

Non-association independent school inspection handbook

Handbook for inspecting non-association independent schools in England under section 162A of the Education Act 2002

This handbook provides instructions and guidance for inspectors conducting inspections of non-association independent schools under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as inserted by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005. It indicates the main activities that are undertaken from the time the school is notified that it is to be inspected until the publication of the report. It sets out what inspectors must do and what schools can expect, and provides guidance for inspectors on making their judgements. Schools can use the guidance to see how inspections will be conducted and may find it helpful when carrying out their self-evaluation.

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Introduction

1. This handbook describes the main activities undertaken by inspectors conducting inspections of schools in England under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as inserted by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005 from April 2014. It should be used in conjunction with *The framework for inspecting non-association independent schools*.¹ It also sets out the judgements that inspectors will make and on which they will report.
2. Non-association independent schools are inspected by Ofsted at the request of the Department for Education (DfE). Inspections occur within a three- or six-year cycle, as set out in *The framework for inspecting non-association independent schools*, but this may be varied at the request of the DfE.
3. The inspection of provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) aged three to five years is part of the school inspection. Unless there is an exemption in place (see Annex D), such provision must meet the *Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*.² Inspectors are required to take account of the quality of provision and outcomes for three to five year olds in reaching their judgements of the school as a whole. They do not make separate judgements or write a section of the report about the provision for children aged three to five years in the EYFS.
4. Childcare provision for older pupils is inspected proportionately as part of the school inspection and mentioned in the main school report, where appropriate. Where schools offer before and after school care for their own pupils on roll, this provision should be considered as part of the school inspection.
5. In the case of childcare provision for children aged three and over, if none of the children are on the school's roll, this provision will be registered on either the Early Years Register or the Childcare Register. Such provision is not part of the school inspection; it forms part of a separate inspection of registered EYFS provision.
6. The registered provision for children in the EYFS, including for children aged from birth to three years is not part of the school inspection. It may be inspected at the same time as the school inspection when possible, but may also be inspected separately by Ofsted. The inspection of registered provision occurs every three years. Inspectors write a separate report about the registered provision.

¹ *The framework for inspecting non-association independent schools* (140052), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140052.

² *Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage* (DFE-00023-2012), Department for Education, 2012; www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/AllPublications/Page1/DFE-00023-2012.

7. The school inspection includes the inspection of the boarding or residential provision in boarding and residential special schools. Inspectors should refer to the guidance in *Conducting inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools*.³ An inspector with training and experience in inspecting residential provision is assigned to the school inspection team. Following the inspection, the lead inspector writes a report that covers both the education and boarding or residential provision.
8. The handbook has two parts:
 - Part A – How schools will be inspected: this contains instructions and guidance for inspectors on the preparation for and conduct of school inspections
 - Part B – 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.
9. All references to 'leaders' in this document include proprietors and those in governance roles.

Tariff for the inspection

10. The inspection tariff for a standard inspection of a non-association independent school under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 is variable. The size and composition of the inspection team is determined by Ofsted and takes account of the size and circumstances of the school. The precise use of the inspection days is at the discretion of the lead inspector who will organise inspection activities in the most appropriate way to fit the circumstances of the school. Inspections do not normally last longer than three days. Please refer to Annex B for an illustration and further detail about deploying the tariff and an example of a timeline.

Part A: How schools will be inspected

Before the inspection

Inspectors' planning and preparation

11. In the case of integrated inspections of boarding and residential special schools, inspectors must follow the guidance in *Conducting inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools*.

³ *Conducting inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools* (100180), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100180.

12. Preparation time is short, and is allocated to the lead inspector. Before the lead inspector, and where appropriate the lead social care inspector, arrives at the school on the first day of the inspection, she/he **must** carry out the following pre-inspection activity. The outcomes of this preparation must be summarised on evidence forms (EFs).

13. 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 (s), which may include boarding and early years inspection reports
 - analysis of any reports or advice notes resulting from emergency inspection activities or complaints notified to Ofsted
 - analysis of the findings of any recent Ofsted survey and/or monitoring reports
 - analysis of any linked early years provision inspection reports and compliance and complaints history
 - the responses from Parent View⁴ and the pupils', and if relevant placing authorities', replies to the online surveys that were conducted at a given point in time. The online surveys will normally be open for a period of six weeks in the academic year. Any issues arising from the analyses of the point-in-time surveys or Parent View that need to be addressed should be noted in an evidence form, discussed with the headteacher and/or proprietor and resolved during the inspection. Inspectors must use the information from pupils and parents to set up lines of enquiry
 - whether any safeguarding issues have arisen at the school since the last inspection. For HMI and social care inspectors, this information can be accessed through Ofsted's provider information portal (PIP), and there is guidance on the Ofsted intranet site to help access PIP. For the inspection service providers' (ISPs') additional inspectors, this information is made available through the ISPs' own secure inspection portals. In all cases, the portal provides only high-level information about any matters that have arisen, which can be triangulated with other pre-inspection information in order to inform inspection trails (which should be recorded in an evidence form). Where inspectors are leading an inspection of a boarding or residential special school or a children's home providing education, they should ensure that they have also checked the linked social care site on the respective portal, information available on the school's website, which may include a prospectus and other information for parents

⁴ <http://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/parent-view-results>.

- any complaints from parents or members of the public notified to Ofsted and held on file
 - access to the school's census returns through the ISP's secure inspection portal and consideration of whether the information from these indicates particular lines of enquiry that should be followed up in the course of the inspection
 - the school's website and consideration of the school policies and procedures if they are held there and any other relevant material provided electronically by the school.
14. 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.
15. 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 judgements and come to a collective view about the quality of the education provided by the school.
16. The lead inspector should plan sufficient time for holding team meetings and providing feedback to the school to ensure that the inspection is concluded on time.

Notification and introduction

17. Ofsted gives schools no more than one day's notice of inspection. This means that schools must take into account that inspectors could come at any time, and inspectors must be prepared to take schools as they find them. Thus, a school is not required to make any special preparation for the inspection, and inspectors should not expect the school to make any special arrangements for them.
18. Notification of inspection is normally given by an administrator from the ISP in a telephone call at around lunchtime on the day before the inspection is due to start. The inspection will normally start in the early afternoon of the following day. The administrator should ask to speak to the headteacher or, in the absence of the headteacher, the most senior member of staff available. The

administrator should check that the school is open and that there are no special circumstances that would prevent the inspection from taking place.⁵ During the telephone call, the administrator should cover the points listed in Annex C.

19. The ISP will send a formal notification of inspection letter to the school (as an attachment to an email) on that same day.⁶ It will confirm the team details, dates and documents needed. Also attached to the email will be a copy of the inspection questionnaire for the school's staff and a letter for the school to send to the parents and placing authorities of all pupils inviting them to fill in Parent View. The school is asked to distribute the questionnaire to all staff apart from those in the boarding provision, whose views will have already been sought through the online point-in-time survey. The ISP must copy the confirmation email to the lead inspector and to the lead boarding inspector in the case of an integrated inspection.

The lead inspector's telephone call

20. The lead inspector should telephone the school on the morning of the inspection and ask to speak to the headteacher or, in the absence of the headteacher, the most senior member of staff available. This telephone call is an important opportunity to initiate a professional relationship between the lead inspector and the headteacher. It should be short and focused on practical issues, such as the time that the inspector(s) will arrive and the arrangements for inspection activities. Inspectors should not use this as an opportunity to probe or investigate the school's self-evaluation or any other matters.
21. A good working relationship between the lead inspector and the headteacher and/or proprietor is based on courtesy and professional behaviour. Inspectors are expected to uphold Ofsted's code of conduct and must be sensitive to the context of the school and its ability to respond to a range of requests in the time available.⁷ Lead inspectors should avoid making unrealistic demands on the school. The school may not be able to quickly prepare a space for inspectors to work or arrange interviews and assemble documents and policies when inspectors arrive at short notice. However, the school should be able to supply the lead inspector with a staff list, a plan of the school, a timetable with the times of the school day, a copy of the current school improvement plan and a copy of the school's self-evaluation in whichever form it wishes to present it.

⁵ *Deferral policy for inspections of independent day, boarding and residential special schools* (090037), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090037.

⁶ The inspection service providers have been supplied with standard text to use in the covering email to schools, to ensure that schools receive a consistent message.

⁷ The code of conduct for inspectors is published in *The framework for inspecting non-association independent schools* (140052), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140052.

Liaising with the social care inspector

22. In the case of integrated inspections, once the lead inspector has spoken to the headteacher, they must briefly telephone the lead boarding inspector to confirm that the inspection is taking place and convey the estimated time of arrival.

Duties of the inspection service provider

23. The ISP will provide the appropriate **inspection forms** in advance of the inspection, via their secure inspection portal. These will include evidence forms, a pre-populated *Record of inspection evidence and judgements* and the *Report template for standard inspections of independent schools*.
24. The ISP will also make the following documents available through their inspection portal: the annual school census return data; and the previous inspection report(s), including the most recent welfare report in schools with residential provision, the most recent childcare report for schools with registered childcare, and any other reports such as a progress monitoring or emergency inspection report on the school, if relevant. The last welfare report must be uploaded even when the education provision of a boarding or residential special school will be inspected as a single event. Where the education provision of a school with dual registration as a children's home will be inspected, either as a single event or at the same time as the care provision, the ISP must ensure that the previous inspection on the care provision is uploaded to the portal.
25. The analysis of responses to Ofsted's point-in-time surveys for pupils and, where applicable, boarders/residential pupils, boarding staff and placing authorities must also be made available on the inspection portal; the analyses will have been provided to the ISP by Ofsted's inspection management and support team. The previously completed *Pre-registration regulatory check sheet* and advice note must be provided for the first inspection of all newly registered independent schools.
26. In the case of integrated inspections, the ISP must provide the social care inspector/s as well as the education inspector/s with access to the inspection portal. The social care inspector will access additional information about the school through the regulatory support application (RSA).

If a school cannot be contacted by the inspection service provider

27. In exceptional circumstances, it may prove difficult for the ISP to make contact with the school. In cases where the school has a telephone answering machine, the ISP should leave a message and state the time at which this message was left, keeping a note that they have done so. Where the telephone remains unanswered, the ISP should persevere, keeping a note of the times at which they tried to make contact with the school.

28. If the ISP has not managed to make contact by **2pm** on the day before the inspection, they will contact the relevant regional Senior HMI responsible for independent schools. Normally, the Senior HMI will advise that the inspection will continue and that the ISP should continue to try and make contact with the school by telephone. If there continues to be no answer, the inspection will be undertaken as an unannounced inspection.
29. If a secure email address for the school is available from the last inspection report or the school's website, the ISP will email the formal notification of inspection letter and accompanying documents to it (see paragraph 19) whether or not they are able to make telephone contact with the school. Where one is not available, the lead inspector will seek confirmation of the school's email address on arrival at the school, and provide it to the ISP so that the documents can be supplied as soon as possible. The lead inspector will also give a paper copy of the inspection questionnaire for school staff and the letter for parents and carers to the school on arrival.

Requests for deferral

30. If a school requests a deferral of its inspection the lead inspector must make Ofsted aware through the agreed channels. Ofsted will decide whether this should be granted in accordance with its policy on the deferral of inspections.⁸ The deferral policy makes clear that the absence of the headteacher is not normally a reason for deferring an inspection.

Informing parents of the inspection

31. When the ISP sends confirmation of the inspection to the school by email, this will include a letter which gives formal notification of the inspection for parents. The school must make every effort and take such steps as are reasonably practicable to notify all parents of registered pupils, using this letter. In addition, the school should also be encouraged to notify parents using its own electronic systems (such as SMS messages) where available. The letter will invite parents to give their views about the school to the lead inspector and will provide them with the following information:
 - the website address for Parent View
 - how to communicate, or request a meeting, with the inspection team.

⁸ *Deferral policy for inspections of independent day, boarding and residential special schools* (090037), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090037.

During the inspection

The start of the on-site inspection

32. Inspections do not normally last longer than three days, and the size of the inspection team will vary according to the size and nature of the school – please see Annex B for a timeline.
33. Inspectors must show their identity badges on arrival (these should be worn at all times during inspection) and ensure that the headteacher (or other senior member of staff) has been informed of their arrival. Inspectors should ensure that inspection activity starts promptly.
34. The lead inspector should meet briefly with the proprietor, headteacher and/or senior leadership team at the beginning of the inspection to:
 - introduce team inspectors, if there is more than one inspector
 - make arrangements for a longer meeting at a convenient time with the proprietor, 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
 - request information about staff absence and other practical issues
 - ascertain whether there are particular reasons why any lessons should not be observed, for example if a teacher is subject to capability 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.
 - discover how to access the policy documents and records required for the regulatory part of the inspection
 - clarify that Ofsted does not expect to see any particular style of teaching.
35. In small schools, the need for such meetings may be reduced. Precise arrangements should be made at the discretion of the lead inspector, having regard for the views of the headteacher.
36. 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.

Organisation of the inspection activities

37. Lead inspectors may use their inspection time and deploy their inspection team members as they see fit. However, on arrival the lead inspector should meet

the headteacher and analyse the school's self-evaluation and any other information presented by the school. The lead inspector may undertake the regulatory checks but may also undertake some direct observation of lessons on the afternoon of the first day at their discretion.

