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INTRODUCTION

The Inspection Manual was produced by the Inspectorate Unit in order to equip schools with a document that would facilitate their understanding of School Inspection. The manual is intended for use alongside the framework document ***Looking at our School*** as well as the Self Evaluation Form (SEF).

The manual outlines the purpose of School Inspection and states the activities that will happen before, during and after the Inspection visit. The roles of all players are clearly defined and activities systematically scheduled.

It is hoped that schools will have a clearer understanding of what School Inspection is all about and appreciate the benefits it can bring in the quest for better quality. Working in close partnership is vital if we are to achieve the goal of improving the quality of education in our schools.

1. THE INSPECTORATE – PURPOSE AND PROCESS

The aim of the Inspectorate Unit is to audit schools against established standards and performance indicators and report to the Ministry of Education for monitoring and follow-up action.

The Inspection exercise is designed to answer the following key questions:

- How well are students performing?
- How effective is the school in achieving its aims and targets?
- How well is the school managed?

The main features of an Inspection exercise will be one or more of the following:

- A meeting with the Head teacher regarding the inspection activity (*Appendix A*).
- An analysis of students' attainment and progress in curriculum, drawing on any assessment evidence provided by the school, end of cycle examination results will also be used.
- An evaluation of the quality of the teaching process across subjects and of the extent to which staff and resources are used effectively to meet the learning needs of students. In secondary schools, departments will not be evaluated individually, but teachers will be seen teaching through a sample of classes across all stages and, as far as possible, all subjects.

- An evaluation of the personal development of students as demonstrated through the school's procedures and practices for health and safety, behaviour and discipline, and for the overall pastoral care of students. This will involve an interview with groups of students of different levels and selected staff.
- An evaluation of the Management Team focussing on the management of staff and on the school development planning process. The latter will involve the use of audit trails to determine the effectiveness of the planning process and the school's procedures for managing change.

A draft written report will be produced, highlighting the key strengths of the school and recommending main points for action by the school. A summary of the main findings of the report will be presented through PowerPoint to representatives of the school community; Management, staff, School Council / parents and students representatives before it is finalised and published. Time will be allowed for participants to sincerely seek clarifications of essential points raised if required. However, since the report is strongly evidence-based, defensive or argumentative comments will not be entertained by the Inspection Team during the presentation.

Following the issue of the report, the school will draw up specific action plans together with monitoring and support plans to address the recommended points for action. These plans will be put into effect immediately. Monitoring will be done by the Schools Division personnel, and inspection teams will measure the progress achieved through Return Visits. The deadline to address the recommendations may be stipulated in the report.

2. INSPECTION – AN OVERVIEW OF INSPECTION TEAM ACTIVITIES

Phase I : Planning of the Inspection Visit ▪ Analysis of the school’s self-evaluation report (SEF) ▪ Notification of the Inspection visit to the school, as appropriate; 2 weeks for a whole school inspection and 2 days for a short inspection or Return Visit ▪ An initial visit to the school to discuss issues pertaining to the Inspection and to answer queries (in the case of a whole-school inspection) (<i>Appendix A</i>) ▪ Gathering and collating of documentation for analysis purposes (e.g. examination scripts, end of term results, end of cycle examinations results) (<i>Appendix C</i>) ▪ Preparation of the Inspection team’s time table ▪ Meetings to finalise the Inspection visit.	Phase II : Inspection Process The schedule will vary according to school size, type of inspection and special circumstances. The following are activities which normally feature on the Inspection time table ▪ Discussion with the head teacher on the focus of the inspection and the inspection schedule ▪ Classroom observations ▪ Interviews with individuals and focus groups within the school community (e.g. members of the Management Team, teaching staff, support staff, students) ▪ Documentation review as per the prescribed list (<i>Appendix C</i>) ▪ Inspection of facilities and school environment ▪ Administration and analysis of questionnaires, as appropriate ▪ Team meetings by the Inspection Team for compilation of Inspection findings, individual and composite.
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Phase III : Writing and Presenting the Report

- Individual team members compile their findings separately. The Team then meets to discuss the findings and reach consensus on the strong and weak points highlighted and together prepare a draft report under the direction of the team leader/ Lead Inspector.
- The draft report is submitted to the Principal Officer for verification.
- The Inspection Team prepares a PowerPoint presentation to give feedback as a summary of the main findings to the school community; Management Team, staff, School Council / PTA and student representatives.
- The principal Inspectorate Officer leads the Team and presents the recommended points for action. Time allowance is made to permit participants to seek clarifications as and when required. *(This should normally be done within four weeks after the Inspection visit)*
- The report is finalised, published and distributed to: the school, Office of the Principal Secretary and Minister for Education, Schools Division and Centre for Curriculum and Teacher Support (CCATS).

