

## **New inspection arrangements from September 2005 - the story so far.**

NB Further pilot inspections are taking place this term and may lead to some fine tuning by HMI.

### **Why change arrangements again?**

- To minimise the pressure on schools
- Economics! [*Fewer inspectors e.g. smallest primaries may have only 1*]
- The influence of the Green Paper
- The further development of thinking around School Self-Evaluation

### **Central Organisation**

- There will be a Regional Divisional Manager for each region. Bristol's will be Sheila Browne. She will manage all inspection activity for us.
- Office will be based in same office as Early Years inspectorate
- 80% of secondary inspections and 20% of primary inspections will be led by HMI. All other inspections will be led by contracted inspectors.
- Contracted inspectors will be trained by the RISPs (Regional Inspection Providers) and will have to meet stringent levels of performance. HMI and RISPs will work together to quality assure inspections.
- All reports will be in HMCI's name. At present the registered inspector is responsible for the report and ensuring it meets the required quality standard. In the future Her Majesty's Chief Inspector will carry this responsibility

### **There will be,**

- Shorter sharper inspections taking no more than 2 days per school with smaller inspection teams. Extended schools will have extra inspection time to allow for discussions with key personnel.
- Closer interaction with senior managers with self-evaluation as the starting point.
- Shorter notice to avoid unnecessary preparation and stress.
- More frequent inspections – every 3 years – but more often for schools causing concern.
- Greater emphasis on self-evaluation evidence as the starting point for inspection
- Regular feed back and input from users [parents/pupils].
- More relevant and accessible information for parents.
- Simplification of the categorisation of schools causing concern. Special Measures remains but Serious Weaknesses replaced by an 'Improvement Notice'.

## The Inspection Process

Inspection will report on

1. **Overall effectiveness**
    - How effective and proficient are the provision and related services in meeting the full range of learners' needs and why?
    - What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?
  2. **Achievement and standards**
    - How well do learners achieve?
    - How good are the overall personal development and well-being of learners?
  3. **The quality of provision**
    - How effective are teaching and learning?
    - How well do curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?
    - How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?
  4. **Leadership and Management**
    - How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?
- NB The 5 areas from '**Every Child Matters**' have been included in the framework
  - Lead inspectors will construct their initial view of the school by referring to just **3 documents**. These are,
    - the previous inspection report,
    - the most recent PANDA
    - The School Self Evaluation Form (SEF). It is important that the SEF is a record of the school's own evaluations based upon **secure and reliable evidence** because this is the only document the lead inspector will have that provides the school's view of its work
  - The **School Improvement Plan** will be a core document. Schools should aim for a single integrated plan which clearly sets out the school's priorities based upon its self-evaluation. It is the basis for the 'single conversation'.
  - **The PANDA** will now be available in October. It will be briefer and contain more visual representation of data. It will include data on attainment on entry from Y3 and

more value added data. Statisticians are working at present on reconciling FFT data. Conversations about data in the early part of the inspection will be important.

- Inspectors will sample lessons [*see example of pilot inspection on 'Ofsted Direct'* ] but will use data and follow 'inspection trails'

## Grades

There will be **4 grades**,

1. Outstanding
2. Good
3. Satisfactory
4. Inadequate

- Descriptors for each grade can be found in the Ofsted document '*Guidance For Inspectors of Schools – Using The Inspection Schedule*'
- The new grading system raises the bar – eg previous grade 3 will not automatically become the new 'good'. Good now covers the previous good and very good .*Good cannot be ordinary or mundane*

## Judgments

There will be no conversations about judgments – judgments still cannot be challenged

- **Judgments on standards and progress**
  - These will be based mainly on the school's *performance data*
  - The new inspection arrangements concentrate on evaluating the school's *central nervous system*, focusing mainly on the quality of leadership and management (including governance), how well the school knows itself and its capacity to improve.
- **Judgments on Subjects**
  - Individual subjects may be visited if they come up in the SEF [eg high quality music] but *there are no subject sections in the report.*

- Ofsted has a programme of *subject survey visits* and this work will be undertaken outside of the normal inspection arrangements and the outcomes will contribute to HMCI's annual report on the quality of subject provision. They will take 1 day in primaries and 2 days in secondaries. The programme will be agreed with the school in advance and will start from self-evaluation. Secondaries and colleges can expect to be seen at least once between inspections, primaries much less frequently.
- It is hoped that there will be a closer dialogue with LEAs on themes and subjects

### **Judgments on teaching**

- The quality of teaching will not be an aggregation of scores. **All** available information will be used including the school's data on outcomes.
  - **How many lessons will be observed?** It depends on the issues being pursued by inspectors. The approach to inspection has changed significantly. At the start of the inspection, inspectors discuss with schools the issues that will be pursued. Once that is established they then decide with the school where to find *the best sources of evidence* to investigate these issues. In the pilot inspections there has been a significant fall in the number of lessons observed. In some cases inspectors have visited several parallel lessons to evaluate the schools' provision, for example in meeting the needs of the full range of pupils. At other times inspectors have held discussions with pupils and senior staff at the school. At each stage inspectors discuss their findings with senior staff; these discussions have taken on greater significance because inspectors want to discover how well the school knows its strengths and weaknesses. To test this out inspectors need to observe some lessons, but not necessarily in the same way or in the very high numbers, as in the past.
  - There will be *no meeting for parents* but there will be a brief questionnaire. However there is an onus on schools to collect their own data on parents' views. Parents will be given access to inspectors if they request it.
  - *The role of Governors remains central.* They have to sign off the SEF. Inspectors will *'try'* to meet representatives of the Governing Body. However there will be *no formal feedback meeting for the governing body* at the end of the inspection. Inspectors have been instructed to ensure that the chair of governors, or another senior governor if he/she is unavailable, is invited to the formal feedback to the school immediately after the inspection has ended.

