects of achievement, such as those reflected in the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, are taken into account in the evaluation of other areas for which there are key judgements and when reporting on the overall effectiveness of the school.
185. When judging achievement, inspectors must have regard for pupils' starting points in terms of their prior attainment and age. This includes the progress that the lowest attaining pupils are making and its effect on raising their attainment, and the progress that the most able are making towards attaining the highest grades.
186. Inspectors should pay particular attention to whether more able pupils in general and the most able pupils in particular are achieving as well as they should. For example, does a large enough proportion of those pupils who had the highest attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics achieve A*/A GCSE grades in these subjects by the age of 16?
187. Inspectors should summarise the achievements of the most able pupils in a separate paragraph of the inspection report.
188. Inspectors should not insist that there must be three years' worth of data or that these data must show good progress or achievement, before judging a school's overall effectiveness to be good. A school can be good overall if teaching, leadership and management, and behaviour and safety are good, and if there is sufficient evidence that progress and/or achievement of current pupils are good as well. This is often the case when a school is improving from requires improvement, serious weaknesses or special measures. However, inspection reports must state that this is the case and explain clearly why the school is good despite published data that appear not to support that judgement.
189. National curriculum levels are being removed from September 2014. In 2014/15, Year 2 and Year 6 pupils will not have been taught the new curriculum. Therefore, the 2015 Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 assessments and tests will be on the old national curriculum and will be the last to be reported on against levels.
190. In 2014/15, most schools, academies and free schools will have historic performance data expressed in national curriculum levels, except for those pupils in Year 1. Inspectors may find that schools are tracking attainment and progress using a mixture of measures for some, or all, year groups and subjects.
191. As now, inspectors will use a range of evidence to make judgements, including by looking at test and examination results, pupils' work and

considering pupils' own perceptions of their learning. Inspectors will not expect to see a particular assessment system in place and will recognise that schools are still working towards full implementation of their preferred approach.⁴⁸

192. However, they will:

- spend more time looking at the range of pupils' work in order to consider what progress they are making in different areas of the curriculum
- talk to leaders about the school's use of formative and summative assessment and how this improves teaching and raises achievement
- evaluate how well pupils are doing against relevant age-related expectations as set out by the school and the national curriculum (where this applies).⁴⁹

193. Inspectors will consider how the school uses assessment information to identify pupils who are falling behind in their learning or who need additional support to reach their full potential, including the most able.

194. In arriving at judgements about **progress**, inspectors will usually consider how well:

- pupils' work shows that, where possible, they have the knowledge, understanding and skills expected for their age as set out by the curriculum and assessment system

⁴⁸ Further advice and guidance to support schools in selecting an appropriate system may be found by following the links below:

[Department for Education \(DfE\) Assessment Principles;](#)

[Assessment Innovation Fund winners;](#)

[Department for Education \(DfE\) National curriculum and assessment from September 2014: information for schools;](#)

[Report of the NAHT Commission on Assessment;](#)

Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) case studies [one](#) and [two](#).

⁴⁹ Schools are likely to use a combination of relevant national curriculum expectations and performance descriptors where they apply (see below), and expectations set by the school for other subjects and age groups through the chosen assessment system. For the end of each key stage, the government will set the expected standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In between, it is for schools to determine where pupils must be in relation to that standard. For Key Stage 1, the DfE will provide performance descriptors for expected national standards in mathematics, reading and writing. It will provide a single descriptor of the expected standard for science. For Key Stage 2, the DfE will provide performance descriptors for expected standards in writing. For science, reading and mathematics, it will provide a single descriptor of the expected standard. The DfE will publish the draft performance descriptors in autumn 2014. At both key stages, tests will be reported against scaled scores rather than levels. Key Stage 4 programmes of study for English and mathematics were published in July 2014 for teaching from September 2015. Science will be published for first teaching from September 2016.

- all pupils are set aspirational progress targets and that they are on track to meet or exceed these, and where possible, expected standards by the end of each key stage
- assessment, including test results, targets, performance descriptors or expected standards are used to ensure that all pupils make the progress their teachers expect and that more able pupils do work that deepens their knowledge and understanding
- progress in literacy and mathematics are assessed by drawing on evidence from other subjects in the curriculum, where this is sensible
- pupils' strengths and misconceptions are identified and acted on by teachers during lessons and more widely to:
 - plan future lessons and teaching
 - remedy where pupils do not demonstrate knowledge or understanding of a key element of the curriculum
 - deepen the knowledge and understanding of the most able.

