



Governors' Inspection Handbook

Background

The model for the **combined inspection of Regulatory Compliance and Educational Quality** is the current model for ISI inspections on a 6-year cycle, with a Compliance inspection operating on a 3-year cycle inside this.

A few details at this stage:

1. *Notice*: 1.5 days (Monday morning)
2. *Length*: 'usually' 2.5 days (Tuesday mid-morning to Thursday afternoon: 1 working day for Regulatory Compliance overlapping with 2 days for Educational Quality = 2.5 days in school altogether). The regulatory compliance component may need to be extended 'to take account of any regulatory concerns arising late in the inspection'.
3. *Size*: the inspection team for an average-sized school will comprise: Regulatory Compliance element = 1 Reporting Inspector (RI) + 1 other inspector (+ more if boarding and EYFS); Educational Quality element = 1 RI + 3 other inspectors. However, 'each individual school may have fewer or more inspectors depending on its size and complexity'

Regulatory Compliance – focuses on whether the Education Regulations 2014 are met and looks at such things as: safeguarding, bullying, safer recruitment, information for parents, handling of parental complaints – all covered in 8 different parts and referencing national Minimum standards

Educational Quality – focuses on the outcomes for pupils in terms of their **achievement** and in their **personal development**

Quality of teaching, curriculum, governance, leadership and management etc are all included within the focus of the outcomes for pupils.

Framework

As you will see from below, much of what happens during the visit will have a familiar feel to those who have been involved in any previous inspection.

In their framework document ISI list the following as areas for finding evidence to support their judgements:

- Observation of lessons
- Work scrutiny and quality of work in lessons
- Consultation with pupils
- Discussion with the Chair of Governors
- Discussion with other staff relating to compliance matters
- Discussion with relevant staff who have responsibility for planning, implementing and evaluating the school's provision
- Pupil and Parental questionnaires

- Analysis of documentary evidence, including performance indicators and self-evaluation
- Evidence gathered as the inspectors move about the school

Nothing new there but it is clear that one of the inspectors’ starting points will be to focus on **issues raised in previous inspections**, as listed below for us:

1. Departmental marking policies – looking at consistent quality
2. Consistent quality of schemes of work
3. Consistent application of the Behavioural Policy

The Role of Governors according to ISI:

What are the roles of governors and proprietors in the inspection process?

Governors and proprietors have an important role to play in the inspection process, not least because of their overarching responsibility for regulatory compliance. ISI inspectors are familiar with the many and varied forms of governance that operate in independent schools: there is no preferred or expected model. What is expected is that those with governance responsibility can demonstrate how they fulfil the criteria for governance laid down in the inspection schedule, which is summarised here:

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

Inspectors can gather evidence about these criteria from a variety of documentary sources, but an interview with the chair of governors or proprietor and/or other *governors* is an invaluable part of the process.

Sample questions for the Chairman of Governors

ISSR 34 Governance

Inspector’s initials	EF No	Regulation
XX	34b	Part 8: Quality of leadership and management – Paragraph 34

Inspection plan and record of sources of evidence (Amend as necessary)	Responsibility
Discussion with Chair of the Governing Body	
Questions, issues and aspects to follow up on inspection (amend and supplement as necessary)	
<p>ISSR 34 – Leadership and management</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 How do you ensure that governors are fully informed about regulatory requirements and keep abreast of any changes to regulations? 2 How do you ensure that the school’s and the governors’ legal obligations are met, including the ISSRs and, if applicable, NMS for Boarding Schools and EYFS Statutory Framework? [Explore awareness of the Handbook – Regulatory requirements by the Chair and other members.] 3 Is independent advice taken on compliance issues when required? How effective has this been? 4 Where governors are satisfied with the quality of policies, how do you monitor that implementation matches policy? 5 What are the arrangements for ensuring that governors recruited have appropriate expertise and have completed the necessary recruitment checks? 6 What are the arrangements for induction and training for governors? 7 What contacts are there with the head, senior management and other staff that enable you to become familiar with the school, its staff and its workings? What arrangements do you have for ensuring that senior leaders have appropriate skills and knowledge for their roles? <p>ISSR 7 – Safeguarding</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8 How do you ensure that the school's safeguarding (child protection) policy is reviewed annually? 9 As governors/proprietors, how do you ensure that you have good oversight of safeguarding , including policy implementation? 10 If you have a dedicated safeguarding governor, how do you ensure that all governors are kept appropriately informed about safeguarding matters? 11 Are governors kept informed of safeguarding/disciplinary issues? What is the threshold for governors being informed about these issues? Can you talk me through the most recent ones? <p>ISSR 11 – Health and safety</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12 How do governors ensure health and safety policy and procedures are appropriate to the school’s and pupils’ needs? 13 How do governors monitor the implementation of the H&S policy and procedures? <p>ISSRs 18-21 – Recruitment checks</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14 How do governors monitor the implementation of the school’s recruitment policy and procedures? 15 Do governors have any system to monitor the completion of the SCR? (not required but good practice) <p>ISSRs 23-30 – Premises and accommodation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16 How do governors ensure the premises provide safe and suitable accommodation to support the educational programmes? 	