Phase IV : Follow-up

- The school prepares an action plan to address the main points recommended for action.
- The school incorporates the plan in its current Development plan and submits a copy of the supplement to the Inspectorate Unit. The plan should be implemented immediately.
- The school is monitored by Schools Division personnel and provide the required support with the assistance of CCATS, particularly the Curriculum specialists
- The Inspectorate prepares a Return Visit to evaluate progress on the recommendations:
 - notifies the head teacher (usually two days in advance)
 - prepares and conducts the visit
 - writes the follow-up report highlighting the level of progress achieved
 - publishes and distributes copies of the report to the relevant parties.
- Schools Division keeps track of / monitors the school's progress
- The school reports on its achievements/progress to the Inspectorate through its annual SEF.
- The report influences the Inspectorate's decisions for further action.

3. INSPECTION : DATA COLLECTION

3.1 The work of the Inspection Team in this phase is designed to answer the following key questions:

- **How well are the students performing?**
- **How effective is the school in achieving its aims and targets?**
- **How well is the school managed?**

3.2 In gathering evidence and making evaluations, the Inspection Team will use the six Key Areas and associated Performance Indicators as outlined in the framework “*Looking at Our School*”. The Inspection team will focus on selected Performance Indicators depending on the type of inspection or purpose of the visit.

3.2.1 **Learning** (Key Area 1)

Evidence for the above will come from the evaluation of attainment across the curriculum (all stages, all subjects) with regard to assessment, examinations and personal and social development.

3.2.2 **Teaching** (Key Area 2)

Lesson observation will be the main source of evidence.

At the end of each classroom observation, the Inspection team member will award an overall lesson rating of 1 – 4, using the following scale:

- 4 = very good : major strengths
- 3 = good : strengths outweigh weaknesses
- 2 = fair : some important weaknesses
- 1 = poor : major weaknesses

(which may be used to calculate the school’s overall

It should be clear that this is an evaluation of the lesson and **not** the teacher. It should also be borne in mind that no individual lesson is likely to provide evidence for all the features to look for in relation to a given performance indicator / theme. For example, lack of evidence of *interaction with groups* would not preclude a rating of 4 for a lesson.

Members of the Inspection Team will complete a Lesson Observation Grid for each lesson observed. (*Lesson Observation Records will be strictly confidential and copies will not be made available to the school.*)

3.2.3 **Support, Guidance and Student Welfare** (Key Area 3)

Evidence relating to the above will come from observation, inspection of facilities, interviews and discussions with students, staff and the Management Team and the study of relevant documentation.

3.2.4 **Ethos, Liaison and Community Links** (Key Area 4)

Evidence for the evaluation of the school’s ethos will be picked up through the many activities of the Inspection team, such as lesson observations; discussions with staff, Management Team, students and school community; examination of documentation; observation of school life and audit trails.

rating).

3.2.5 **Resource Development and Management** (Key Area 5)

Human resources will be addressed through an analysis of the staff profiles, discussions with school Management and staff and consideration of staff development programmes available to, and undertaken by staff.

Physical and financial resources will be addressed through inspection of facilities, observation, analysis and study of relevant documentation.

3.2.6 **Management, Leadership and Quality Assurance** (Key Area 6)

The school development plan (SDP) should be the main focus in the evaluation of the school's management. This will involve appraisal of:

- the structure and presentation of the development plan;
- the relevance of the plan to improving school performance;
- the ownership of the plan amongst staff, as evidenced by their commitment to it, the deployment of resources and the achievement of targets;
- how well the whole process of development planning is managed and its impact

3.2.7 **Self-evaluation**

Evidence will be derived from the school's annual report through their SEF, questionnaires, interviews, monitoring records and other documentation.

The extent to which self-evaluation is conducted will be determined by focussing on:

- structures established for the Management Team to monitor and evaluate the whole school;
- procedures for teachers to be involved in self-evaluation;
- mechanisms through which the Management Team is engaged in the evaluation of its procedures and practices.