195. Inspectors must take account of:

- **the learning and progress across year groups of different groups of pupils currently on the roll of the school**, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, disadvantaged pupils and the most able; evidence gathered by inspectors during the course of the inspection should include:
 - observation of lessons and other learning activities
 - scrutiny of pupils' work, particularly their written work, to assess standards, progress and the quality of learning of pupils currently in the school
 - the school's own records of pupils' progress, including the progress of pupils who attend off-site alternative provision for all or part of the week, and the progress of disadvantaged pupils, or those for whom the Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium provide support, and the most able pupils such as those who joined secondary schools having attained highly in Key Stage 2
 - the quality and rigour of assessment, particularly in Key Stage 1
 - in primary schools, how increasing participation in physical education (PE) and sport is helping all pupils develop healthy lifestyles and reach the performance levels they are capable of
 - discussions with pupils about their work
 - the views of parents, pupils and staff
 - discussions with staff and senior leaders
 - case studies of individual pupils

- in primary schools and some secondary schools, listening to pupils read in order to assess their standards and rates of progress in reading, with a particular focus on weaker readers.
- **pupils' progress in the last three years**, where such data exist and are applicable, including that of looked after children, disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and the most able; evidence gathered by inspectors during the course of the inspection should include:
 - the proportions making expected progress and the proportions exceeding expected progress in English (or separately in reading and writing) and in mathematics from each starting point, compared with national figures, for all pupils and disadvantaged pupils
 - value added data for the school overall and for different groups of pupils and subjects
 - use of data below national curriculum Level 1 (if used), including the national data analysis
 - any analysis of robust progress data presented by the school, including information provided by external organisations.
- **pupils' attainment** in relation to national standards (where available) and compared with all schools, based on data over the last three years where applicable, noting any evidence of performance significantly above or below national averages; trends of improvement or decline; and inspection evidence of current pupils' attainment across year groups using a range of indicators, including, where relevant:
 - the proportion of pupils attaining particular standards
 - capped average points scores
 - average points scores
 - pupils' attainment in reading and writing
 - pupils' attainment in mathematics
 - pupils' attainment in other subjects (as relevant)
 - the outcomes of the most recent phonic screening check and any follow-up screening undertaken by the school
 - Early Years Foundation Stage Profile data
 - attainment as shown by test and examination results available in school, but not yet validated or benchmarked nationally.

196. Inspectors must take particular account of the progress made by disadvantaged pupils compared with that made nationally by other pupils with similar starting points, and the extent to which any gaps in

this progress, and consequently in attainment,⁵⁰ are closing. Inspectors should first consider the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils compared with the national figures on progress and attainment for non-disadvantaged pupils, and how much any gaps are closing. They should then also consider any in-school gaps between disadvantaged pupils' progress and attainment and the progress and attainment of the other pupils in the school, and how much these gaps are closing. Inspectors should consider the impact of what a school is doing to narrow all of these gaps in progress and attainment between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils, where they exist. Where in-school gaps are narrowing, inspectors should check that this is because the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils is rising, and not because the progress or attainment of non-disadvantaged pupils is falling. Where an in-school attainment gap exists or widens, inspectors should consider whether this is because disadvantaged pupils attain more highly than other pupils nationally, while non-disadvantaged pupils in the school attain even more highly.

197. Inspectors should compare a school's 2013 performance with the 2013 DfE floor standards. Once the 2014 floor standards are available,⁵¹ inspectors should compare a school's 2014 results with those.
198. In relation to particular ages or groups of pupils, inspectors must consider the following:
- Evaluation of achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage should take account of the proportions of children who have made typical progress or more from their starting points. An example of typical progress for a child would be to start Nursery or Reception displaying the knowledge, skills and understanding that are typical for her/his age and then to meet the early learning goals by the end of Reception. Children who meet all the early learning goals but who started at a lower level of development than is typical for their age might be said to be making rapid progress. However, a child starting school at a higher level of development who meets all the early learning goals but exceeds none of them is unlikely to have made enough progress. Evaluation of achievement should also consider attainment at the end of Reception in comparison with Early Years

⁵⁰ Inspectors must evaluate and report on the difference in average point scores in each of English and mathematics in national assessments at the end of Key Stage 2, and at GCSE at the end of Key Stage 4, between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally, and between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils within the school. They must report on the extent to which any such gaps are closing, considering in-school gaps in the context of national gaps. Inspectors should express gaps in terms of grades at Key Stage 4 and periods of time, such as 'two terms', at Key Stage 2.

⁵¹ December 2014 for Key Stage 2 floor standards and January 2015 for Key Stage 4 floor standards.

Foundation Stage Profile national figures and in terms of how well it prepares children for Key Stage 1.

- For those schools where children are aged three and four years and move to primary school before any nationally comparable assessments are made, the judgement should be based on an evaluation of children's learning and progress relative to their age and evidence of their starting points.
- Evaluation of achievement in Key Stage 1 should take account of the proportions of pupils who have made typical progress or more from their starting points. For 2014/15, as a broad rule of thumb, Year 2 children who reached a good level of development at the end of Reception ought to be reaching **at least** the expected standard by the end of Key Stage 1 (so attaining at least Level 2b in the 2015 assessments). Children exceeding the early learning goals at the end of Reception ought to be exceeding the expected standard at the end of Key Stage 1 and be reaching high standards. Inspectors should take into account of how well pupils with a lower starting point have made up ground, and the breadth and depth of progress made by the most able.
- In schools where pupils have completed part of a key stage elsewhere, inspectors should take this into account when evaluating the pupils' progress.
- In schools where attainment is not benchmarked nationally – for example in the final year group of a middle school – inspectors should draw on all the available evidence to decide whether attainment is above average, broadly average or low.
- In sixth form provision, inspectors should take account of whether the school meets the 16–19 interim minimum standards specified by the DfE,⁵² noting the impact this is likely to have on sixth form effectiveness.
- For those groups of pupils whose cognitive ability is such that their attainment is unlikely ever to rise above 'low', the judgement on achievement should be based on an evaluation of the pupils' learning and progress relative to their starting points at particular ages and any assessment measures held by the school. Evaluations should not take account of their attainment compared with national benchmarks.