38. If the inspection team is augmented by other school inspectors, they must arrive at the start of the second day. All members of the inspection team must contribute to the evaluation of the main issues and the judgements and come to a view about the quality of the education and overall effectiveness of the school. Where there is more than one team inspector, the lead inspector should produce an outline team deployment plan for at least the first day in school. This should indicate any particular patterns of lesson observations planned by the lead inspector and any meetings with pupils and/or staff.
39. Inspection activities include observing teaching and learning; looking at the school's policies and records; checking staff files and the single central register; looking at pupils' work; hearing pupils read and checking their understanding; talking to pupils, and boarders, if relevant; analysing the feedback from pupils and placing authorities through the completed online point-in-time surveys, responses from parents and carers to Parent View, and from staff to the paper-based inspection questionnaire;⁹ holding discussions with the headteacher and key staff; answering any queries raised by the school and providing feedback at the end of the inspection. The lead inspector may use the inspection tariff flexibly to include all these activities in a way that best suits the circumstances of the school. The lead inspector must ensure that there is a secure evidence base on which the judgements are founded. Inspectors must spend as much time as possible in classes, observing lessons, talking to pupils about their work, scrutinising work, gauging their understanding and their engagement in learning, and obtaining pupils' perceptions of typical teaching.
40. Inspectors must see a sufficient number of lessons to make a secure judgement on all the independent school standards relating to teaching, and to follow inspection trails identified from the pre-inspection information.
41. The **first inspection of a newly registered school** takes place within a year of its registration. The tariff and conduct of this inspection is the same as for all standard inspections under section 162A. Inspectors should use the evidence of compliance recorded on the pre-registration regulatory check sheet from the pre-registration inspection as a helpful guide to planning the inspection, but should nonetheless check compliance and implementation of policies in the normal way. Now that the school has admitted pupils, inspectors should focus

⁹ Inspectors should use an evidence form to record inspection trails arising from responses to the staff questionnaires and the online point-in-time surveys. The completed staff questionnaires, analysis of the responses to the point-in-time surveys, any printed copies of responses made to Parent View, and evidence forms must be included in the evidence base for the inspection.

the bulk of inspection time on the quality of teaching and learning over time, and on how well the stated policies meet the needs of the pupils in the school and how effectively they are implemented. In particular, inspectors must ensure that procedures for safeguarding pupils/boarders, including the procedures for recruiting staff, are being implemented with rigour.

Gathering and recording evidence

42. Compliance with each of the independent school standards and other regulatory requirements must be recorded in the *Record of inspection evidence and judgements* (ROIEJ), together with the evidence of any non-compliance. Inspectors should refer to the detailed guidance in *Completing the record of evidence and judgements* which provides additional clarification about each standard and guidance on how to complete the record of evidence.¹⁰ Inspectors must be diligent in recording their evidence of non-compliance in the ROIEJ, ensuring that the record is clear and legible and that all relevant sections of the form are completed.
43. With the exception of regulatory compliance, all other evidence must be recorded on evidence forms. Inspectors must follow the guidance in part B of this handbook carefully to make an evaluative assessment of the school. There is a clear relationship between the grade descriptors and the school's compliance with the independent school standards, which is set out in the evaluation schedule.
44. Inspectors must record their evidence clearly and legibly on evidence forms, 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 the judgements. Evidence forms should also be used to record interviews with staff, the key outcomes of team meetings, all feedback given throughout the inspection, and to summarise the main points of discussion when feeding back to leaders and governors, including any significant response from the school.
45. All evidence forms must be passed to the lead inspector for inclusion in the inspection evidence base, which the lead inspector will submit to the ISP at the end of the inspection. Evidence bases are destroyed after six months in accordance with Ofsted's retention policy. Where inspectors choose to use electronic evidence forms, a hard copy must be printed and added to the evidence base.
46. Evidence forms may be scrutinised for the purposes of retrieval and quality assurance monitoring and in the event of a complaint. It is important that

¹⁰ *Completing the record of inspection evidence and judgements* (090051), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090051.

inspectors record accurately the time spent gathering the evidence recorded on the evidence form. Inspectors should highlight or identify any information that was provided 'in confidence'.

47. The electronic *Record of inspection evidence and judgements* forms part of the evidence base which is scrutinised by the quality assurance reader.
48. In the event of a safeguarding concern being under investigation at the time of the inspection, or emerging in the course of the inspection, inspectors should follow Ofsted's safeguarding procedures and seek advice. They should also refer to *Completing the record of inspection evidence and judgements* and *Inspecting safeguarding briefing*.^{11,12} *Writing inspection reports* gives advice to inspectors on how to write up these matters in the report.¹³

Lesson observations

49. The key objective of lesson observations is to evaluate the quality of teaching and its contribution to learning over time, particularly in the core subjects across all phases of education. This includes provision within the Early Years Foundation Stage, such as nursery/pre-school classes if they are included as part of the registered provision. **Inspectors must not advocate a particular method of teaching or show preference towards a specific lesson structure.** As such, inspectors will not look for a preferred methodology but must record aspects of teaching that are effective and identify ways in which teaching and learning can be improved. 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 teaching and learning
 - gather evidence about how well individual pupils and particular groups of pupils are learning and making progress, including those with disabilities and special educational needs, and the most able, and assess the extent to which pupils have grown in knowledge
 - collect sufficient evidence to support detailed and specific recommendations about any improvements needed to teaching and learning.

¹¹ *Completing the record of inspection evidence and judgements* (090051), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090051.

¹² *Inspecting safeguarding briefing* (090205), Ofsted, 2014: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/briefings-and-information-for-use-during-inspections-of-maintained-schools-and-academies

¹³ *Writing inspection reports* (090052), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090052.

50. 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 planning.
51. There are many different strategies for lesson observations. Lead inspectors should not be constrained by a single approach, but should use their professional judgement to plan an appropriate lesson observation strategy. 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 experience, progress and learning of these pupils can be judged within the context of other pupils' experience.
52. 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 inspections of large schools.
53. 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.
54. When inspectors carry out lesson observations, they should grade, where possible, the judgements such as achievement and teaching, indicating in particular the growth in students' knowledge and the quality of their learning. Judgements made through shorter observations will relate to the part of the lesson observed. For short observations, inspectors might not award grades, but should use the evidence they have gathered to inform the overall evaluation of teaching.
55. As noted above, inspectors must not advocate a particular approach to teaching or planning lessons. It is for the school to determine how best to teach and engage pupils to secure their good learning.

Participation of the headteacher or senior staff in joint lesson observations

56. The lead inspector should invite the proprietor, 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 quality of teaching and learning they have observed and the implications of this for understanding the quality of teaching and learning over time. 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 the judgements should be explored. The joint observation and subsequent discussion will allow the inspector to engage in a professional dialogue with the headteacher or senior member of staff. It will also enable the inspector to:

- assess the accuracy and quality of the school's monitoring and 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 judgements inspectors are making on the quality of teaching and how it might be improved.

57. The lead inspector should be mindful not to overload the headteacher and/or senior member of staff. The number of joint observations will be at the discretion of the lead inspector.
58. In most cases, the senior member of staff involved in the joint observation will give feedback. 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.
59. The inspector should complete an EF on the observations made in the lesson and the feedback. Any notes taken by the headteacher or senior member of staff should remain in the school; they are not included within the evidence base for the inspection.

Feedback and discussion with teachers and other staff

60. With the exception of joint observations, where feedback is given by the headteacher or senior member of staff and observed by inspectors, teachers must be offered feedback by inspectors. If the observation has been for 25 minutes or more, the feedback will take place at a time when the inspector and teacher/member of staff can discuss specific points that have been noted during the observation. If the observation is for less time than this, the feedback will not be extensive.
61. Feedback should address the main strengths and weaknesses identified during the observation, focusing on pupils' learning and the teacher's contribution to it, including the teaching judgement where one has been made.

62. Inspectors might also discuss:

- the context and content of the whole lesson
- how the lesson fits into a sequence or programme of lessons
- associated teaching and learning activities used by the teacher
- how professional development has improved the quality of teaching
- the extent to which leaders' monitoring of teaching has identified needs and provided targeted pedagogical guidance and support for teachers
- the nature and impact of performance management.

Inspecting the teaching of literacy and mathematics

63. Inspectors will consider the impact of teaching and outcomes across the range of the school's provision and 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. When making the judgements, inspectors will give particular attention to the teaching of literacy (including reading) and mathematics.

Literacy¹⁴

64. Literacy includes the key skills of reading, writing and oral communication that enable pupils to access different areas of the curriculum. Inspectors should give attention to pupils' writing and communication skills, as well as their reading skills. They should also consider the extent to which the school intervenes to provide support for pupils, especially those that are at risk of underachieving.

Hearing children read

65. Inspectors will listen to, among others, lower attaining pupils' reading in schools with primary aged pupils. There may be occasions when inspectors need to hear lower attaining pupils read in schools with younger secondary aged pupils. This is to find out how effectively the school is teaching reading to its weakest readers.

66. 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.

¹⁴ Please refer to the guidance for inspectors: *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.

67. Wherever possible, inspectors should listen to children reading within a classroom or in an open area with which pupils are familiar.

Mathematics¹⁵

68. When evaluating the effectiveness of a school's work in mathematics through the analysis of performance data, observations of 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, age groups, key stages, sets and classes, including those taught by non-specialist teachers of mathematics in schools with pupils of secondary age
 - how well teaching, in the mathematics lessons observed and through discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their work:
 - fosters mathematical understanding of new concepts and methods – this includes teachers' explanations and the way they require pupils to think and reason for themselves
 - helps pupils to apply the mathematical knowledge and skills they have been taught, by solving a variety of mathematical problems
 - how well pupils apply their mathematical skills across the curriculum.
69. Inspectors should evaluate the school's approach to early entry for GCSE mathematics and its impact on achievement and subsequent curriculum pathways. Inspectors should challenge the use of inappropriate early and multiple entry to GCSE examinations, including where pupils stop studying mathematics before the end of Year 11.

The use of data on inspection

70. Inspectors should use a range of data to judge a school's performance, including that found in examination or key stage results where available. No single measure or indicator determines judgements, particularly since much data are historical and relate to pupils that have left the school.
71. 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 levels, particularly where there are no externally marked test or examination results

¹⁵ Please refer to *Mathematics: made to measure* (110159), Ofsted 2012; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110159.

- check the robustness and accuracy of the school's self-evaluation, particularly on achievement, teaching, and behaviour and safety.

Other observations

72. Inspectors should ensure that they observe pupils in a range of situations outside normal lessons to evaluate 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.

Meetings with pupils, parents, staff and other stakeholders

73. Inspectors must take advantage of opportunities to gather evidence from pupils during the school day, for example in formal meetings and informally before and after school, at lunchtime and during break or play times. When engaging with pupils in lessons, inspectors should be mindful not to disrupt the flow of teaching and any activities taking place.
74. Inspectors must gather evidence from a wide range of pupils, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, pupils who are receiving other forms of support and the most able.
75. As well as meeting pupils, inspectors are highly likely to conduct meetings with:
- parents (these may be informal at the start and end of the day or through telephone conversations, especially of parents whose children are boarders)
 - staff
 - or other stakeholders.
76. These meetings must take place without the presence of the proprietor, 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 which raise child protection or safeguarding issues and/or where there are concerns about serious misconduct or criminal activity.
77. Inspectors must also have regard to their own safety and exercise caution in setting up interviews for example with vulnerable pupils in circumstances which could potentially put the inspector at risk if they are alone.

Meeting with those with responsibility for governance

78. Inspectors will always seek to meet with the proprietor and those in leadership and governance positions during the course of the inspection.
79. Inspectors will expect those with responsibility for governance to know about the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Inspectors will expect school governors to be familiar with, and understand information available regarding the school's performance.
80. 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 proprietor, headteacher or senior staff.

Obtaining the views of registered parents and other stakeholders

81. Inspectors must obtain the views of registered parents at the school. Parent View, an online survey, is the primary means of obtaining their views. However, inspectors should take account of results of any other surveys carried out by the school, or commissioned by the school, in addition to results from Parent View. Inspectors must not come to any final conclusions on the basis of the Parent View survey data alone.
82. Inspectors will review the evidence from Parent View, and any other evidence from parents, towards the end of the first day on site and check Parent View responses again on the second day to ensure that all on-line responses received during the inspection are taken into account. Where individual parents raise serious issues, these should be followed up with the school.
83. Ofsted also conducts annual online point-in-time surveys of the views of pupils. Inspectors should note that some schools do not use the online pupils' survey and instead circulate a culturally adapted version of the survey in hard copy, the responses to which will be available to the inspectors on arrival at the school.
84. A point-in-time survey is also used to gather the views of local authorities that place and fund children in independent schools. Further information about the point-in-time surveys is available in Annex E.
85. The views of the staff at schools are gathered through a questionnaire, which the ISP sends to the school by email alongside the formal notification of inspection letter. The school is asked to distribute the questionnaire to all staff apart from those in the boarding provision, whose views will have already been sought through an online point-in-time survey.
86. The questionnaire states that staff should complete and return their questionnaires in a sealed envelope, marked 'Confidential – for the attention of

the Ofsted inspection team' by 11am on the second day of inspection, where practicable.

87. Inspectors use all this information intelligently to set up lines of enquiry which they must record on an evidence form and pursue during the inspection. They must give the headteacher and/or proprietor the opportunity to discuss and comment on the analyses of pupils' and parents' views, particularly where they raise issues of concern or seem out of line with the school's self-evaluation.
88. Data from surveys of parents, pupils or staff should be corroborated with other evidence including any complaints.
89. 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 that receive alternative provision.¹⁶

Performance management and professional development

90. Inspectors should consider how effectively senior leaders use performance management and the school's self-evaluation to focus professional development activities. This should include:
 - analysis of the impact of professional development on teaching, and on specific teachers
 - scrutiny of anonymised information on the performance management of teaching staff, and its relationship to salary progression, provided to those responsible for the governance of the school
 - information about the performance management of the headteacher
 - discussions with the headteacher, governors, senior and middle leaders, and other staff
 - scrutiny of the school's records of lesson observations
 - 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

¹⁶ See *Subsidiary guidance* (110166), Ofsted, 2014: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110166.

- evaluation of the support and professional development provided for newly qualified teachers and other teachers who are in the early stages of their careers
- analysis of information from staff questionnaires, where available.

How the headteacher or representative is involved in the inspection

91. The lead inspector should meet the headteacher periodically throughout the inspection to:
 - provide an update on emerging issues, including the identification of any inadequate teaching, and 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, such as the arrangements to safeguard children or health and safety.
92. The outcomes of all meetings with the headteacher should be recorded on an EF.
93. The lead inspector should ensure that the executive headteacher, where such an arrangement exists, is invited to make a contribution to the inspection.

Team meetings held during the inspection

94. If the inspection merits more than one inspector, 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.
95. As soon as 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.