17 Do governors have a programme to review, maintain and improve the school's premises and accommodation?

18 How do governors ensure the security of the school site?

ISSR 33 – Complaints procedure

19 How do you ensure that you are aware of and respond to the interests and concerns of parents and pupils?

20 How are you informed about/how do you deal with complaints? Any recent examples?

EYFS

21 Do governors have a secure understanding of the requirements of the EFYS? Do they visit and meet staff? Probe for specific examples of recent changes.

NMS

22 How do governors monitor the boarding provision – awareness of NMS, visits to boarding houses, meetings with staff and pupils?

Inspection Report Outline

A note on content

“The way in which schools are inspected has been influenced over time by changes in government requirements and educational practice, and by feedback from schools. The content of reports has reflected these changes, although all reports have covered the same key information about compliance with regulations.” ISI

1. Inspection of Regulatory Compliance:

- a. Preface explaining role of ISI
- b. Basic information about the school

This part of the report focuses on our meeting the National Minimum Standards and Independent Schools Standards Regulations in 8 Parts:

Part 1: Quality of Education

Part 2: Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Part 3: Welfare health and safety of Pupils

Part 4: Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

Part 5: Premises and accommodation

Part 6: Provision of Information

Part 7: manner in which complaints are handled

Part 8: Quality of leadership in and management of the school

2. Inspection of Educational Quality

In reviewing pupils' **achievement** inspectors will focus on:

- change in their attainment levels over time, including evidence from externally standardised tests and
- examination results;
- development of their knowledge, understanding and skills across the areas of learning (linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education);
- development of their competence in communication (speaking, listening, reading and writing) and its application to other areas of learning;
- development of their competence in numeracy and the application of their knowledge and skills in mathematics to other areas of learning;
- development of their competence in information and communication technology and its application to other areas of learning;
- development of their study skills, including the ability to draw upon a suitably wide range of sources and to develop higher-order skills, for example, to analyse, hypothesise and synthesise;
- their achievements in scholarships and competitions, other academic distinctions, and success in sports, the performing and other arts; and
- their attitudes towards learning, including their ability to demonstrate initiative and independence, their competence in working collaboratively and the extent to which they take leadership in their learning.

In reviewing the **pupils' personal development**, inspectors will evaluate the extent to which pupils, as relevant to their age and ability:

- develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem, confidence and resilience, including an understanding of how
- to improve their own learning and performance;
- understand that the decisions they make are important determinants of their own success and well-being;
- are adaptable and self-disciplined and develop the ability to persevere; develop spiritual understanding and appreciate non-material aspects of life;
- are able to work with others in solving of problems, achieving common goals and fulfilling responsibilities;

- distinguish right from wrong, understand and respect systems of rules and laws, and accept responsibility for their own behavior, including towards others;
- know how to stay safe and understand how to be physically and mentally healthy, particularly in terms of diet, exercise and a balanced lifestyle;
- respect and value diversity within society, show respect for and appreciation of their own and other cultures, and demonstrate sensitivity and tolerance to those from different backgrounds and traditions;
- contribute positively to the lives of others within the school, including in boarding, to the local community and wider society; and
- demonstrate the skills necessary for the next stage of their lives.

EYFS

There will also be a discrete section of the report on EYFS under the following headings:

- Overall effectiveness
- Effectiveness of leadership and management
- Quality of teaching, learning and assessment
- Personal development, behaviour and welfare
- Outcomes for children

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