⁵² Interim minimum standards: 40% of students achieve an average point score per entry in vocational qualifications of 194 points; 40% of students achieve an average point score per entry in academic qualifications of 172 points;
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140203092005/http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/participation/b00218198/16-19-accountability/interim-minimum-standards-2012-13>.

- Inspectors should explore and identify the reasons for any difference between the achievement of pupils in resource-based provision and other pupils in the school, including those who are disabled or have special educational needs. When analysing achievement, inspectors should consider carefully the impact that a large provision might have on the overall attainment and progress data for the whole school.

The achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs

199. Inspectors should note that:

- pupils identified with special educational needs may or may not have a disability and disabled pupils may or may not be identified as having special educational needs
- inspectors must not assume that levels of attainment in all special schools will be below those expected of pupils of a similar age nationally
- it is not appropriate to evaluate achievement according to a pupil's type of disability or special educational need, or whether or not they have been identified as requiring school support or an education, health and care plan, as explained in the Code of Practice
- levels of identification and definitions of need vary considerably within an area or from one area of the country to another.

200. Inspectors need to take into account the proportion of pupils whose attainment is below that expected for their age and where these are related to cognitive difficulties. The judgement on these pupils' achievement should be based on an evaluation of their learning and progress relative to their starting points at particular ages, and any assessment measures held by the school. When reaching judgements in these schools, inspectors should consider the impact of these pupils on the school's overall attainments.

201. Schools may use a range of evaluation tools and evidence to judge whether pupils are making or exceeding the progress expected for their age and starting point. Inspectors must assure themselves that the methods used are robust and that the school's attainment data are accurate and reliable.

202. Where 'Progression 2010–11'⁵³ is used to contribute to the school's analysis then the starting point for evaluation is that expected progress is the median level for pupils' age and starting point.
203. It is expected that schools will use national data and RAISEonline for pupils whose attainment can be assessed within national assessment arrangements.
204. As with all progress information, inspectors must be cautious when considering data relating to small groups of pupils. For example, it is important to distinguish between health-related issues and educational provision. Inspectors must also distinguish between pupils' success towards achieving aspirational targets set by the school and the expected progress for pupils at different ages and starting points.
205. Inspectors should also look at the way the school identifies pupils who have special educational needs. They should find out whether pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, when in fact their progress has been hampered by weak teaching.
206. Inspectors should:
- note whether pupils who receive additional intervention are demonstrating accelerated or sustained progress – this would indicate whether the intervention is effective
 - evaluate the school's arrangements for ensuring the accuracy of its pupil performance data, as there is no statutory moderation of P scales.

⁵³ *Progression 2010–11: Advice on improving data to raise attainment and maximise the progress of learners with special educational needs*, Department for Education, 2010; www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/180840/DfE-00557-2010.pdf.

Grade descriptors – Achievement of pupils at the school

Note: These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach which relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Outstanding (1)

- Pupils make substantial and sustained progress throughout year groups across many subjects, including English and mathematics, and learn exceptionally well.
- From each different starting point, the proportions of pupils making expected progress and the proportions exceeding expected progress in English and in mathematics are high compared with national figures. For disadvantaged pupils, the proportions are similar to, or are rapidly approaching, those for **other pupils nationally** and in the school.
- The attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils at least match or are rapidly approaching⁵⁴ those of **other pupils nationally** and in the school.
- Pupils read widely and often across all subjects to a high standard.
- Pupils acquire knowledge and develop and apply a wide range of skills to great effect in reading, writing, communication and mathematics. They are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment.
- Pupils, including those in sixth form provision and those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, acquire knowledge quickly and develop their understanding rapidly in a wide range of different subjects across the curriculum.
- The learning of groups of pupils, particularly those who are disabled, those who have special educational needs, disadvantaged pupils and the most able, is consistently good or better.
- The standards of attainment of almost all groups of pupils are likely to be at least in line with national averages with many pupils attaining above this. In exceptional circumstances, an outstanding grade can be awarded where standards of attainment of any group of pupils are below those of all pupils nationally, but the gap is closing rapidly, as shown by trends in a range of attainment indicators. This may include attainment in reading.

Good (2)

- Progress across year groups in a wide range of subjects, including English and mathematics, is consistently strong and evidence in pupils' work indicates that they achieve well.
- From each different starting point, the proportions of pupils making expected progress and the proportions exceeding expected progress in English and in mathematics are close to or above national figures. For disadvantaged pupils, the proportions are similar to, or improving in relation to, those for **other pupils nationally** and in the school.
- The attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils are similar to or improving⁵⁵ in relation to those of **other pupils nationally** and in the school.
- Pupils read widely and often.
- Pupils acquire knowledge and develop understanding quickly and securely in a wide range of subjects. They develop and apply a wide range of skills, in reading, writing,

⁵⁴ Where the attainment of disadvantaged pupils is high, any in-school attainment gaps need not be closing rapidly.