Reaching final judgements

96. Inspection activity, including lesson observations, should continue throughout the final 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 also should 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

97. Following the end of the inspection, there must be a brief feedback meeting that includes the proprietor, headteacher, where possible. Attendees at this feedback meeting should include as many representatives from the governing body, or those responsible for governance, as possible. It is for the lead inspector to decide, following discussion with the headteacher, whether other senior staff should be present.
98. 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 confidential to the school until it receives the final report. Governors and others may seek clarification about the judgements, but discussion should not be lengthy. Any feedback or comments should be in the form of professional and objective language and should not include informal remarks that may be personally damaging to the reputation of a member of staff or to the professionalism of the inspectors. An EF should be completed by an inspector summarising the key points raised at the feedback.
99. 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, including any standards not met in advance of the extended formal feedback meeting.
100. 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 should, therefore, be treated as confidential until the school receives a copy of the final inspection report
 - about the independent school standards met/not met
 - 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
 - about the procedures leading to the publication of the report
 - that the school is invited to complete the post-inspection survey

- about (where relevant) the implications of the school being judged inadequate
- about the procedure for making a complaint.

Aligned inspections of independent schools with dual registration as children's homes

101. The inspection of education in a registered independent school which is also a children's home may take place as a free-standing event or be aligned with the full inspection of the children's home. Where possible, Ofsted will attempt to align both inspections so that inspectors may work together and share evidence, which should reduce pressure on the school/home.
102. Where the education inspection takes place as a free-standing event, inspectors must follow the instructions for conducting the inspection of a day school, but prepare for the inspection by reading both of the most recent education and children's home reports. They must make themselves aware of any on-going issues which relate to children's welfare which may be likely to impinge on aspects of the school inspection, and ensure that they take these into consideration during the inspection.
103. Where the inspections are aligned, both inspectors should work together to share evidence and reduce the demands of inspection on the school. The lead education inspector should contact the social care inspector in advance to discuss the inspection. The social care inspector is likely to be more familiar and up to date with developments at the children's home, and this knowledge should be shared. The lead education inspector should share with the social care inspector any issues arising from the pre-inspection evidence or the initial telephone call to the school.
104. Throughout the inspection, inspectors should share the evidence that is required by them both in order to make the judgements required to fulfil their respective evaluation schedules, for example evidence of child protection and safe recruitment procedures, records, risk analyses and matters relating to safeguarding children's welfare, health and safety. They may inspect these matters jointly, where practicable, but in any event should share their judgements with one another to ensure that their judgements match up, and that any inconsistencies are justified and clear to the school and the children's home.
105. Inspectors should aim to feed back their judgements jointly at the end of the inspection, so that the school/home receives clear and consistent messages from Ofsted, particularly about the provision which is covered in both inspection schedules.
106. Aligned inspections always result in separate reports – one for the DfE which covers the education provision and one for Ofsted which reports the findings from the care inspection.

Inspecting group providers

107. Where education is provided in children's homes that are members of a group or company of schools which is registered as a single education provider, Ofsted will make separate arrangements to inspect the group provision as a whole, taking account of each of the settings. To be eligible for these arrangements the group must share common policies, procedures, records and teaching arrangements, and all of the settings must be in reasonable geographical proximity. The group must be registered as a single education provider. The registration is at the discretion of the DfE. The DfE, as the registration authority, may take other matters into consideration, such as the outcome of previous education or care inspections of individual settings in the group. Specific inspection arrangements will be matched to the provision made by each group.
108. The DfE will inform Ofsted of the registration of a group provider. Ofsted's Senior HMI remit lead for inspections of independent schools will arrange a meeting with the group's director of education. The meeting will review the nature of the group provision, the location of all settings and the arrangements made for care and education by the group. The meeting will also cover the specific inspection requirements, such as the number of days and size of the team needed to cover all settings, and the expertise required by the inspection team. The arrangements will vary between groups, but it is expected that the size of the inspection team will be sufficient to inspect all settings, for team meetings to occur and for feedback to be given to the group as a whole within a single week. The meeting between the Senior HMI and the education director will occur at a separate time in advance of the inspection and outside the normal notification period. After the meeting the Senior HMI will discuss and finalise scheduling and deployment requirements and discuss these with the ISP remit lead for independent school inspections and the lead inspector.
109. The lead inspector will be allocated two planning days in advance of the inspection to ensure that the more complex aspects of coordinating the team's inspection can be fully planned. The lead inspector should prepare a detailed plan and briefing for the team, indicating the locations and telephone numbers of all the settings and a list of those to be inspected by each inspector, together with an indication of the time they should spend in each location. The lead inspector must ensure that sufficient time is planned for travel between the settings, particularly if they are some distance apart, or if travel is required at peak times. The briefing must include a clear focus of activity for each inspector and their role in the inspection. The briefing should be recorded, made available to all team members, and included in the evidence base for the inspection.
110. Each setting must be seen, even where there are currently no young people in residence or being educated. Where there are currently no young people, the inspector must check that the accommodation and premises are suitable, and look at any individual records or procedures that are relevant to that setting.

111. The lead inspector must plan for inspectors to observe a range of teaching staff, without overburdening any one individual, so that the inspection team covers a variety of subjects, teachers and young people in the group in order to make reliable judgements about teaching and learning and the achievements the pupils make. Where it is possible to do so, inspection efficiencies should be built into the plan, so that group records, for example of pupils' progress, or staff recruitment files, may be looked at centrally.
112. The lead inspector must ensure that sufficient time is planned for all team inspectors to meet and discuss their findings and to contribute to the main inspection judgements of the whole group provision. Team meetings should weigh carefully the evidence from all settings to reach balanced and clear overall judgements. However, while there may be variations between settings and the response of young people may be different in each, all settings must meet the independent school standards, particularly for premises, welfare, health and safety, for the group provision to meet the standards overall.
113. In all other respects the normal inspection arrangements for notification, gathering stakeholders' views and conducting the inspection and feedback will apply. Such an inspection will result in a single report. The individual settings should be referred to in the report by their social care reference numbers only. For further guidance on inspection reports for group providers, please refer to *Writing inspection reports*.¹⁷

Assessing a material change application as part of a routine section 162A inspection

114. Occasionally, a school makes an application for a material change around the same time as the routine section 162A and/or the routine boarding inspection is due. When this occurs, and at the request of the Department for Education, it is sensible and desirable that the material change is assessed as part of the inspection. Guidance for assessing a material change as part of a routine inspection is available in *Conducting additional inspections of independent schools*.¹⁸

Identifying an inadequate independent day or boarding school after a section 162A or integrated inspection

115. If, at the end of the inspection, the inspectors have reached the conclusion that the school's overall effectiveness is inadequate, the lead inspector must complete *Form A – confirmation that an independent day, boarding or residential special school is causing concern* (Form A) and send it to the ISP

¹⁷ *Writing inspection reports* (090052), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090052.

¹⁸ *Conducting additional inspections of independent schools* (090060), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090060.

together with the draft report and *Record of inspection evidence and judgements* at the end of the inspection.¹⁹

116. It is the responsibility of the inspection service provider to send the completed Form A to the independent school admin team (indepentschools@ofsted.gov.uk) who will forward it to the relevant regional Senior HMI for independent schools together with the final copy of the report and the *Record of inspection evidence and judgements*, which should also be sent to Ofsted via the datafeed in the normal way.
117. On receipt, the Senior HMI will consider the information provided on the form and may, at that stage, hold a discussion with the lead inspector, before taking further action. The main purpose of Form A is to alert the registration authority, the DfE, to the need for regulatory action to meet the standards and to prioritise those schools which require most urgent attention. The Form A will be sent to the DfE by the relevant SHMI.
118. Children's homes are registered, inspected and regulated by Ofsted. If any national minimum standards for children's homes are not met or any aspect is found to be inadequate Ofsted, as the registration authority, will take steps to follow up on this.

After the inspection

Arrangements for publication of the report

119. The lead inspector is responsible for writing the whole of the inspection report and finalising the *Record of inspection evidence and judgements* on the day after the inspection ends. Guidance is provided in the documents *Writing inspection reports*.²⁰ The guidance for writing an integrated report on a boarding or residential special school is in *Conducting inspections of boarding and residential provision in schools*.²¹ Lead education inspectors **must** refer to this document.
120. 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

¹⁹ *Form A – confirmation that an independent day, boarding or residential special school is causing concern* (20090044), Ofsted, 2013; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/form-confirmation-independent-day-boarding-or-residential-special-school-causing-concern.

²⁰ *Writing inspection reports* (090052), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090052.

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

end of the inspection. The school has one working day to respond. The lead inspector will respond to the school's comments about factual accuracy.²²

121. 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.
122. 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 school has five working days to respond. The lead inspector will respond to the school's comments about factual accuracy.
123. Schools judged to be inadequate will normally receive an electronic version of the final report within 20 working days of the end of the on-site inspection.
124. Paragraph 24(1)(d) of the independent school standards requires the proprietor to ensure that a copy of the inspection report is provided to the parents of every registered pupil at the school by the date specified by Ofsted, which is five working days from receipt. The proprietor may send or give a copy of the report to parents. Alternatively, if parents have provided an email address, the school may either email an electronic copy of the report to them, or email a link to where the report is available to download from the internet. HMCI also expects schools to ensure that all pupils are made aware of the findings of the inspection. The proprietor may also wish to make any local authorities that have placed pupils in the school aware of the report.
125. The proprietor must also make a copy of the inspection report available upon request to members of the public. A charge, not exceeding the cost of reproduction, can be made for copies of the inspection report.
126. The final version of the report will be published on Ofsted's website.

The evidence base for the inspection

127. The lead inspector is responsible for sending the evidence base, which should include the top copies of all evidence forms, including any completed by the social care inspector in the case of integrated inspections, and any additional notes or hard copies of completed questionnaires by post to the inspection service provider within five days of the end of the inspection. The evidence

²² 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.

base for the inspection needs to be retained for the period of time specified in Ofsted's *Handling and retention of inspection evidence*²³ guidance.

Quality assurance and complaints

How are inspections quality assured?

128. 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.
129. Ofsted monitors the quality of inspections and reports through a range of formal processes. Some inspections are subject to quality assurance by HMI and/or senior ISP managers. When an external quality assurance visit is scheduled, the HMI undertaking the quality assurance visit will telephone the headteacher around 30 minutes in advance of their arrival at the school, and explain clearly the purpose and format of the visit. The lead inspector may not be aware of the quality assurance visit. The quality assurance assessment is confidential to the inspectors and the ISPs concerned. As part of quality assurance, a sample of inspection evidence bases will be evaluated.
130. In the rare event that an inspection and/or an inspection report are judged by Ofsted to be seriously flawed, the school will be notified that the inspection is incomplete and that a further visit may be necessary, to make sure that enough evidence is gathered to make the inspection judgements secure.²⁴
131. All schools will be invited to complete a post-inspection survey so that the views of headteachers, governors and staff are considered and can contribute to the future development of inspection.

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

132. 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.
133. The publication of an inspection report is not normally delayed by a complaint.

²³ *Handling and retention of inspection evidence* (100122), Ofsted, 2010;

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100122>.

²⁴ *Flawed inspections* (110098), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110098.

134. If it has not been possible to resolve the concerns, then individuals or schools may decide to lodge a formal complaint. The complaints procedures are available on Ofsted's website.²⁵

²⁵ www.ofsted.gov.uk/contact-us/how-complain.

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

135. The evaluation schedule sets out the sources of evidence, grade descriptors and independent school standards 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. It is interpreted within the context of each school.
136. The evaluation schedule must be used in conjunction with the guidance set out in part 1 of this document and *The framework for inspecting non-association independent schools*. Inspectors must interpret grade descriptors in relation to pupils' age, stage and phase of education.

Judging the quality of a school

137. Inspectors must judge **the quality of education provided in the school**. This judgement concerns the provision for all pupils at the school, including within the Early Years Foundation Stage and the sixth form, where such provision exists. This is the overarching judgement.
138. In order to make a judgement about the quality of education provided in the school, inspectors **must** first make four judgements. These are:
- the achievement of pupils at the school
 - the quality of teaching in the school
 - the behaviour and safety of pupils at the school.
 - the quality of leadership in, and management of, the school.
139. In reaching these judgements, inspectors must also consider the following :
- the extent to which the school meets all paragraphs of the independent school standards. Compliance with relevant standards informs the judgements listed in paragraph 138, as set-out in the grade descriptors below, and in Annex F
 - the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school
 - 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.
140. Where the school has a sixth form, inspectors should evaluate and report on its overall effectiveness.

141. In judging the quality of education provided by the school, inspectors will decide whether overall the school is outstanding (grade 1), good (grade 2), requires improvement (grade 3) or inadequate (grade 4).
142. Inspection is primarily about evaluating how well individual pupils benefit from 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. Depending on the type of school, 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,²⁶ as defined by the Equality Act 2010
 - boys
 - girls
 - the highest and lowest attainers
 - pupils who require additional support, including:
 - looked after children
 - children of service families
 - boarders/residential pupils
 - those receiving alternative provision²⁷.
143. In making their judgements, inspectors draw on the available evidence, use their professional knowledge and consider the guidance and the grade descriptors for each judgement, provided in this document.
144. In the published regulations, each independent school standard is set out in one or more paragraphs. For example, paragraph 7 is a standard in its own right, and paragraph 5(a)(i) is an element of the standard in paragraph 5. However, for the purpose of this guidance document, the term 'compliance with the standard' is used in the context of both examples shown above.

Overall effectiveness: the quality of education provided in the school

145. When reporting on the quality of education, inspectors must consider the extent to which the school meets the independent school standards, evaluate evidence

²⁶ 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 children; lesbian, gay and bisexual pupils; transgender pupils; young carers; and other vulnerable groups.

²⁷ See *Subsidiary guidance*.

for each of the four judgements, and judge the extent to which the school meets the needs of the range of pupils on the school's roll. They must take into account the destination of pupils when they leave school and consider how well they have been prepared for their next steps.