- **Judgments on Leadership and Management**

*'If School Self Evaluation is weak then leadership and management is inadequate'*  
**OFSTED**

- At the core of the inspection is,

1. *the quality of leadership and management*
2. *the school's capacity to improve.*

- There will be full *involvement of senior staff*. From the outset the lead inspector must discuss with the senior staff of the school any issues being investigated. Discussions with senior staff are crucial for the smooth and efficient running of the inspection. At the first formal meeting between the lead inspector and the headteacher at the beginning of the inspection a PIB (Pre-Inspection Briefing) should be shared. Inspectors are to provide a hard copy of this for the school.
- *Judgments on governance* are subsumed into judgments on leadership and management. There are no specific descriptors for governance. However the previous inspection guidance still applies. SEFs must include an evaluation of the impact of governors on the work of the school.

## **School Self-Evaluation**

*The key questions are,*

- *How well are we doing?*
  - *How can we improve?*
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- School self-evaluation is no soft touch. Leaders must know schools well.
  - Teachers need to have a clear view of what is good or bad. Schools which know themselves well, achieve well.
  - There will be no blueprint for self-evaluation. The question will be *'Is it a spur to action?'*
  - However, inspection is not merely about validating self-evaluation. Rather, it involves coming to *an independent judgement against a national framework*. That's what inspection has always been and that's what it will remain.

## The School Evaluation Form [SEF]

The SEF is a summative document intended to record *the outcomes* of rigorous self-evaluation. *All conclusions must be fully supported by the evidence.*

- The SEF is on the Ofsted website and the school's password is the same as for the S4.
- It brings together S1-S4.
- It will be pre-populated with the school's data.
- The SEF should summarise outcomes and focus on the *impact* of decisions taken. It should be *clear and concise and free from assertions*. It should be the focal point for discussions between the various stakeholders.

*"... I cannot emphasise enough that the best SEFs are not descriptive, they are evaluative." David Bell*

- Governors must be engaged in the process. They have to sign off the SEF.
- The quality of the SEF *reflects directly on the quality of leadership and management*
- *The SEF should be updated annually at least.* [ though it should be done at any review point eg after core visits] The lead inspector will want to chat about the current status of the SEF and will provide opportunities for the school to explain any changes that have occurred since it was last updated. NB *the SEF is accessible online but is frozen 2 days before inspection.*
- *The SEF is at the heart of the process.* Does this school know itself? What is it doing about its strengths and weaknesses? Inspection says 'This is what you are telling us. How can we find the evidence?' This does not mean that there has to be a huge portfolio but there must be a clear view of where evidence is to be found

See examples of completed SEFs in '*A New Relationship with Schools: Improving Performance through School Self Evaluation*' Ofsted.

## Publication

- In most instances the report will be available for parents *three weeks* after the inspection has finished. It is expected that the school will provide free copies of the short report for parents and a copy of the letter to pupils. It will also be available on

Ofsted's website. Reports will be short [4-6 pages] and in language accessible to parents.

## **School Improvement Partners [SIP]**

- All schools will have a SIP who will act as a critical friend focusing on school development. The role is grounded in the school's external accountability to the LEA and to central government. They will be recruited from serving and recently retired heads and will need to be trained and accredited. NCSL and CEA will provide this.
- LEAs will employ SIPs as external consultants.
- They will be directly in conducting *'The single conversation'* with schools.
- SIPs will also be involved in,
  - Performance Management of the head
  - Advice to the Governing Body on HT objectives and appraisal
  - National and local networking
- SIPs will link to central government through DfES National Contractor [They will moderate and oversee LEA QA arrangements.
- SIPs will report to the Governing Body on the quality of School Self-Evaluation, provide a commentary on priorities and targets, recommendations about the action planned. They will extend their support if needed.
- SIP will agree on any package of external support.
- Inspectors will have access to SIP reports but are unlikely to meet SIPs. ***SIPs will not carry responsibility for school failure. It is the schools which are being inspected.***

## **'The Single Conversation'**

### **How well is the school performing?**

- Attainment
- Well-being
- Progress

### **What are the key factors?**

- School Self-Evaluation , core systems – pupil assessment and target setting
- CPD, PM, behaviour, curriculum, middle management
- Use of resources

### **What are the priorities for improvement?**

- Are priorities right?
- Are medium term ambitions high enough?
- Are targets appropriate?

### **How will the school get there?**

- Strategies chosen by leadership team lead to high impact -quality of planning
- Organisation and co-ordination of plans
- What support is needed?
- What advice should SIP give to Governing Body?

### **References**

- Ofsted Direct' available online [sign up for termly newsletter –v useful]
- HMI slide presentation on Ofsted website covers all new arrangements
- See updates on 'Teachernet' online

### **Ofsted publications**

- 'A New Relationship with Schools' and 'A New Relationship with Schools, Next Steps'.
- 'Framework for Inspecting Schools'
- 'Guidance For Inspectors of Schools –Using The Evaluation Schedule'