⁵⁵ Where the attainment of disadvantaged pupils is high, in-school attainment gaps may exist.

communication and mathematics. This ensures that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment.

- The learning of groups of pupils, particularly those who are disabled, those who have special educational needs, disadvantaged pupils and the most able, is generally good.
- Where attainment, including that in reading in primary schools, is low overall, it is improving at a faster rate than nationally, over a sustained period.

Requires improvement (3)

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because it is not good.

Inadequate (4)

Achievement is likely to be inadequate if **any** of the following apply.

- From their different starting points, the proportions of pupils making expected progress, or the proportions exceeding expected progress, in English or mathematics are consistently below national figures and show little or no improvement.
- For disadvantaged pupils, the proportions making expected progress or exceeding expected progress from the different starting points in English or in mathematics are consistently well below those of other pupils either nationally or in the school, and show little or no improvement.
- Pupils' learning and progress in any key subject⁵⁶ or key stage, which may, depending on the impact on overall achievement, include sixth form provision or the Early Years Foundation Stage as appropriate, indicate they are underachieving.
- Groups of pupils, particularly disabled pupils and/or those who have special educational needs and/or disadvantaged pupils and/or the most able, are underachieving.
- Pupils' communication skills (including reading and/or writing) or proficiency in mathematics are not sufficiently strong for them to succeed in the next stage of education, training or employment.
- Attainment is consistently below floor standards⁵⁷ or is in decline and shows little, fragile or inconsistent improvement.
- There are wide gaps in the attainment and/or the learning and progress of different groups.

⁵⁶ 'Key' subjects in primary schools are English and mathematics. In secondary schools, they are English, mathematics, science and any specialist school subjects and/or GCSE subjects with very high levels of entry.

⁵⁷ Floor standards for 2013, 2014 and 2015 refer to the expected levels of performance set by the government in relation to standards of attainment at Key Stages 2 and 4 and the proportion of pupils exceeding the threshold in 2014 and 2015 for the number of national curriculum levels of progress made in English and mathematics between Key Stages 1 and 2 or between Key Stages 2 and 4.

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

207. Inspectors are required to report a numerical grade for the quality of education provided in the early years and write a section in the inspection report that summarises its effectiveness. Inspectors will judge the overall quality and standards of the early years provision, taking into account:

- how well children, including those disabled children, those with special educational needs and the more able, achieve so that they are ready for the next stage of their education
- how well the provision, including the quality of teaching, meets the needs of the range of children in the early years
- how well the provision contributes to children's physical and emotional health, safety and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- how well the provision is led and managed.

208. Inspectors must consider:

- the proportions of children who have made at least typical or better progress from their starting points, including disabled children, those with special educational needs and the more able
- the attainment of children at the end of Reception compared with Early Years Foundation Stage Profile national figures, including the proportion that achieve a good level of development⁵⁸
- whether achievement is consistent across areas of learning, particularly in the prime areas and the specific areas of literacy and mathematics, and if any groups are underachieving
- the quality of the approach to teaching phonics in Reception
- how well teaching nurtures, engages and motivates children, includes a broad range of educational programmes and is based on accurate assessment of children's learning and development, so that activities and experiences meet their needs
- how well all staff work with parents, engage them in their children's learning and keep parents informed about their children's achievements and progress

⁵⁸ A child achieves a good level of development, as defined by the government, if s/he meets the expected level in the early learning goals in the prime areas of learning (personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language), and in the specific areas of mathematics and literacy. This is not the same as making good progress.

- children's attitudes to learning, including their participation and willingness to make choices and decisions, and the extent to which children are active and inquisitive learners who are creative and think critically
- how well children behave, cooperate and share with each other, make friends, respect each other's differences and build their understanding and respect for different families, people and communities beyond their immediate experience
- the extent to which children behave in ways that are safe, understand how to stay safe and show that they feel safe
- the rigour and effectiveness of systems to drive improvement, including: monitoring the quality of provision and children's outcomes; the professional development of staff; evaluation of the impact of actions taken; and setting challenging targets
- the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures.

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

Note: These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach that relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team. The exception is that teaching must be outstanding for effectiveness of the early years provision to be outstanding.