146. When making judgements, inspectors must consider whether the school meets all the safeguarding and welfare, and (except where there is an exemption in place (see Annex D)) learning and development statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, where there is provision for children aged three to the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The impact of any breaches in statutory requirements must be taken into account and reported upon clearly within the inspection report.
147. Inspectors must also consider the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and the effectiveness of leadership in improving the quality of education or in maintaining already high standards.
148. 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 as outstanding (grade 1)
 - the school requires improvement as even though it may meet all of the independent school standards it is not a good school because one or more of the four judgements requires improvement (grade 3), and/or there are weaknesses in the overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; any independent school standards that are not met will be judged by inspectors to be minor, easy to rectify, and to not have a serious impact on pupils' welfare, health and safety, academic or personal development
 - the school is inadequate (grade 4) as there are one or more un-met independent school standards (or, where relevant, statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage) which have a negative impact on pupils' welfare, health and safety, academic or personal development, including the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
149. In addition to checking compliance with part 2 of the independent school standards, evidence regarding the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, evidence can be found, for example, where pupils:
- are reflective about beliefs, values and more profound aspects of human experience, enabling them to develop curiosity in their learning, and as thoughtful, responsible individuals
 - develop and apply an understanding of right and wrong in their school life and life outside school
 - take part in a range of activities requiring social skills

- develop awareness of and respect for diversity in relation to, for example, gender, race, religion and belief, culture, sexual orientation and disability
- gain a well-informed understanding of the options and challenges facing them as they move through the school and on to the next stage of their education, training and employment
- develop an appreciation of theatre, music, art and literature
- develop the skills and attitudes to enable them to participate fully and positively in democratic modern Britain
- respond positively to a range of artistic, sporting and other cultural opportunities
- understand and appreciate the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of their preparation for life.

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, which relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team. The exception is that teaching must be outstanding for overall effectiveness to be outstanding.

Outstanding (1)

- All of the independent school standards (and, where relevant, statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage) are met.
- Teaching is outstanding and, together with a rich and relevant curriculum, contributes to outstanding learning and achievement, significant growth in students' knowledge, and excellent attitudes to learning. Exceptionally, achievement may be good and rapidly improving.
- Pupils, and particular groups of pupils, including those within the Early Years Foundation Stage and/or sixth form 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 which ensures that all pupils have high levels of literacy appropriate to their age.²⁸
- The school's practice consistently reflects the highest expectations of staff and the highest aspirations for pupils, including 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 wellbeing enables them to thrive in a supportive, highly cohesive learning community.

Good (2)

- All of the independent school standards (and, where relevant, statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage) are met.
- Pupils benefit from teaching that is at least good and some that is outstanding. This leads to growth in students' knowledge, promotes very positive attitudes to learning and ensures that pupils' achievement is at least good.
- Pupils and particular groups of pupils including those within the Early Years Foundation Stage and/or sixth form, 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. Those pupils who have fallen behind are being helped to make rapid progress in their reading.
- The school takes effective action to enable most pupils, including 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

²⁸ Pupils whose cognitive ability is such that their literacy skills are likely to be limited make excellent progress appropriate to their age and capabilities.

wellbeing. There is a positive climate for learning.

Requires improvement (3)

- All of the independent school standards may be met, but the school is not yet demonstrating the characteristics of a good judgement. Any un-met independent school standards (or, where relevant, statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage) are minor, easily rectified, and do not have a serious impact on pupils' welfare, health and safety, academic or personal development.
- The school requires improvement because one or more of the four judgements requires improvement (grade 3) and/or there are weaknesses in the overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Inadequate (4)

- There are one or more un-met independent school standards (or, where relevant, statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage) which have a negative impact on pupils' welfare, health and safety, academic or personal development, including the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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

- the achievement of pupils, including those within the Early Years Foundation Stage and/or sixth form
- pupils' progress in literacy
- the quality of teaching across all age groups within the school
- the behaviour and safety of pupils
- the quality of the leadership in, and management of, the school.

Achievement of pupils at the school

150. 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 judgements and when reporting on the overall effectiveness of the school.
151. 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 levels and grades.
152. In judging the achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, inspectors should consider paragraphs 51 to 63 in the *Subsidiary guidance for inspecting maintained schools and academies* because much of this will apply to pupils in independent special schools, particularly those who are funded by the local authority and have statements of special educational needs. However, inspectors should bear in mind the following:
- independent schools do not have Raiseonline data
 - independent schools will not have Fischer Family Trust data, although pupils may come with some Fischer Family Trust information and this could be used for setting targets and baseline assessments
 - independent schools may use individual education plans but, as in mainstream schools, do not have to
 - independent schools could use the Department for Education's progression materials 2010-2011²⁹
 - a large proportion of pupils in independent special schools will be funded by local authorities (public money), so it is reasonable for local authorities to expect that independent schools' provision for these pupils is at least of equal quality as in mainstream schools when considering how well pupils' needs are met. This might include the use of external expertise, personalised programmes, preparation for the next stage in their education, information, advice and guidance, community links, appropriately trained staff
 - statements of special educational needs often state entitlement to a full National Curriculum³⁰

²⁹ *Progression 2010 to 2011: advice on improving data to raise attainment and maximise the progress of learners with special educational needs*: www.gov.uk/government/publications/progression-2010-to-2011-advice-on-improving-data-to-raise-attainment-and-maximise-the-progress-of-learners-with-special-educational-needs.

153. Inspectors must take into account whether the school meets paragraphs 2(1), 2(2)(a)–(j) and 4 in part 1 of the independent school standards.

154. Inspectors must take account of:

- **the learning and progress across all year groups of different groups of pupils currently on the roll of the school**, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, those for whom there is additional support 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 those who receive additional support
 - the quality and rigour of assessment, particularly in within the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1
 - discussions with pupils about their work
 - the views of parents, pupils, placing authorities 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**, including that for looked after children, disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and the most able. Evidence gathered by inspectors during the course of the inspection should include, where available:

³⁰ The independent school standards do not require independent schools to follow the National Curriculum.

- where the school uses the National Curriculum Standard Assessment Tests, the proportions making expected progress³¹ and the proportions exceeding expected progress in English and in mathematics from each starting point³², compared with national figures³³, for all pupils
 - value-added indices for the school overall and for different groups of pupils and subjects
 - other relevant indicators, including value-added data
 - performance measures for the sixth form,³⁴ which include success rates
 - Early Years Foundation Stage Profile data
 - where applicable, use of data below National Curriculum Level 1, including the national data analysis
 - any analysis of robust progress data presented by the school, including information provided by external organisations
 - pupils' progress over time as shown by the school's records and by any evidence or analysis by the school of pupils' progress overall and the progress of different groups of pupils, taking account of their starting points
- **pupils' attainment** in relation to national standards (where available) and compared with all schools, based on data over the last three years, 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

³¹ Expected progress is defined by the government as two National Curriculum levels of progress between Key Stages 1 and 2 and three National Curriculum levels of progress between Key Stages 2 and 4. From 2013, expected progress data between Key Stages 1 and 2 in English will be provided separately for reading and writing, but no longer aggregated for English.

Expected progress for pupils attaining below Level 1 of the National Curriculum at the end of Key Stages 1 or 2 is explained in *Subsidiary guidance*.

³² Starting points at Key Stage 1 include Levels W (and P levels), 1, 2c, 2b, 2a and 3; starting points at Key Stage 2 include Levels W (and P levels), 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

³³ Comparison should consider the consistency with which the school's proportions are close to or above the national figures for each starting point; school proportions below national figures for one starting point should not be considered to be compensated for by school proportions above national figures for another starting point.

³⁴ See *Subsidiary guidance*.

- the outcomes of the most recent phonic screening check and any follow-up screening undertaken by the school
- attainment as shown by test and examination results available in school, but not yet validated or benchmarked nationally
- **difference in achievement** between pupils who receive additional support and other pupils in the school, including:
 - gaps in attainment³⁵, in particular in English and mathematics
 - differences in progress from similar starting points.

155. Inspectors should also note the following:

- in schools where attainment is not benchmarked nationally, inspectors should draw on all the available evidence to decide whether attainment is above average, broadly average or low
- the standards attained by pupils at key points in their education and by the time they leave the school, including results in public examinations, and, where relevant, in Common Entrance; and their standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school
- in schools where pupils have completed part of a key stage elsewhere, inspectors should take this into account when evaluating the pupils' progress
- 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
- 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
- for those schools where children are aged three and four years old 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

³⁵ Gaps in attainment must include the difference between the average points 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, as explained in *Subsidiary guidance*.

- 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 is to start nursery or reception displaying the knowledge, skills and understanding that are typical for his or her age and then to meet the Early Learning Goals by the end of reception. Evaluation of achievement should also consider attainment at the end of reception in comparison with Early Years Foundation Stage Profile national figures and in terms of how well it prepares children for Key Stage 1
- where available, any 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. An example of typical progress is for a pupil who has met the Early Learning Goals at the end of reception to attain Level 2b at the end of Year 2. Inspectors should take into account how well pupils with a lower starting point have made up ground, and the breadth and depth of progress made by the most able.

Grade descriptors – Achievement of pupils at the school

Note: These descriptors should not to 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)

- All of the requirements for good are met.
- All of paragraphs 2(1), 2(2)(a)–(j) and 4 in part 1 of the independent school standards are met.
- Apart from where there is an exemption in place, the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (where appropriate) are met.
- From each different starting point³⁶, the proportions of pupils making expected progress³⁷ and the proportions exceeding expected progress in English and in mathematics are high compared with national figures. For schools only providing Early Years Foundation Stage provision, children exceed expected levels of development within the prime and specific areas of learning.
- Pupils make rapid and sustained progress throughout year groups across many subjects, including English and mathematics, and learn exceptionally well.
- Pupils read widely, and often across all subjects to a high standard.
- Pupils 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 the sixth form 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, 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)

- All of paragraphs 2(1), 2(2)(a)–(j) and 4 in part 1 of the independent school standards are met.
- Apart from where there is an exemption in place, the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are met.
- 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

³⁶ Starting points at Key Stage 1 include Levels W (and P levels), 1, 2c, 2b, 2a and 3; starting points at Key Stage 2 include Levels W (and P levels), 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

³⁷ Expected progress is defined by the government as two National Curriculum levels of progress between Key Stages 1 and 2 and three National Curriculum levels of progress between Key Stages 2 and 4. From 2013, expected progress data between Key Stages 1 and 2 in English will be provided separately for reading and writing, but no longer aggregated for English.

Expected progress for pupils attaining below Level 1 of the National Curriculum at the end of Key Stages 1 or 2 is explained in *Subsidiary guidance*.

national figures.

- 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.
- 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, 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 and the most able, is generally good.
- Where attainment, including attainment in reading in primary schools, is low overall, it is improving at a faster rate than nationally, over a sustained period.

Requires improvement (3)

- All of paragraphs 2(1), 2(2)(a)–(j) and 4 in part 1 of the independent school standards may be met, but the school is not yet demonstrating the characteristics of a good judgement. Any non-compliance with paragraphs 2(1), 2(2)(a)–(j) and 4 in part 1 of the independent school standards (or non-compliance with the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage) is minor, easily rectified, and does not have a significant impact on pupils' academic and personal development.
- Pupils' achievement, in any phase of the school's provision, requires improvement as it is not good.
- Pupils' achievements are not inadequate as defined below.

Inadequate (4)

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

- Any non-compliance with paragraphs 2(1), 2(2)(a)–(j) and 4 in part 1 of the independent school standards (or non-compliance with the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage) has a negative impact on pupils' academic and personal development.
- From their different starting points, the proportions of pupils making expected progress, and the proportions exceeding expected progress, in English or in mathematics are consistently below national figures and show little or no improvement.
- Pupils' learning and progress in any key subject³⁸ or key stage, including the sixth form or the Early Years Foundation Stage, indicate they 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 standards³⁹ or is in decline and shows little, fragile or inconsistent improvement.

³⁸ '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.

³⁹ Floor standards 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 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. Current figures are given in *Subsidiary guidance*.

- There are wide gaps in the attainment and/or the learning and progress of different groups.

Quality of teaching in the school

156. The most important role of teaching is to promote learning and to raise pupils' achievement. It is also important in promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The evidence collected for this judgement contributes to inspectors' evaluation of the school's promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teaching should be understood to include teachers' planning and implementing of learning activities, including the setting of appropriate homework, across the whole curriculum, as well as marking, assessment and feedback. It encompasses activities within and outside the classroom, such as additional support and intervention. In Early Years Foundation Stage provision, inspectors must assess whether the characteristics of effective teaching and learning are being promoted.
157. When judging teaching, inspectors must take into account whether the school meets paragraphs 2(1), 2(2)(a)–(j) and 3(a)–(h) in part 1 and all the paragraphs in part 2 of the independent school standards.
158. The judgement on the quality of teaching must take account of evidence of pupils' learning and progress over time. Inspectors must not simply aggregate the grades awarded following lesson observations.
159. Inspectors must not expect teaching staff to teach in any specific way. Schools and teachers should decide for themselves how to teach so that children are engaged in lessons, acquire knowledge and learn well.
160. Inspectors must evaluate the use of, and contribution made by, teaching assistants.

Observing teaching and learning

161. When observing and judging teaching, inspectors must be guided by the response and engagement of pupils and evidence of how well they are learning.
162. Inspectors must consider whether:
- teaching engages and includes all pupils, with work that is challenging enough and that meets their individual needs, including for the most able pupils
 - pupils' responses demonstrate sufficient gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding, including of literacy and mathematics
 - teachers monitor pupils' progress in lessons and use the information well to adapt their teaching
 - within Early Years Foundation Stage provision, there is a sufficient balance between adult-led and child-initiated play and learning
 - teachers use questioning and discussion to assess the effectiveness of their teaching and promote pupils' learning

- assessment is frequent and accurate and used to set relevant work from the Early Years Foundation Stage onwards
- pupils understand well how to improve their work
- all pupils are taught well so that they are properly prepared for the next stage in their learning, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage where the development of their communication, language and literacy skills must equip them well for Key Stage 1.

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

Evaluating learning over time

164. 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:

- evidence arising from observations of lessons carried out by school leaders
- discussions with pupils about the work they have undertaken 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
- the school's own evaluations of the quality of teaching and its impact on learning
- scrutiny of pupils' work, with particular attention to:
 - how well and frequently marking, assessment and testing are used to help teachers improve pupils' learning
 - the level of challenge provided
 - pupils' effort and success in completing their work and the progress they make over a period of time.