Outstanding (1)

- Children make consistently high rates of progress in relation to their starting points and are extremely well prepared academically, socially and emotionally for the next stage of their education. As a result, almost all pupils in the early years provision, including disabled children, those who have special educational needs, those for whom the school receives additional funding and the most able, are making sustained progress that leads to outstanding achievement.
- Gaps between the attainment of groups of children and all children nationally, including those for whom the school receives additional funding, have closed or are closing rapidly. Any gaps between areas of learning are closing.
- A highly stimulating environment and exceptional organisation of the educational programmes reflects rich, varied and imaginative experiences that meet the needs of all children exceedingly well.
- The quality of teaching over time is outstanding and never less than consistently good; it is highly responsive to children's needs.
- Accurate assessment, including through high quality observations is rigorous, sharply focused and includes all those involved in the child's learning and development. Provision across all areas of learning is well planned and based on regular and precise assessments of children's achievement so that every child undertakes highly challenging activities.
- Children are highly motivated, very eager to join in and consistently demonstrate the characteristics of effective learning with high levels of curiosity, imagination and concentration. They listen intently and are highly responsive to adults and each other. They do not distract others or become distracted themselves.
- All children are developing a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and manage risks and challenges. They demonstrate exceptionally positive behaviour and high levels of self-control, cooperation and respect for others.
- Children's health, safety and well-being are significantly enhanced by the vigilant and highly consistent implementation of robust policies, procedures and practice.
- Highly successful strategies engage parents and carers, including those from different groups, in their children's learning in school and at home.
- The pursuit of excellence by leaders and managers is demonstrated by an uncompromising, highly successful and well-documented drive to improve achievement, or maintain the highest levels of achievement, for all children over a sustained period of time. The training and development of staff is highly focused and has a significant impact on improving outcomes for children.

Good (2)

- Children make at least typical progress and most children make good progress from their starting points. This includes disabled children, those who have special educational needs, those for whom the school receives additional funding and the most able, who make good progress relative to their starting points. They develop the key skills needed to make a good start in the next stage of their education.

- Children who join the school at a level below what is typical for their age, but not significantly so, catch up quickly. Any gaps between the attainment of groups, including those for whom the school receives additional funding, and all children nationally are closing.
- The educational programmes have depth and breadth across the seven areas of learning. They provide interesting and demanding experiences that meet the needs of all children.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good.
- All teachers and other adults have high expectations of children based on accurate assessment of children's skills, knowledge and understanding when they join the school. Learning opportunities are well planned and based on regular and accurate assessments of children's achievement so that every child is suitably challenged.
- Children are motivated and interested in a broad range of activities and are keen learners who regularly display the characteristics of effective learning. They listen carefully to adults and each other.
- Children's good behaviour shows that they feel safe. They gain an understanding of risk through activities that encourage them to explore their environment. Children are learning to respect and celebrate each other's differences and to build their understanding of diversity beyond their immediate experience.
- Parents and carers contribute to initial assessments of children's starting points when they join the school and they are kept well informed about their children's progress. Parents are encouraged to support and share information about their children's learning and development at home.
- Safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are implemented consistently; practice is reviewed regularly and clearly evaluated.
- Leaders and managers have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision through effective self-evaluation. They take concerted action to improve provision and can demonstrate the impact of such action, including the training and development of staff, on children's achievement over time.
- Monitoring ensures that individual children or groups of children with identified needs are targeted, and appropriate interventions are secured so that children receive the support they need, including through effective partnerships with external agencies and other providers.

Requires improvement (3)

- The early years requires improvement because provision and outcomes are not good.

Inadequate (4)

The early years is likely to be inadequate if **any** of the following apply:

- Children, or specific groups of children such as disabled children, those with special educational needs, those for whom the school receives additional funding, or the most able, do not achieve as well as they can so that many start Year 1 without the skills and knowledge they need. Low attainment of any group shows little sign of rising.
- Educational programmes do not adequately cover the seven areas of learning and/or do not provide interesting activities in enough depth or breadth to provide adequate challenge for children.
- Leaders and/or staff have a poor understanding of how to promote children's learning and development, resulting in weak teaching that is not matched to children's needs.
- Information from assessment is not accurate and not used well enough to enable children to make the progress they should.
- Children, or particular groups of children, are not enthusiastic about learning, spend

much of their time with little purpose and fail to thrive.

- Children's behaviour is not consistently well managed. As a result, more than occasionally, lack of engagement in activities leads to a disorderly environment that hinders their learning and/or puts them and others at risk.
- Strategies for engaging parents about their child's learning and development are weak. As a result, parents do not know what their child is learning or how to help them.
- Teachers and other adults are not knowledgeable enough and/or they are not vigilant enough to ensure that children are kept safe and safeguarded and that their health and welfare are promoted.
- Self-evaluation is weak, with too little focus on raising achievement and improving the quality of provision. Any actions taken to tackle areas of identified weakness have been insufficient or ineffective.

Effectiveness of the sixth form provision: the quality of education provided in the post-16 study programmes

209. Inspectors are required to report a numerical grade for the quality of education provided in the sixth form and write a section in the inspection report that summarises its effectiveness. They must do this by evaluating achievement, quality of teaching, behaviour and safety, and leadership and management. School and academy sixth forms are covered, as is all provision for 16–19-year-old students, by the requirements of the DfE 16–19 study programmes.⁵⁹
210. When inspecting and reporting on students' achievement in the sixth form, inspectors must take into account all other guidance on judging the achievement, behaviour and development of students, including specific groups such as disabled students, those with special educational needs, those who are disadvantaged⁶⁰ and the most able, and the extent to which achievement gaps are closing and how well provision for them is led and managed, their safety assured and an appropriate curriculum provided.
211. Inspectors will additionally consider:
- whether the school meets the 16-19 interim minimum standards specified by the DfE, including the extent to which those students who do not already have a grade C or above in English and/or mathematics at GCSE are helped to achieve these and progression beyond the sixth form
 - how well students' personal, social and employability skills are developed and how well this prepares them for their next steps in education or at work, including the contribution of 'non-qualification' activity and/or work experience and appreciation of how to approach life in modern Britain positively
 - the extent to which students are supported to choose the most appropriate courses, taking into account retention and success rates, as well as destination and progression information and students' views
 - the extent to which teaching, including non-qualification activity and the quality of one-to-one and small group tutorial support, leads to all groups of students developing knowledge, understanding and skills, and enables them to make good progress over time

⁵⁹ *16-19 study programmes: advice for further education colleges*, Department for Education, 2013; www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-study-programmes-advice-for-further-education-colleges.

⁶⁰ In the sixth form, the term 'disadvantaged' applies to looked after children and students who were known to be eligible for free school meals when in Year 11.

- how well teachers monitor, review and assess students' achievement of challenging targets, take account of each student's current progress, and provide frequent, detailed and accurate feedback so that students understand how to improve
- how well leaders and managers:
 - ensure the effectiveness of the curriculum and the arrangements to provide well-planned and well-managed individual study programmes,⁶¹ including the contribution of partnerships with other providers and employers
 - provide high-quality teaching in English and mathematics so that students that still need to achieve at least grade C in English and/or mathematics or appropriate functional skills or similar qualifications do so
 - ensure that all students are provided with high-quality impartial careers education, information, advice and guidance prior to starting post-16 courses, and about choices following completion of their post-16 study programme
 - use information about the destinations of those leaving the sixth form to check the extent to which provision meets the needs of all groups of students.

212. Inspectors will draw from the range of inspection activities in the overall guidance, **and additionally:**

- analyse data in the sixth form performance and assessment reports (PANDAs), level 3 value added reports, data dashboard (when introduced), DfE performance tables and other data to identify inspection questions and hypotheses
- check the suitability of the criteria for entry to the sixth form and the impact of these on students' achievement
- analyse retention rates and students' achievement and destinations to help determine the extent to which students are following appropriate study programmes
- talk to students to find out:
 - how well individual study programmes meet their expectations, needs and future plans, including for disabled students, those with special educational needs, those who are disadvantaged or the most able

⁶¹ Inspectors should not make judgements about the 'nature' of the sixth form. It is up to the school or academy to determine what level and type of qualifications it offers and to set the entry requirements. Inspectors should focus on the outcomes and achievement of students.

- the quality of teaching, other tutorial support and the feedback they receive on progress and next steps
- the development of personal and wider employability skills
- how well teaching helps to develop their skills in English and mathematics
- the quality and impact of any non-qualification activity and/or work experience
- the quality and impartiality of the information, advice and guidance they were given prior to starting their post-16 study programme.

Grade descriptors – effectiveness of sixth form provision: the quality of education provided in the post-16 study programmes

These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach that relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team. The exception is that teaching must be outstanding for effectiveness of sixth form provision to be outstanding.

Outstanding (1)

- Teaching over time is outstanding and never less than consistently good. It contributes to outstanding learning and achievement, significant growth in knowledge, skills and understanding and excellent attitudes to learning. All groups of pupils make outstanding progress, including disabled learners, those with special educational needs, disadvantaged students and the most able. Teachers' subject knowledge and expertise ensures that the needs of all students are met precisely and, as a result, all groups of students achieve highly. All students follow study programmes that build on their prior achievement and ensure progression to higher levels. Students are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment. All students access high quality non-qualification activity or work experience relevant to their study programme. Students in the sixth form make an outstanding contribution to the life of the school.
- The very large majority of students on all study programmes complete their programme. They make substantial and sustained progress. Level 3 value added progress measures and, where appropriate, level 2 achievement in the large majority of subjects, including for those following GCSE courses in English and/or mathematics or functional skills or similar programmes, are above the national rates and no significant subjects (with large entries) are below them.
- Gaps between the achievement of disadvantaged students and other students nationally have closed or are closing rapidly.
- The standards of attainment of almost all groups of students, given their starting points, are likely to be at least in line with national rates, with many students attaining above this. In exceptional circumstances, an outstanding grade can be awarded where standards of attainment of some students, given their starting points, are below those of all students nationally, but the gap is closing rapidly because of the progress being made by students currently in the sixth form.
- Students show excellent attitudes to their learning. They make best use of independent study time so that they are very well prepared for lessons and other activities.
- All students are provided with high quality impartial careers education, information, advice and guidance prior to starting post-16 courses and are fully aware of their choices following completion of their post-16 study programme.
- Students have an excellent understanding of the potential risks to their health and well-being and how to manage them.
- Leadership of the sixth form is highly effective.