Grade descriptors⁴⁰ – 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 which relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Outstanding (1)

- All of the requirements for good are met.
- All of paragraphs 2(1), 2(2)(a)–(j) and 3(a)–(h) in part 1 and all paragraphs in part 2 of the independent school standards are met.
- Apart from where there is an exemption in place, the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are met.
- Much of the teaching 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 and the most able, are making rapid and sustained progress.
- All teachers, including those within the Early Years Foundation Stage and/or sixth form, have consistently high expectations of all pupils. They plan and teach lessons and provide learning opportunities that enable pupils to learn exceptionally well across the curriculum.
- Teaching within the Early Years Foundation Stage is exceptional with an excellent balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning. Children's play is extremely purposeful and all activities and incidental opportunities are maximised to enhance and accelerate children's learning, both inside and outside.
- 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 students 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 rapid gains.
- Teachers use well-judged and often imaginative teaching strategies, including setting appropriate homework that, together with clearly directed and timely support and intervention, match individual needs accurately. Consequently, pupils learn exceptionally well across the curriculum.

Good (2)

- All of paragraphs 2(1), 2(2)(a)–(j) and 3(a)–(h) in part 1 and all paragraphs in part 2 of the independent school standards are met.
- Apart from where there is an exemption in place, the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are met.
- Teaching in most subjects, including English and mathematics, is usually good, with examples of some outstanding teaching. As a result, most pupils and groups of pupils on roll in the school, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and the most able,

⁴⁰ These grade descriptors describe the quality of teaching in the school as a whole, taking account of evidence over time. While they include some characteristics of individual lessons, they are not designed to be used to judge individual lessons.

make good progress and achieve well over time.

- Within the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers are skilled at recognising how children learn and provide a highly stimulating range of learning opportunities, both inside and outside.
- 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, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage. 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 appropriately targeted support and intervention are matched well to most pupils' individual needs, including those most and least able, so that pupils learn well in lessons.

Requires improvement (3)

- Teaching requires improvement as it is not good.
- All of paragraphs 2(1), 2(2)(a)–(j) and 3(a)–(h) in part 1 and all paragraphs in part 2 of the independent school standards may be met, but the school is not yet demonstrating the characteristics of a good judgement. Any non-compliance with paragraphs 2(1), 2(2)(a)–(j) and 3(a)–(h) in part 1 and the paragraphs in part 2 of the independent school standards (or non-compliance with the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage) is minor, easily rectified, and does not have a significant impact on pupils' academic and personal development.

Inadequate (4)

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

- Any non-compliance with paragraphs 2(1), 2(2)(a)–(j) and 3(a)–(h) in part 1 and the paragraphs in part 2 of the independent school standards (or non-compliance with the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage) has a negative impact on pupils' academic and personal development.
- As a result of weak teaching over time, pupils or particular groups of pupils, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, and the most able, are making inadequate progress.
- Pupils cannot communicate, read, write, or apply mathematics as well as they should.
- Teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations and teaching over time fails to engage or interest particular groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Learning activities are not sufficiently well matched to the needs of pupils.
- Provision within the Early Years Foundation Stage is poor. Children's learning needs are not appropriately identified and addressed. The daily routine and physical environment do not promote children's learning across all areas of learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils at the school

165. The evidence collected for this judgement contributes to inspectors' evaluation of the school's promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
166. When judging the behaviour and safety of pupils, inspectors must take into account whether or not the school meets all the paragraphs in part 2, part 3 and part 4 of the independent school standards.
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 behaviour and safety over an extended period. Inspectors may look at a small sample of case studies in order to evaluate the experience of particular individuals and groups, such as disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, looked after children and those with mental health needs. They 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. Inspectors must also take account of the views of parents, staff, governors and others.
169. Inspectors should consider:
- the extent to which pupils' attitudes to learning help or hinder their progress in lessons
 - pupils' attitudes to school, conduct and behaviour, during and outside of lessons, their attitudes to other pupils, teachers and other staff
 - 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 permanent and fixed-period exclusions⁴¹
 - pupils' respect for courtesy and good manners towards each other and adults, and their understanding of how such behaviour contributes to school life, relationships, adult life and work
 - 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

⁴¹ 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.

educational need, sexual orientation, sex, race, religion and belief, gender reassignment or disability

- the school's 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 effectiveness of the school's actions to prevent and tackle discriminatory and derogatory language – this includes homophobic and racist language, and language that is derogatory about disabled people
- the extent to which pupils are able to understand and respond to risk, for example risks associated with extremism⁴²
- the school's response to any extremist behaviour shown by pupils
- overall and persistent absence and attendance rates for different groups
- punctuality over time in arriving at school and at lessons
- the impact of the school's strategies to improve behaviour and attendance⁴³
- the number of pupils taken off roll in the last year as a result of factors related to behaviour, safety and attendance
- the views of parents, staff and governors.

⁴² This also includes risks associated with e-safety, substance misuse, knives and gangs, relationships (including sexual relationships), water, fire, roads and railways.

⁴³ 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 which relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Outstanding (1)

- All of the requirements for good are met.
- All paragraphs in part 2, part 3 and part 4 of the independent school standards are met.
- The safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are met.
- Pupils' consistently display a thirst for knowledge and a love of learning, including in independent, group and whole class work, which have a very strong impact on their progress in lessons
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are of an equally high standard across subjects, years, classes and with different staff.
- 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 almost always 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 rare and dealt with highly effectively.
- Skilled and highly consistent management of behaviour, including bullying, by all staff 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 at 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.
- Pupils are open to new ideas, have a very well-developed knowledge of their own and other cultures, appreciate and promote diversity and challenge prejudice and discrimination.

Good (2)

- All paragraphs in part 2, part 3 and part 4 of the independent school standards are met.
- The safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are met.
- Pupils' attitudes to all aspects of learning, including in independent, group and whole class work, are consistently positive, and have a good impact on the progress they make
- Pupils respond very quickly to staff's instructions and requests allowing lessons to flow smoothly and without interruption. Low-level disruption in lessons is uncommon.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive across subjects, years, classes and with different staff.
- There are few 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 lunch time, attend regularly, have good attitudes and are punctual to lessons.
- 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.

- Behaviour is managed consistently well. There are marked improvements in behaviour over time for individuals or groups with particular behavioural needs.
- Pupils are safe and feel safe at school and at alternative provision placements and understand how to keep themselves safe in different situations.
- Pupils have good knowledge of their own and other cultures. They are tolerant and respectful of others and strongly committed to promoting good relationships between people regardless of age, race, gender, disability, gender reassignment, ethnic heritage or sexual orientation.
- Pupils are encouraged to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and are well prepared to make a positive contribution to modern British society.

Requires improvement (3)

- Behaviour and safety require improvement as these aspects are not good.
- All paragraphs in part 2, part 3 and part 4 of the independent school standards may be met, but the school is not yet demonstrating the characteristics of a good judgement. Any non-compliance with the paragraphs in part 2, part 3 and part 4 of the independent school standards (or non-compliance with the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage) is minor, easily rectified, and does not have a significant impact on pupils' welfare, health and safety.

Inadequate (4)

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

- Any non-compliance with the paragraphs in part 2, part 3 and part 4 of the independent school standards (or non-compliance with the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage) has a negative impact on pupils' welfare, health and safety.
- Pupils' lack of engagement and persistent low-level disruption of learning 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. 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 no or little sign of improvement.
- Anti-social and anti-democratic views may be expressed or promoted.
- Pupils are intolerant and closed-minded. The school does not enable pupils to understand or engage with the local or wider community so that they have little knowledge of other sections of society and scant understanding of or respect for other people's beliefs and values.

Quality of leadership in, and management of, the school

170. Inspection must examine the impact of leaders at all levels, (including, where relevant, the work of the proprietor or governors), and evaluate how efficiently and effectively the school is led and managed. In some cases, schools are making an effective contribution to improving the performance of other schools and, where relevant, this will be reported on by inspectors.
171. Inspectors should focus on the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels in promoting improvements within the context of the school. They evaluate the extent to which the school meets the needs of a diverse pupil population, enabling all pupils to overcome specific barriers to learning.
172. 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 a school.
173. Inspectors should consider:
- the extent to which the school meets all paragraphs of the independent school standards
 - how well leaders, managers and those in governance roles pursue excellence, modelling professional standards in all of their work, for example through:
 - the rigorous implementation of well-focused improvement plans which are based on robust self-evaluation
 - the consistent application of policies and procedures, in particular in relation to reading, writing and mathematics
 - the extent to which pupils, parents and staff are committed to the vision and ambition of leaders, managers and governors
 - the respect and courtesy shown by staff towards each other and pupils
 - the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation and the extent to which it is shared with those in governance roles – this includes monitoring and evaluation of:
 - the quality of teaching including provision within the Early Years Foundation Stage, and the achievement and progress of all groups of pupils
 - the performance of the school, including, if applicable, the school's sixth form
 - the satisfaction of pupils, parents and placing authorities
 - the use of performance management and effectiveness of strategies for improving teaching – this is demonstrated through:

- the effectiveness of procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning , including provision within the Early Years Foundation Stage, and the extent to which underperformance is tackled
- a strong link between performance management and appraisal and salary progression
- compliance with statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage in relation to staff appraisals, continuous professional development and the coaching and supervision of all staff
- 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 needs of newly qualified teachers and teachers at an early stage of their career
- the accuracy with which best practice is identified, modelled and shared
- how well leaders and managers ensure that the curriculum:
 - meets paragraphs 2(1)–2(2)(j) of the independent school standards
 - focuses on the necessary priorities for ensuring that all pupils make excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics
 - is broad and balanced (in the context of the school) and meets the needs, aptitudes and interest of pupils including, if applicable, pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the sixth form
 - promotes high levels of achievement and good behaviour
 - promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils and meets all paragraphs in part 2 of the independent school standards
 - is effectively planned and taught
 - does not compromise pupils’ achievement, success or progression by inappropriately early entry to public examinations
 - is based at Key Stage 4 on an appropriate balance between academic and vocational courses
 - provides timely independent information, advice and guidance to assist pupils on their next steps in training, education or employment
 - planning in the sixth form takes account of completion rates in sixth form courses
- how well leaders and managers demonstrate the capacity to bring about further improvement through, for example:
 - a track record of improvements in achievement and/or maintenance of high levels of achievement, with particular reference to those pupils who receive additional support

- improvements in the quality of teaching over time or the maintenance of good and outstanding teaching
 - rigorous self-evaluation, which underpins actions and plans that are focused accurately on the areas requiring improvement
 - how well the school’s strategies and procedures, including the provision of appropriate guidance, help pupils to prepare for life in modern democratic Britain and a global society, and to prevent extremist behaviour
 - how effectively the school works in partnership with other schools, 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 and placing authorities including how well the school gathers, understands and responds to the views of parents (including the use of Parent View data⁴⁴)
- the quality of middle leadership in the school
 - the extent to which schools are adequately developing their middle leadership
 - succession planning and the development of future leaders in the school
 - the effectiveness of governance including how well governors, proprietors or an equivalent body:
 - ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
 - contribute to the school’s self-evaluation and understand its strengths and weaknesses, including the impact of their own work
 - support and strengthen school leadership, including by developing their own skills
 - 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 progress data, examination outcomes and test results
 - use performance management systems, including the performance management of the headteacher, to improve teaching, leadership and management across all phases of education, including the Early Years Foundation Stage

⁴⁴ Inspectors will consider the use of Parent View as one of a range of elements of a school’s engagement strategy with parents.

- ensure solvency and probity and that the financial resources made available to the school are managed effectively
- operate in such a way that statutory duties are met and priorities are approved
- engage with key stakeholders including placing authorities
- use other resources to overcome barriers to learning, including reading, writing and mathematics.
- the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements to ensure that there is safe recruitment and that all pupils are safe. This includes the:
 - maintenance of the single central record and appropriate arrangements for child protection
 - rigour with which absence is followed up
 - decision-making process involved in taking pupils off roll
 - care taken to ensure that pupils placed in alternative provision are safe at all times
 - action taken following any serious incident
 - promotion of safe practices and a culture of safety, including e-safety
 - compliance with all statutory safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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 which relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Outstanding (1)

- All of the requirements for good are met.
- All of the independent school standards (and, where relevant, statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage) are met.
- 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.
- Proprietors, governors, or those with a similar responsibility, stringently hold senior leaders to account for all aspects of the school's performance.
- There are excellent policies underpinning 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 at an early stage of their careers. This is underpinned by searching performance management that encourages, challenges and supports teachers' improvement. As a result, teaching is outstanding, or at least consistently good and improving.
- The school's curriculum promotes and sustains a thirst for knowledge and a love of learning. There is clear and rapid progress in the activities planned for all year groups in all or almost all subjects. 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 wellbeing, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school's actions have secured improvement in achievement for those who require additional support, which is rising rapidly, including in English and mathematics.
- The school has highly successful strategies for engaging with parents and where appropriate, placing authorities to the benefit of pupils, including those who find working with the school difficult.
- 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. This leads to the excellent deployment of staff and resources to the benefit of all groups of pupils.
- Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are outstanding. Leaders closely monitor the delivery of the curriculum and consistently ensure teaching strategies are effective in meeting the needs of all children, and groups of children. Performance management arrangements are exceptional. This means staff consistently update their knowledge and skills through continuous professional development, and this has a significantly positive impact on the depth and breadth of the curriculum and quality of teaching. Tracking arrangements for all groups of children are consistently monitored by senior leaders to ensure all children, regardless of their starting points, make exceptional progress.
- There is a rich and varied programme of extra-curricular activities, off-site visits and visiting speakers to the school, including an evening and/or weekend programme for boarders, where

relevant.

- Extensions to the curriculum, where relevant to the type of school, are extremely well planned and fully support both pupils' academic progress and the aims of the school.
- The impact of the wider curriculum is that pupils are helped to become well-rounded individuals who are knowledgeable about a wide range of issues, and able to develop and pursue new interests to a high level
- leaders and managers have ensured that all the independent school standards and statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are met in an exemplary fashion and can be shared with other schools to promote improvement.

Good (2)

- All of the independent school standards (and, where relevant, statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage) are met.
- 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.
- The well-thought-out policies ensure that pupils make at least good progress in literacy.
- Proprietors, 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 a love of learning. It is well organised and it demonstrates how pupils of all ages and aptitudes are to be challenged and supported. It covers a range of subjects and provides opportunities for academic, technical and sporting excellence and contributes well to pupils' academic achievement, their physical wellbeing and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It promotes positive behaviour and a good understanding of safety matters.
- The school works well with parents and where appropriate placing authorities including those who might find working with the school difficult, to achieve positive benefits for pupils.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements, including the safeguarding and welfare statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Governors ensure the efficient management of financial resources. This leads to the effective deployment of staff and resources.
- The school is proactive in its approach to safeguarding pupils, including working with other agencies. Staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and commonly undertake a broad range of training to keep up to date.
- Robust policies and procedures have been established to promote the welfare, health and safety of all pupils at all times and comply fully with government legislation and guidance.
- Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. Leaders closely monitor the delivery of the curriculum and ensure teaching strategies are effective in meeting the needs of all children, and groups of children. Performance management arrangements are good and have a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Tracking arrangements for all groups of children are monitored effectively by senior leaders to ensure all children, regardless of their starting points, make good progress.

Requires improvement (3)

- All of the independent school standards may be met, but the school is not yet demonstrating

the characteristics of a good judgement. Any un-met independent school standards (or, where relevant, statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage) are minor, easily rectified, and do not have a serious impact on pupils' welfare, health and safety, academic or personal development.

- In exceptional circumstances there may be a minor weakness in meeting a detail of the paragraphs in parts 3 and 4 but this should be easily rectified and must not compromise pupils' welfare, health and safety.
- Leadership and management require improvement because they are not good but are demonstrating the capacity to secure improvement in the school
- Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage requires improvement. Leaders do not sufficiently monitor the delivery of the curriculum and ensure teaching strategies are effective in meeting the needs of all children, and groups of children. As a result, not all children, or groups of children, achieve equally from their starting points. Performance management arrangements are not robust enough to ensure staff training impacts positively on the quality of provision and the needs of any children who may be at risk of developmental delay are not sufficiently addressed.
- Weak monitoring by leaders and managers of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum results in some statutory requirements not being met. These do not have a significant impact on children's safeguarding and welfare, and/or their learning and development.

Inadequate (4)

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

- There are one or more un-met independent school standards (or, where relevant, statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage) which have a negative impact on pupils' welfare, health and safety, academic or personal development, including the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Capacity for securing further improvement is limited because current leaders and managers have been ineffective in securing essential improvements.
- Improvements which have been made are unlikely to be sustainable, 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.
- Leaders and managers are not taking sufficiently effective steps towards securing good behaviour from all pupils and a consistent approach to the management of challenging behaviour.
- Levels of supervision are inadequate and put pupils at unnecessary risk.
- The curriculum fails to meet the needs of pupils or particular groups of pupils, or pupils are entered for public examinations inappropriately early, and pupils' achievement, physical wellbeing and enjoyment of learning are significantly impaired.
- Poor literacy is not being tackled urgently and this is impeding pupils' progress.
- Proprietors and 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.
- The school's strategies for engaging with parents and/ or placing authorities 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.
- Child protection procedures are weak – staff are inadequately trained, insufficiently vigilant, or

ineffective in safeguarding pupils' health and safety.

- There are breaches in the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and this compromises children's safety and well-being.
- Procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety are weak; consequently pupils are at unnecessary risk.
- Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage is inadequate. Leaders do not monitor the delivery of the curriculum and ensure teaching strategies are effective in meeting the needs of all children, and groups of children. As a result, all children's progress is poor and the needs of some groups of children are not appropriately addressed. Performance management arrangements are weak. Staff do not have access to appropriate professional training and development opportunities. This means their knowledge of Early Years Foundation Stage statutory requirements is poor. Insufficient action is taken to address any early indicators that some children may be at risk of developmental delay.
- Poor monitoring by leaders and managers of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum results in some statutory requirements not being met. These have a significant impact on children's safeguarding and welfare, and/or their learning and development.
- Procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety are weak; consequently pupils are at unnecessary risk.

Evaluating the quality of boarding and residential provision in schools

174. Where the school provides boarding provision, inspectors will make five 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*.⁴⁵ The inspection team must take account of the judgements of the residential provision in reaching a judgement of the overall effectiveness of the school.

Evaluating the quality of early years childcare provision

175. Early years registered childcare is inspected as required by the Childcare Act 2006. This relates to provision which caters for children from birth to under three years. This provision is either managed by the school or by a private, voluntary and/or independent provider, on the school site. The inspections of this provision will normally not take place at the same time as the school inspection and will be inspected separately. Following each inspection a separate report is provided for such registered provision.

⁴⁵ *Evaluation schedule for the inspection of boarding and residential provision in schools* (110096), Ofsted, 2013; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/110096.

Annex A. Actions as a result of Ofsted's reports in independent day, boarding and residential special schools

Inspection outcomes	Action that the Department for Education (DfE) will take, as registration authority	Further action by DfE	Further action by Ofsted	Any further action?
All judgements outstanding, good or requires improvement All independent school standards and/or national minimum standards met (with or without recommendations for improvement)	Letter to school noting inspection findings	None	School re-inspected according to routine cycle	No
Overall effectiveness judgement of requires improvement Any un-met independent school standards and/or national minimum standards (with or without recommendations for improvement)	DfE sends letter to school seeking a non-statutory action plan for how independent school standard/national minimum standard failures will be rectified	DfE assesses action plan and only seeks Ofsted's advice if necessary School may supply evidence of improvement Noted by DfE on school file	School re-inspected according to routine cycle Ofsted considers and reports on improvement at next inspection	No
One judgement of inadequate At least one serious regulatory and/or national	DfE serves Statutory Notice on school seeking an urgent action plan showing steps by which independent school	DfE seeks Ofsted's assessment of action plan and normally asks Ofsted to monitor the school's progress against the	Ofsted assesses action plan Ofsted monitors the school's achievement in	No further action if regulatory failings have been rectified. If failings not fully rectified, school may be asked for a

Inspection outcomes	Action that the Department for Education (DfE) will take, as registration authority	Further action by DfE	Further action by Ofsted	Any further action?
<p>minimum standard failure or many minor failures (with or without recommendations)</p>	<p>standard/national minimum standard failings will be rectified so as to meet standards</p>	<p>action plan at a progress monitoring inspection</p>	<p>implementing the action plan and rectifying regulatory failings, at DfE's request, and publishes a progress monitoring report</p>	<p>further action plan. Alternatively a determination to remove the school from the register, or an Order to cease part of its operations, may be made.</p>
<p>Boarding and residential provision Inadequate judgements in boarders' safety and/or leadership and management and overall effectiveness One or more serious national minimum standard failure</p> <p>Education provision Inadequate judgements in education report Serious regulatory failures Report accompanied by 'Form A'</p>	<p>Immediate issue of Statutory Notice requesting an urgent action plan showing steps by which independent school standard/national minimum standard failings will be rectified so as to meet standards</p>	<p>DfE seeks Ofsted's urgent assessment of action plan and asks Ofsted to monitor progress to the timescale declared in the Statutory Notice</p>	<p>Ofsted assesses action plan and monitors the school's achievement in implementing the action plan and rectifying regulatory failings to timescale set out in the Statutory Notice. Progress monitoring report published</p>	<p>No further action if regulatory failings have been rectified. If failings not fully rectified, school may be asked for a further action plan. Alternatively a determination to remove the school from the register, or an Order to cease part of its operations, may be made.</p>

Annex B. Inspection tariff and timeline

Tariff

176. The inspection tariff for a standard inspection of most non-association independent schools is four days for the lead inspector. This tariff includes all the preparation, travel, on-site inspection, feedback and writing time needed by the lead inspector to complete the inspection and report. The tariff is illustrated in the table below.
177. A standard inspection of all but the smallest schools takes place over three days and is detailed below. The lead inspector of a standard inspection in a school with 5 or more pupils on roll will always be on site for half a day on the first on-site day, and then two whole days. This structure allows sufficient time for the inspector(s) to undertake the required regulatory checks and evaluate the quality of the school. Evidence gathering concludes towards the end of the third on-site day. The lead inspector will have informed the headteacher of the likely time that evidence gathering will end in the notification of inspection telephone call. The timing depends on the circumstances of the school and is at the discretion of the lead inspector. After evidence gathering has concluded, the inspector/s will complete evidence records; where there is more than one inspector, conduct a final meeting of inspection team; and then provide the formal feedback of inspection findings to the school's senior staff and governors/trustees.
178. The overall tariff for the inspection of a small school (where there are 4 or fewer pupils on roll) is three days. The lead inspector will normally be working alone, and will always be on site for one half day and then one whole day. This structure allows sufficient time for the inspector to undertake the required regulatory checks, which are the same for all schools irrespective of size and type, and to spend sufficient time inspecting teaching and learning to reach a fair and accurate evaluation of the quality of the school.
179. The precise use of inspection time is at the discretion of the lead inspector who will organise all inspection activities in a way that best suits the school, taking account of its context and circumstances. In all cases, the lead inspector must spend time on site during the first day of the inspection.
180. The size and composition of the inspection team takes account of the size and type of school, the age range of the pupils, whether the school is on one site or two or more sites, and any special features it has, such as residential provision. In many cases the inspection is conducted by one inspector working alone. Additional inspectors may join the team depending on the size and nature of the school. In integrated inspections of boarding or residential special schools, one or more social care inspectors will join the team to inspect the boarding/residential provision, depending on the number of boarders or residential pupils.

181. Where the school operates in a language other than English, an interpreter may be added to the inspection team for the duration of the inspection, unless there is an inspector with knowledge of the language.

Tariff illustration

LI – lead education inspector

TI – team education inspector

LSCI – lead social care inspector

TSCI – team social care inspector

Number of pupils on roll	Tariff: total number of days allocated to the lead inspector for preparation, inspection and writing the report	On-site days		
		Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
1–4 (small school)	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LI half a day preparation and travel ■ LI half a day on-site evidence gathering If integrated inspection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LSCI half a day preparation and travel ■ LSCI half a day on-site evidence gathering* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LI whole day If integrated inspection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LSCI whole day 	
5–74	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LI half a day preparation and travel ■ LI half a day on-site evidence gathering If integrated inspection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LSCI half a day preparation and travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LI whole day If integrated inspection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LSCI whole day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LI whole day If integrated inspection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LSCI whole day ■ LSCI provides the lead inspector with the findings from the boarding provision

Number of pupils on roll	Tariff: total number of days allocated to the lead inspector for preparation, inspection and writing the report	On-site days		
		Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LSCI half a day on-site evidence gathering 		<p>All cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Completion of evidence records ■ Final meeting of inspection team ■ Feedback inspection findings to the school's senior staff and governors/trustees/proprietor
75–249	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LI half a day preparation and travel ■ LI half a day on-site evidence gathering <p>If integrated inspection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LSCI half a day preparation and travel ■ LSCI half a day on-site evidence gathering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LI whole day <p>Augmented education team:**</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ TI whole day <p>If integrated inspection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LSCI whole day*** 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LI whole day <p>Augmented education team:*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ TI whole day <p>If integrated inspection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LSCI whole day ■ LSCI provides the lead inspector with the findings from the boarding provision <p>All cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Completion of evidence records ■ Final meeting of inspection team

Number of pupils on roll	Tariff: total number of days allocated to the lead inspector for preparation, inspection and writing the report	On-site days		
		Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback inspection findings to the school's senior staff and governors/trustees/proprietor
250–399	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LI half a day preparation and travel LI half a day on-site evidence gathering If integrated inspection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LSCI half a day preparation and travel LSCI half a day on-site evidence gathering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LI whole day Augmented education team:* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TI1 whole day TI2 whole day If integrated inspection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LSCI whole day** 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LI whole day Augmented education team:* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TI1 whole day If integrated inspection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LSCI whole day LSCI provides the lead inspector with the findings from the boarding provision All cases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of evidence records Final meeting of inspection team Feedback inspection findings to the school's senior staff and governors/trustees/proprietor

Number of pupils on roll	Tariff: total number of days allocated to the lead inspector for preparation, inspection and writing the report	On-site days		
		Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
400–599	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LI half a day preparation and travel ■ LI half a day on-site evidence gathering <p>If integrated inspection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LSCI half a day preparation and travel ■ LSCI half a day on-site evidence gathering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LI whole day <p>Augmented education team:*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ TI1 whole day ■ TI2 whole day ■ TI3 whole day <p>If integrated inspection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LSCI whole day** 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LI whole day <p>Augmented education team:*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ TI1 whole day <p>If integrated inspection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LSCI whole day ■ LSCI provides the lead inspector with the findings from the boarding provision <p>All cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Completion of evidence records ■ Final meeting of inspection team ■ Feedback inspection findings to the school's senior staff and governors/trustees/proprietor

Number of pupils on roll	Tariff: total number of days allocated to the lead inspector for preparation, inspection and writing the report	Day -1	On-site days		
			Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
600+	5	LI full day preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LI half a day preparation and travel ■ LI half a day on-site evidence gathering If integrated inspection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LSCI half a day preparation and travel ■ LSCI half a day on-site evidence gathering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LI whole day Augmented education team:* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ TI1 whole day ■ TI2 whole day ■ TI3 whole day ■ TI4 whole day If integrated inspection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LSCI whole day** 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LI whole day Augmented education team:* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ TI1 whole day If integrated inspection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LSCI whole day ■ LSCI provides the lead inspector with the findings from the boarding provision All cases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Completion of evidence records ■ Final meeting of inspection team ■ Feedback inspection findings to the school's senior staff and governors/trustees/proprietor

* – the inspection of boarding or residential provision in schools with 4 or fewer pupils on roll will normally have a tariff of three days for the lead social care inspector, which also includes writing time. In exceptional circumstances, the length of inspection and deployment of inspectors may be adjusted if necessary to ensure that there is sufficient time for the residential inspection to take place. This will be discussed and agreed in advance by the relevant regional Senior HMI for independent schools and the Senior HMI for boarding provision in schools. Consideration is given to the number and location of the residential premises and to the needs of the young people.