Good (2)

- As a result of teaching that is consistently good over time, students make good progress, including disabled students, those with special educational needs, disadvantaged students and the most able. Teaching makes a strong contribution to students' good learning and achievement, growth in knowledge, understanding and skills, and positive attitudes to learning, including punctuality to lessons and attendance.
- All students follow study programmes that meet their needs. The programmes build on prior achievement, provide clear progression to a higher level of attainment and ensure

that students are well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment. All students take part in non-qualification activity or work experience relevant to their study programme. Students participate fully in the life of the school.

- Retention rates are high. Level 3 value added progress measures and, where appropriate level 2 achievement, in the large majority of subjects are at least in line with the national rate and some are above.
- Any gaps between the achievement of disadvantaged students and other students nationally are closing.
- All students who do not already have at least a GCSE grade C in English and/or mathematics follow a programme that enables them to achieve this or are following an appropriate functional skills or similar programme. Success rates on these courses are high or improving rapidly.
- The standards of attainment of almost all groups of students, given their starting points and for most subjects, are likely to be at least in line with national rates. A good grade can be awarded where standards of attainment of any group of students, given their starting points, are below those of all students nationally, but the gap is closing over a sustained period.
- The school provides good, impartial careers education, information, advice and guidance prior to starting post-16 courses. Students are aware of their choices following completion of their post-16 study programme.
- Students have a good understanding of potential risks to their health and well-being and how to manage them.
- Leaders of the sixth form maintain good levels of achievement and personal development for all students over a sustained period and/or secure improvement where necessary.

Requires improvement (3)

The sixth form requires improvement because it is not good.

Inadequate (4)

The quality of education in the sixth form is likely to be inadequate if any of the following apply.

- Achievement does not meet the current national 16-19 minimum standards. Too few students complete their course successfully or courses do not meet their needs. Students' progress is inadequate overall or for particular groups, as indicated by the level 3 value added progress measures or achievement in level 2 courses in many subjects being well below national rates.
- Students or specific groups such as disabled students, those with special educational needs, disadvantaged students or the most able do not achieve as well as they can. Low attainment of any group shows little sign of rising.
- The requirements of the 16-19 study programmes are not met. For example, students are on courses that do not allow them to progress to a higher qualification than that already achieved; the requirements for English and mathematics are not met.
- The quality of teaching is inadequate overall or in a number of subjects and/or teachers do not have adequate specialist/subject knowledge.
- Students' attitudes to learning are poor.
- Students are uninformed and ill-equipped to deal with potential risks to their health and well-being and/or learning and progress.
- Leadership of the sixth form is ineffective.

Evaluating the quality of boarding and residential provision in schools

213. Where the school provides boarding provision, inspectors will make five key judgements on that provision. These judgements will be made in accordance with the guidance and grade descriptors in the evaluation schedule for the inspection of boarding and residential provision in schools.⁶²
214. If any national minimum standards have not been met by the provision, the following standard phrase must appear as one of the recommendations under 'What does the school need to do to improve further?':
- 'The school must ensure that it meets the national minimum standards for boarding schools that have not been met'
- or
- 'The school must ensure that it meets the national minimum standards for non-maintained special schools that have not been met.'
215. The national minimum standards not met should be listed towards the end of the report, as set out below.
216. Inspectors must consider the impact of the grades for boarding/residential provision on the grades for the whole school, for which they will need to take account of the proportion of boarders/residential pupils in the school.
217. The section 5 and boarding grades for leadership and management, and behaviour and safety should either match or be within one grade of each other, and the reasons for any difference should be clearly stated in the main body of the report.

⁶² *Evaluation schedule for the inspection of boarding and residential provision in schools* (110096), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110096.