** – total maximum number of additional education inspectors. Additional inspectors will only be added to the team where the nature of the inspection or the circumstances of the school requires it as recommended by the relevant regional Senior HMI for independent schools to the appropriate regional director who has the ultimate decision – please refer to paragraphs 180 and 181 above.

*** – additional social care inspectors will be added to the team where there are more than 50 boarders on roll, or where there are more than two boarding houses which are not located in the same district, as recommended by the Senior HMI for boarding provision in schools to the appropriate regional director who has the ultimate decision.

Timeline for inspection process

Example standard inspection

Timeline	Activity
Day –1	<p>Around lunchtime</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Inspection service provider (ISP) telephones school to announce the inspection will take place on the following day. ■ ISP sends formal notification letter by email to the school, copied to the lead inspector (and lead social care inspector (LSCI) in the case of integrated inspections). <p>Inspections of NOR 600+ only Lead inspector's (LI) planning day – one full day.</p>
Day 1	<p>Early morning (approximately 8–9am)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LI telephones school to discuss inspection. ■ LI calls LSCI, where necessary, to confirm. ■ LSCI rings the head of boarding/care prior to departure. ■ LI and, where appropriate, LSCI short preparation time and travel to school. <p>Afternoon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Education and, where applicable, boarding/residential inspection starts – one half day on-site evidence gathering. <p>Evening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LSCI inspects during 'boarding time'.
Day 2	<p>Morning and afternoon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ On-site inspection – one full day. ■ Inspection of small schools ends (NOR \geq 1–4). <p>Evening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LSCI/s may inspect during 'boarding time'.
Day 3 (NOR \geq 5 only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ On-site inspection – one full day. ■ Integrated inspections: LSCI provides the LI with the findings from the boarding provision. ■ Completion of evidence records. ■ Final meeting of inspection team. ■ Feedback inspection findings to the school's senior staff and governors/trustees/ proprietor. ■ Inspectors travel home.
Day +1	<p>LI's writing day.</p> <p>For day schools: LI sends report and <i>Record of Inspection Evidence and Judgements</i> (ROIEJ) to ISP by the end of the day.</p> <p>Integrated reports: LSCI sends findings from the boarding provision to LI as soon as possible, if this was not practicable at the end of Day 3. LI sends whole report and ROIEJ to ISP by the end of the same day. LI</p>

Timeline	Activity
	has five days to send the evidence base of the inspection to the ISP.
Day +2–3	Quality assurance: ISP ensures quality of the whole report. ISP sends draft report back to LI to check.
Day +4	<p>G1-G3 reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LI checks report ■ LI sends final draft report to ISP by end of day and sends the evidence base to ISP. <p>G4/integrated/aligned/reports deemed not fit for publication: ISP sends report to National quality assurance team (NQAT).</p>
Day +5	<p>G1-G3 reports: By 10am ISP sends draft report to the school for factual accuracy check.</p> <p>G4/integrated/aligned/reports deemed not fit for publication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ NQAT sends report to region for quality assurance. ■ ISP sends the evidence base NQAT.
Day +5–6	<p>G1-G3 reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Report is with the school. ■ Draft report sent back to ISP with school comments form by the end of Day +6.
Day +6–14	<p>G4/integrated/aligned/reports deemed not fit for publication: The region quality assures the report and ROIEJ.</p>
Day +7–8	<p>G1-G3 reports: ISP considers the comments made by the school and where appropriate agrees changes with LI (telephone contact with LI where needed). LI liaises with LSCI where necessary.</p>
Day +9	<p>G1-G3 reports: ISP finalises the report.</p>
Day +10	<p>G1-G3 reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ISP sends final report to the school with invitation to complete post-inspection survey. ■ ISP sends final report and ROIEJ to Ofsted. ■ In the case of integrated inspections, deadline for SCI to ensure any amendments made to the boarding aspects of the integrated report are reflected in the RSA toolkit (editing is possible up to 15 days after toolkit submission).
Day +11	<p>G1-G3 reports: NQAT sends the report and ROIEJ to the DfE.</p>
Day +14	<p>G4/integrated/aligned/reports deemed not fit for publication: Region returns quality assured report and ROIEJ to NQAT.</p>
Day +15	<p>G1-G3 reports: Report is published on the Ofsted website. (No further action required.)</p>

Timeline	Activity
	<p>G4/integrated/aligned/reports deemed not fit for publication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ NQAT sends quality assured report and ROIEJ to ISP. ■ In the case of integrated inspections, deadline for SCI to ensure any amendments made to the boarding aspects of the integrated report are reflected in the RSA toolkit (editing is possible up to 15 days after toolkit submission).
Day +16	<p>G4/integrated/aligned/reports deemed not fit for publication: By 10am ISP sends draft report to the school for factual accuracy check.</p>
Day +16–17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Report is with the school. ■ Draft report sent back to ISP with school comments form by the end of Day +5.
Day +18	ISP considers the comments made by the school and where appropriate agrees changes with LI (telephone contact with LI where needed). LI liaises with LSCI where necessary.
Day +19	ISP finalises the report.
Day +20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ISP sends final report to the school with invitation to complete post-inspection survey. ■ ISP sends final report and ROIEJ to Ofsted.
Day +21	NQAT sends the report and ROIEJ to the DfE.
Day +25	Report is published on the Ofsted website. (No further action required.)

Annex C. Notification telephone prompts for ISP administrators and lead inspectors

182. The **ISP administrator** should cover the following points during the notification telephone call with the headteacher:⁴⁶

- notify the school that the inspection will start on the following day in the afternoon, and confirm the inspection end date
- provide the names of members of the inspection team, where relevant, including the names of social care inspectors in the case of integrated inspections
- give brief detail about the shape and process of the inspection and what will happen once inspectors arrive, ensuring that the school knows how to access on Ofsted's website the important information about inspections of independent schools, such as *Inspections of non-association independent schools, boarding schools and residential special schools: a leaflet for non-association independent schools*⁴⁷
- ask whether the headteacher has a summary of the school's evaluation of the school's provision that they are content to share at the start of the inspection
- confirm the management arrangements for any registered childcare provision or out-of-school care run by the school, and establish clearly whether or not this provision will be inspected at the same time as the school inspection;⁴⁸ explain that holiday play schemes for under-five-year-olds and provision that is voluntarily or independently owned and managed is inspected under separate arrangements
- confirm the extent of the boarding or residential provision at the school and (if relevant) the arrangements for inspecting it
- explain that, following this initial phone call, the ISP will email a formal notification of inspection letter to the school, which will contain:
 - a letter for the school to send to the parents and carers of all pupils on Ofsted's behalf inviting them to fill in Parent View
 - an inspection questionnaire for school staff

⁴⁶ Inspection service providers have been provided with a telephone script for use when announcing inspections of independent schools, to ensure that schools receive a consistent message.

⁴⁷ *Inspections of non-association independent schools, boarding schools and residential special schools: a leaflet for non-association independent schools* (090135), Ofsted, 2013; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090135.

⁴⁸ Inspection of registered childcare provision is no longer part of the school inspection. It may be inspected on a separate occasion, or at the same time as the school inspection, but will always receive a separate report.

- in the case of integrated inspections of boarding and residential special schools, a copy of *The indicative timetable*
- confirm the following information about the school: full name of the school; unique reference number; name of the proprietor; number of pupils on roll; age range of pupils; number of staff; name of headteacher (and how this should appear on the inspection report); the nature of the school (for example faith school, catering for disabled pupils and those with special education needs)
- confirm the email address to send the notification letter to the school
- confirm that the school should:
 - inform all parents, carers and pupils that the inspection is taking place and draw parents and carers' attention to Parent View, where they may register their views
 - distribute the inspection questionnaire to all staff (apart from those in the boarding provision whose views will have already been sought through Ofsted's online point-in-time survey) – the ISP will provide the questionnaire to the school with the notification of inspection letter
 - inform the proprietor, governing body or board of trustees (as relevant) that the inspection is taking place
 - inform the lead inspector if any alternative provision is provided by the school for particular pupils

183. The **lead inspector** should cover the following points during the notification telephone call with the headteacher:

- confirm that the inspection will start this afternoon, give an estimated time of arrival, confirm the inspection end date, give the likely time that evidence gathering will end and the estimated times that final feedback will be given to the school's senior staff and governors/trustees/proprietor, and when the inspectors will leave the school
- ask:
 - the headteacher to arrange, where relevant and if possible, a meeting between the lead inspector and the proprietor, or one or more of the trustees or governors
 - how inspectors can see a selection of pupils' work and any case studies of individual pupils, particularly those who have special educational needs, to show provision made for them and their progress since coming to the school
 - about domestic arrangements (such as availability of a room inspectors could use, parking, meals, refreshments) and indicate when inspectors will be on site
- explain:

- in the case of integrated inspections, that the lead social care inspector would like to telephone the member of staff in charge of boarding to make arrangements for inspecting the boarding/residential provision and completing *The indicative timetable*; check that the headteacher is content with this, and the name of the member of staff
- that in primary, preparatory and pre-preparatory schools, and in some secondary and special schools, inspectors will want to hear some children read
- where relevant, such as in the case of larger schools, that not all teachers will be observed and that in some cases teachers may be observed more than once
- that the headteacher or a member of the senior management team is invited to make joint lesson observations with inspectors and to be party to team meetings
- how the school's summary of its self-evaluation will influence the work of inspectors
- the arrangements for feeding back to teachers and at the end of the inspection
- where further information about the inspection process may be found
- remind the headteacher of the policies, records and other documentation that inspectors will need to see in the course of the inspection and check that those which are not already on the school's website will be available during the inspection; these documents are listed in *Inspections of non-association independent schools, boarding schools and residential special schools: a leaflet for non-association independent schools*
- explain that inspectors may also ask to see other existing school documents, such as evidence of internal monitoring of teaching or minutes of meetings.

Annex D. Independent schools with exemption from the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Introduction

184. Section 46 of the Childcare Act 2006 gives the Secretary of State the power to confer exemptions from the learning and development requirements of the EYFS in prescribed circumstances. These circumstances are set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Exemptions from Learning and Development Requirements) Regulations 2008, as amended by the Early Years Foundation Stage (Exemptions from Learning and Development Requirements) (Amendment) Regulations 2012.^{49,50}
185. From 26 October 2012, when the amendments came into force, schools that meet certain conditions may take up an exemption from the learning and development requirements of the EYFS.
186. There are two routes for applying for exemption: the independent schools route and the established principles route.

Independent schools route

187. Registered independent schools that meet the four conditions below, can take an exemption from all of the learning and development requirements. Exemptions will only be granted for pupils aged three upwards, however pupils aged 'rising 3' (that is children who will turn three within the first term that they attend the school) should be treated in the same way as three-year-olds.
188. **Quality threshold.** Quality is determined by the school's most recent inspection report.
- For a school where the last report still contains a separate EYFS judgement, the school must have received a judgement of good or better for Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
 - For a school where the last report does not include a separate EYFS judgement, the school must have received a judgement of good or better against parts 1 and 2 of the independent school standards.

⁴⁹ The Early Years Foundation Stage (Exemptions from Learning and Development Requirements) Regulations 2008: www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2008/1743/contents/made.

⁵⁰ The Early Years Foundation Stage (Exemptions from Learning and Development Requirements) (Amendment) Regulations 2012: www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/2463/contents/made.

- In inspection reports written prior to 1 January 2013, this means a judgement of good or better for Quality of education provided and Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
 - For inspection reports written after 1 January 2013, this means a judgement of good or better for Quality of teaching, Quality of curriculum and Pupils’ behaviour and personal development.
- For any exemption taken up where the most recent inspection report dates after 1 January 2013, the report must also show that the school meets any standard under part 1 of the independent school standards relating to the education of children below compulsory school age.
189. The other conditions (seeking the views of parents, informing the local authority and notifying the DfE) are set out in the DfE’s guidance *The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) learning and development requirements: Guidance on exemptions for early years providers*.⁵¹
190. Under the independent schools route, exemptions will be granted in full against all the learning and development requirements of the EYFS. An exemption is ‘taken up’ on the date that the notification is made to the DfE, provided that all the conditions have been met. The DfE will send an acknowledgement to confirm receipt of the notification. An exemption will remain valid for as long as the school continues to meet the quality threshold.

Established principles route

191. Some independent schools are governed by established principles relating to the learning and development of young children, which cannot be reconciled with some or all of the EYFS learning and development requirements. Such schools can be granted exemption from some or all of the EYFS learning and development requirements via the established principles route if they meet the following conditions, which are taken from the DfE’s guidance *The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) learning and development requirements: Guidance on exemptions for early years providers*.
192. The provider’s established principles cannot be reconciled with one or more of the learning and development requirements of the EYFS. In their application, the provider is required to demonstrate that their early years provision is governed by established principles which cannot be reconciled with some of all of the EYFS learning and development requirements, for which they seek exemption or modification. They must set out how the early learning goals,

⁵¹ *The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) learning and development requirements: Guidance on exemptions for early years providers*, Department for Education, 2012; www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/earlylearningandchildcare/delivery/education/a0068102/early-years-foundation-stage-eyfs.

educational programmes, or aspects of the EYFS profile assessment, conflict with the provider's established principles.

193. The other conditions (seeking the views of parents, informing the local authority and requesting a direction from the DfE) are set out in the DfE's guidance *The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) learning and development requirements: Guidance on exemptions for early years providers*.⁵²
194. Under the established principles route, exemptions can be granted, and modifications can be made, against the learning and development requirements, which in turn may be classified into educational programmes, early learning goals and assessment arrangements.
195. If an exemption is granted under the established principles route, it will be in effect from the date of the letter from the DfE granting the provider exemption. During the period between applying and receiving the response, the provider is **not** exempt from the EYFS learning and development requirements.

What happens after exemption?

196. Schools which have taken up an exemption must continue to meet the conditions above. They must notify the DfE and the local authority if, after taking up an exemption, they cease to meet the conditions above and therefore are no longer eligible for an exemption. Any school that is no longer eligible for an exemption will be required to re-introduce and meet the learning and development requirements of the EYFS.
197. Independent schools that take up full exemption from the EYFS learning and development requirements are still able to practise in a way that meets the EYFS learning and development requirements but they will be classified officially as exempt and will not be subject to local authority moderation.