Annex 1. Evidence form (EF) codes

<p>Inspection number <i>Required in all EFs</i></p> <p>This is the reference number allocated to a particular school inspection.</p>	<p>Inspector's Ofsted inspector number (OIN) <i>Required in all EFs</i></p> <p>Enter own OIN</p>	<p>Inspector's EF number <i>Required in all EFs</i></p> <p>Enter in this box a code that uniquely identifies the EF to an inspector and the observation, analysis, discussion or other event recorded. For example, Jane Smith's 12th EF might be numbered JS12.</p>				
<p>Observation type <i>Required in all EFs</i></p> <p>Please tick the relevant box.</p>	<p>Grouping <i>Required only in EFs coded Lesson observation</i></p>					
<p>Year group(s) <i>Required in all EFs for Lesson observation and Work analysis</i></p> <p>For single year groups use:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="65 869 523 994"> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>For Nursery classes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>R</td> <td>For Reception classes.</td> </tr> </table>	N	For Nursery classes	R	For Reception classes.	<p>For the class (not the task) circle</p> <p>MC For a mixed ability class</p> <p>SU For a class settled or streamed or banded by ability where the pupils are the upper ability range within the school</p> <p>SA For a class settled or streamed or banded by ability where pupils are in the average ability range within the school</p> <p>SL For a class settled or streamed or banded by ability where pupils are in the lower ability range within the school</p> <p>O For other forms of organisation.</p>	
N	For Nursery classes					
R	For Reception classes.					
<table border="1" data-bbox="65 1001 523 1173"> <tr> <td>1-13</td> <td>For classes in Year 1 – Year 13</td> </tr> </table> <p>Where more than one year group is present, include the relevant codes for all the years and circle the one year group which provides the main focus for the observation.</p>	1-13	For classes in Year 1 – Year 13	<p>Gender <i>Required only in EFs coded Lesson observation</i></p> <p>For the class (not the task) circle:</p> <p>B for a boys only class</p> <p>G for a girls only class</p> <p>MI for a mixed gender class.</p>			
1-13	For classes in Year 1 – Year 13					
<p>Subject codes <i>At least one code is required in EFs coded Lesson observation or Work analysis</i></p> <p>In the first box record:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the main subject to which the grades written at the bottom of the EF apply. <p>Use the second box to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> highlight that elements of another subject are included in the lesson (for example, write GG CZ if you inspect a geography lesson which contains elements of citizenship) highlight a focus of the lesson (for example numeracy, EAL) indicate that an observation for one subject took place within a lesson in another subject (for example, write IT MA if you inspect ICT in a maths lesson). <p>The second box may be left blank.</p> <p>See annex for a full list of subject codes.</p>		<p>Present/Number on roll <i>Required only in EFs coded Lesson observation</i></p> <p>Enter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in the first box, the number of pupils present during the observation in the second box, the total number on the roll of the class. <p>If there is a significant gender imbalance in the pupils on roll (or in those absent), this should be commented on in the context box.</p> <p>Observation time <i>Required only in EFs coded Lesson observation</i></p> <p>Enter an estimate of the time, in minutes, spent observing a particular class or activity.</p> <p>One EF may be used to record two or more observations of the same class or activity (a running EF). In these cases circle the Y box and include the number of lessons included in the box provided. Enter the total observation time, the time of each session and the date of the sessions in the final box.</p>				

Area of learning codes for use in EFs coded Lesson observation in the Early Years Foundation Stage only			
Personal, social and emotional development	SF	Understanding the world	KF
Communication, language and literacy	LF	Physical development	PF
Mathematics	MF	Expressive arts and design	CF
Codes for use only in the second code box, to indicate a particular aspect of the lesson			
Focus on English as an additional language	EA	Focus on numeracy	NY
Focus on literacy	LY	Focus on special educational needs	SN
Code for EFs coded A for the Foundation Stage			
Foundation Stage	FD		
Activity codes for use in EFs coded O (other) only			
Assembly/collective worship	AS	Extra-curricular activities	EX
Form/class/registration time	FT		
Codes for recommendation of an external review of governance and/or pupil premium			
EF code O (other) subject code ER special focus code: 1 governance only, 2 governance and pupil premium, 3 pupil premium only			
Codes for the primary PE and sport premium			
EF code O (other) subject code SG special focus code: 1 funding used effectively, 2 funding not used effectively			

Annex 2: Subject codes for use on evidence forms (EFs)

Accounting	AC	French	FR
Arabic	AB	General studies	GS
Art and design/art	AR	Geography	GG
Bengali	BL	Geology	GE
Biology	BI	German	GM
Business studies/business education	BE	Government and politics	GP
Business/business studies and economics	BE	Graphics	GR
Careers education	CA	Greek (modern)	GK
Chemistry	CH	Gujarati	GU
Child development	CD	Health and social care	HS
Chinese	CN	Hebrew (modern)	HW
Citizenship	CZ	Hindi	HN
Classics/classical studies	CL	History	HI
Communication studies	CO	Hospitality and catering	HC
Computing	IT	Humanities	HU
Construction/construction & built environment	CB	Information science/systems/studies	IT
Dance	DA	Information & communication technology	IT
Danish	DN	Instrumental music tuition	IN
Design and technology	DT	Italian	IL
Distribution/retail & distributive services	DI	Japanese	JA
Drama/theatre studies	DR	Land and environment	LB
Dutch	DU	Latin	LA
Economics/economics & business studies	EC	Law	LW
Electronics/systems and control	EL	Leisure and tourism/recreation	LE
Engineering	EG	Manufacturing	MN
English/English literature	EN	Mathematics	MA
Food subjects	FS	Media/media studies	MS

Media: communication & production	MP	Textiles/fabrics/needlework	TL
Music	MU	Travel and tourism	TT
Punjabi	PJ	Turkish	TU
Performing arts	PA	Urdu	UR
Personal/social/health education	PS		
Philosophy	PL	<i>Symbols for subjects not listed</i>	
Physical education/games	PE		
Physics	PH	Any other:	
Psychology	PY	Aesthetic/practical subject	XA
Religious education	RE	Business/commercial subject	XB
Resistant materials	RM	Classical subject/language	XC
Russian	RU	Humanities/social subject	XH
Science	SC	Modern foreign language	XL
Science (double) GCSE	S2	Mathematical subject	XM
Science (single) GCSE	S1	Physical subject	XP
Social studies/science	SS	Science subject	XS
Sociology	SO	Technological subject	XT
Spanish	SP	Vocational subject	XV
Sports science/studies	SR	Any other subject not listed	XO
Statistics	ST		