Before an inspection

198. If the school has EYFS provision, it may transpire in the notification telephone call that the school has recently taken, or is in the process of applying for, exemption from the learning and development requirements of the EYFS. In anticipation of this, the lead inspector must check whether the school meets the quality threshold for exemption, by checking that the last inspection report contains a judgement of good or outstanding for:

- Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage, or

⁵² *The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) learning and development requirements: Guidance on exemptions for early years providers*, Department for Education, 2012; www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/earlylearningandchildcare/delivery/education/a0068102/early-years-foundation-stage-eyfs.

- Overall quality of education and Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development where the last report does not have a separate EYFS judgement and was written prior to 1 January 2013, or
 - Quality of teaching, Quality of curriculum and Pupils' behaviour and personal development, if the last report was written after 1 January 2013.
199. Then, during their initial phone call with the headteacher (after the inspection service provider has notified the school of their inspection), the lead inspector must ask whether the school has or has applied for an exemption from the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. If so, the lead inspector must ask whether the application was via the independent schools route, or through the established principles route, and if the latter whether the exemption covers all or part of the EYFS learning and development requirements.
200. If the school has applied for an exemption under the independent schools route, and meets the quality threshold, the inspection must proceed as if the exemption has been granted.
201. However, if the school has applied through the established principles route, and has not yet received a letter from the Department for Education granting the exemption, the school is not exempt from the EYFS learning and development requirements, and will therefore be inspected against them.

On-site inspection activity

202. Where an independent school is exempt from the learning and development requirements (or has applied through the independent schools route for an exemption and meets the quality threshold) EYFS provision for children aged three and over should be inspected against the independent school standards, rather than the learning and development requirements of the EYFS. Exempted independent schools must continue to comply with the independent school standards for children aged three and over, and the EYFS safeguarding and welfare requirements – the Childcare Act 2006 does not allow for any exemptions from the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS.
203. Inspectors may ask to see copies of letters granting exemptions via the established principles route.
204. All independent schools which have EYFS provision must deliver the EYFS in full, unless they have an exemption or have applied for an exemption through the independent schools route and meet the quality threshold.

Inspection reports

205. Inspection reports must include a line to state that a school is exempt from the EYFS learning and development requirements, or that a school no longer meets

the conditions for exemption, as appropriate. Standard text for use by inspectors is available in the guidance *Writing inspection reports*.⁵³

⁵³ *Writing inspection reports* (090052), Ofsted, 2014; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090052.

Annex E. Point-in-time surveys

206. Ofsted's inspection management and support team will provide each school with the instructions for accessing and completing the online point-in-time surveys. The school is asked to distribute these to all day pupils, and as appropriate, all boarders/residential pupils, boarding staff and the local authorities that place children at the school. The online surveys will normally be open for a period of six weeks during the academic year.
207. All of the point-in-time surveys are available on the Ofsted website as Word documents, and Ofsted will provide a copy of them to schools which do not have access to the internet.⁵⁴ Widgit, Makaton and Picture Communication System versions of the point-in-time surveys for day pupils and for boarders/residential pupils are published on the Ofsted website, and British Sign Language versions are available on YouTube.^{55,56} Links to these adapted versions are included in the request sent to the school about the distribution and completion of the surveys.
208. Alternatively, schools may adapt the surveys for day pupils and boarders/residential pupils to suit any other needs of their pupils, for example by translating it into Braille or other symbol versions, such as photo symbols. However, it is important that any such translations ensure that the questions remain the same in essence. Schools may also make other reasonable adjustments such as providing additional support with completing the point-in-time survey for pupils who have low literacy skills or learning difficulties. It is important, however, that pupils are able to express their views privately if they so wish.
209. The responses to all surveys are sent directly to Ofsted where they are collated and analysed. Ofsted's inspection management and support team will send the analyses to the relevant ISP, in order that they can form part of the pre-inspection information for the relevant school's next inspection, to inform inspection trails.
210. If any of the returned surveys appear to raise safeguarding concerns, the inspection management and support team will send them immediately to the HMI remit lead for inspections of independent schools, in the case of surveys

⁵⁴ The point-in-time surveys are available on the Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk/schools/for-schools/inspecting-schools/inspecting-independent-schools/independent-school-inspection/preparing-for-independent-sc.

⁵⁵ The translated versions of the point-in-time survey for day pupils is available on the Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/point-time-survey-for-pupils-aged-3-19-non-association-independent-schools.

⁵⁶ The translated versions of the point-in-time survey for boarders/residential pupils is available on the Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/point-time-survey-for-boarders-and-residential-pupils.

completed by day pupils or placing authorities responding about independent day schools. If safeguarding concerns are raised on surveys completed by boarders/residential pupils, boarding staff or placing authorities responding about boarding or residential special schools, the inspection support team will send them immediately to the relevant HMI manager. This may have an impact on the timing of the next inspection. Such concerns should be discussed with the inspection manager and a recommendation about the timing of the next inspection should be sent to the Senior HMI for boarding provision in schools who will advise the DfE.

211. The ISP will make the analyses available on their inspection portal for the lead inspector to use to generate lines of enquiry. It is vitally important that the lead inspector has this information in advance so that the inspection can operate effectively with minimum notification.
212. During inspection, the lead inspector may share the quantitative data with the school, but any comments from users that are recorded in analyses remain confidential to the inspection team.⁵⁷ In the case of boarding schools, there may be sets of analyses for up to three years of annual point-in-time surveys available to the lead inspector by the time an inspection of the boarding provision is due. All sets will be taken into account, and the lead inspector will explore with the school any particular 'themes' arising from the analyses. If any of the returned surveys appear to raise safeguarding concerns, the inspection management and support team will send them immediately to the relevant HMI manager. This may have an impact on the timing of the next inspection.
213. In rare cases where there is no analysis from point-in-time surveys, inspectors will need to put greater emphasis on finding alternative ways to seek the views of staff and pupils. For instance, it would be helpful for inspectors to make themselves available at a certain time in a certain place, and make this known to pupils or staff so that they can come forward with any issues and so on. In integrated inspections of boarding and residential special schools, the lead social care inspector may contact Ofsted's inspection management support team to request a copy of the analyses from the previous year's point-in-time surveys for boarders and boarding staff and share this with the lead education inspector, however, analysis from previous years should only be used as a guide alongside other evidence, to help inform inspection trails. It must be included in the evidence base for the inspection.

⁵⁷ Inspectors should note that the point-in-time surveys state the following: 'When we write our inspection report, we may refer to the issues you have raised. We may also use the data in our other publications such as the Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. We keep the information from all of the questionnaires in our database, and the inspector might refer to some of it during inspection with the independent school, boarding school or residential special school to help them improve their service. We make sure no information identifies you whenever we use what you have told us.'

Annex F. How compliance with the independent school standards informs inspection judgements

	Overall effectiveness	Achievement of pupils	Quality of teaching	Behaviour and safety of pupils	Leadership and management
Outstanding	All paragraphs in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Part 1 ■ Part 2 ■ Part 3 ■ Part 4 ■ Part 5 ■ Part 6 ■ Part 7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Paragraph 2(1) in part 1 ■ All of paragraphs 2(2)(a)–(j) in part 1 ■ Paragraph 4 in part 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Paragraph 2(1) in part 1 ■ All of paragraphs 2(2)(a)–(j) in part 1 ■ All of paragraphs 3(a)–(h) in part 1 ■ All paragraphs in part 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All paragraphs in part 2 ■ All paragraphs in part 3 ■ All paragraphs in part 4 	All paragraphs in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Part 1 ■ Part 2 ■ Part 3 ■ Part 4 ■ Part 5 ■ Part 6 ■ Part 7
Good	All paragraphs in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Part 1 ■ Part 2 ■ Part 3 ■ Part 4 ■ Part 5 ■ Part 6 ■ Part 7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Paragraph 2(1) in part 1 ■ All of paragraphs 2(2)(a)–(j) in part 1 ■ Paragraph 4 in part 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Paragraph 2(1) in part 1 ■ All of paragraphs 2(2)(a)–(j) in part 1 ■ All of paragraphs 3(a)–(h) in part 1 ■ All paragraphs in part 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All paragraphs in part 2 ■ All paragraphs in part 3 ■ All paragraphs in part 4 	All paragraphs in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Part 1 ■ Part 2 ■ Part 3 ■ Part 4 ■ Part 5 ■ Part 6 ■ Part 7
Requires improvement	All of the independent school standards may be met, but the school is not yet demonstrating the	All of paragraphs 2(1), 2(2)(a)–(j) and 4 in part 1 of the independent school standards may be met,	All of paragraphs 2(1), 2(2)(a)–(j) and 3(a)–(h) in part 1 and all paragraphs in part 2 of the independent	All paragraphs in part 2, part 3 and part 4 of the independent school standards may be met, but the school	All of the independent school standards may be met, but the school is not yet demonstrating the

	Overall effectiveness	Achievement of pupils	Quality of teaching	Behaviour and safety of pupils	Leadership and management
	characteristics of a good judgement. Any un-met independent school standards (or, where relevant, statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage) are minor, easily rectified, and do not have a serious impact on pupils' welfare, health and safety, academic or personal development.	but the school is not yet demonstrating the characteristics of a good judgement. Any non-compliance with paragraphs 2(1), 2(2)(a)–(j) and 4 in part 1 of the independent school standards (or non-compliance with the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage) is minor, easily rectified, and does not have a significant impact on pupils' academic and personal development.	school standards may be met, but the school is not yet demonstrating the characteristics of a good judgement. Any non-compliance with paragraphs 2(1), 2(2)(a)–(j) and 3(a)–(h) in part 1 and the paragraphs in part 2 of the independent school standards (or non-compliance with the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage) is minor, easily rectified, and does not have a significant impact on pupils' academic and personal development.	is not yet demonstrating the characteristics of a good judgement. Any non-compliance with the paragraphs in part 2, part 3 and in part 4 of the independent school standards (or non-compliance with the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage) is minor, easily rectified, and does not have a significant impact on pupils' welfare, health and safety.	characteristics of a good judgement. Any un-met independent school standards (or, where relevant, statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage) are minor, easily rectified, and do not have a serious impact on pupils' welfare, health and safety, academic or personal development.
Inadequate	There are one or more un-met independent school standards which have a negative impact on pupils' welfare, health and safety, academic or	Any non-compliance with paragraphs 2(1), 2(2)(a)–(j) and 4 in part 1 of the independent school standards has a negative impact on	Any non-compliance with paragraphs 2(1), 2(2)(a)–(j) and 3(a)–(h) in part 1 and the paragraphs in part 2 of the independent school standards (or	Any non-compliance with the paragraphs in part 2, part 3 and part 4 of the independent school standards has a negative impact on pupils' welfare, health	There are one or more un-met independent school standards which have a negative impact on pupils' welfare, health and safety, academic or

	Overall effectiveness	Achievement of pupils	Quality of teaching	Behaviour and safety of pupils	Leadership and management
	personal development, including the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.	pupils' academic and personal development.	non-compliance with the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage) has a negative impact on pupils' academic and personal development.	and safety.	personal development, including the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Annex G. Inspecting schools where there are no pupils on roll

214. Where the inspection of a school has been previously deferred on two consecutive occasions because there were no pupils on roll, the inspection will not be deferred for a third time. The inspection will go ahead even though there will be no pupils present.
215. The purpose of the inspection will be to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards required for continued registration. Inspectors will still make qualitative judgements about the effectiveness of the school, and will comment on the extent to which it is ready to educate and safeguard pupils.
216. It may not be possible for inspectors to check compliance with the following paragraphs in part 1 of the independent school standards: 2(1), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(c), 2(2)(i), 2(2)(j), 3(a)–(h). If not, inspectors must insert a tick in the column entitled 'not applicable' in the *Record of inspection evidence and judgements*. All other paragraphs of the standards must be checked. This is the only situation where the above mentioned paragraphs can be marked as 'not applicable'. Compliance with these paragraphs must always be checked where there are pupils on roll.
217. Where there are no pupils on roll, it will not be possible for inspectors to gather sufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. It may also not be possible to make a judgement on the achievement of pupils. However, inspectors must carry out the following inspection activities and consider the following evidence. A judgement must be made if there is sufficient evidence to secure it.
- Check compliance with the standards by carrying out a systematic trawl of documents to determine whether policies are in place.
 - Check whether all schemes of work are in place.
 - Gather evidence of assessment for achievement, if pupils have attended the school within the last three years.
 - Lesson plans from previous teaching, where available.
 - Check whether curriculum plans are in place and are suitable for the age range of pupils that the school is registered to take.
 - Provision for and achievement of past pupils of the school who were disabled pupils or who had special educational needs, including careers advice and links to trainers and providers for students aged 16 and over.
 - In the case of schools with dual registration as children's homes, how well the care and teaching staff work together in terms of plans for communication between 'home and school', homework arrangements

- Discuss with the proprietor, leaders and managers how the school is prepared to take on any pupils.
 - Talk to the proprietor, leaders and managers about methods for monitoring teaching.
218. In the inspection report, these matters should be reported in the 'Full report' section, under the headings quality of teaching, achievement of pupils and leadership and management, as appropriate. Under the quality of teaching heading, inspectors must clearly state that no judgement has been made as there is insufficient evidence, and take the same approach where no judgement can be made on the achievement of pupils. There must always be a judgement on leadership and management, and this section must report on the extent to which the school is prepared to educate and safeguard pupils. If there is no evidence of pupils attending in last three years, this should be reported.
219. The 'Information about this inspection' section of the report should reflect that there were no pupils on roll, but the inspection went ahead as it had already been deferred twice. It should also state that the purpose of the inspection was to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards required for continued registration and to report on the extent to which the school is ready to educate and safeguard pupils.
220. On the front cover of the report, inspectors must insert the words 'No judgement made' into the first column of the judgement table, and leave the second column (for the numerical grades) blank.
221. In the judgement table at the back of the *Record of inspection evidence and judgements*, inspectors should insert a footnote reference number next to the judgements they cannot make. The text for the footnote must state:
222. As there are currently no pupils on roll at the school, the inspector was unable to gather sufficient evidence to make a judgement on achievement of pupils and quality of teaching.