*** Please note that a special questionnaire covering the overall aspects of school life is administered to the teaching staff with at least one year in the school and another to a representative sample (approximately 10%) of parents.*

3.2.8 **Recording and Collating Evidence**

Each team member will record the evidence to support Inspection on his / her individual record form.

At the team meeting, members will agree on findings and the rating for each performance indicator, which will be recorded by the Team Leader on the composite record form.

4. Publication of the Report

Following the presentation of the draft report to the school, the report will be finalised by the Inspection Team under the direction of the Lead Inspector and approved by the Principal Inspectorate Officer.

The report will be evaluative and concise and will include an introduction, findings under the key area(s) evaluated, indicating the strengths as well as areas requiring improvement. Main points recommended for action will be stipulated at the end of the report and the deadline by which the recommendations should be addressed may also be indicated. Fairness and openness will be essential features of the report.

Copies of the final report will be issued to the School Management and School Council, Office of the Principal Secretary and Minister for Education, Director General for Schools Division and Centre for Curriculum development and Teacher Support (CCATS).

5. The Follow-up

- 5.1 Following the issue of the report, the school will draw up specific action plans together with monitoring and support plans to address the recommended points for action. These plans should be included in the school's development plan and a copy of the supplement submitted to the Inspectorate Unit. The plans will be put into effect immediately. Monitoring will be done by the Schools Division personnel with the support and collaboration of staff from CCATS, particularly the curriculum specialists.
- 5.2 Inspection Teams will measure the progress achieved through Return Visits taking into account the deadline stipulated for the recommendations to be addressed.
- 5.3 The focus of the Return Visits will be to assess progress on the main points for action.
- 5.4 Prior to the Return Visit, the school should report on its achievements /progress made in responding to these points for action in its annual SEF.
- 5.5 On completion of the Return Visits, the findings will be made available to the school and other relevant parties through a report highlighting the level of progress achieved and, if necessary, an indication of any further action which may still be required.

APPENDICES

Issues for discussion with head teacher before evaluation visit

1. Room for use as a base by the Inspection team during the Inspection visit
2. List of documents required for review
3. School master timetable
4. Inspection schedule
5. Liaison between the school and the Inspection Team when inspection is in progress
6. Plan of the school
7. Classroom / lesson observations
8. Teachers' records
9. Compositions and number of groups of staff and students for interviews and discussions
10. Accommodation and arrangements for conducting interviews and / or discussions
11. Presentation of the Report

Points for guidance for schools

- The inspection schedule should not be circulated beyond the School Management Team, on the basis that amendments may be made in the course of the inspection visit, as dictated by changing circumstances.
- As much as possible staff should avoid giving assessments to students during the period of the inspection visit.
- Once the school's teaching timetable has been forwarded to the Inspectorate Unit, staff should ensure that as much as possible, there are no alterations during the period of the inspection visit.
- At the same time, it is important for all involved in the process that the Inspection Team sees the school operating as close to normal as possible.
- Under no circumstances should the staff be left with the impression that the schedule is a contract between the Inspection Team and the members of staff in the school. The Inspection Team reserves the right to adjust its plans as the inspection evolves.
- The school should delegate a member of staff to liaise with the Inspection Team on matters regarding adjustments/changes to the assessment schedule.
- The head teacher should make her/himself available and at the disposal of the Inspection Team during the inspection period.
- Lesson observation:
Evaluation of the quality of the teaching process will involve visits to classes across cycles/levels and, as far as possible, across subjects and ability groups.

The aim of the observation is to gauge whether the quality of expositions and interactions and the standard of resources and work, including homework, are appropriate to students' needs.

A lesson should be taken to mean an episode of teaching which is of sufficient coherence and completeness to provide evidence of the quality of teaching. In view of the tight inspection schedule, teachers may be seen teaching part of a lesson only and should not worry if the Inspection Team member walks out before the lesson ends, or does not follow a double period right through.

Documents that must be available by personnel in schools for the Inspection

Team /Person	Document	Notes
Senior Management Head Teacher Deputy Head Teacher	Log book	
	Minutes of meetings	
	School policies and guidelines e.g. for assessment, homework....	
	School based exam / assessment item analysis	
	Curriculum Report including special needs reports	
	School based analysis of Curriculum	
	National / international Examination reports	
	Pastoral reports	
	PTA records and minutes of meetings	
	School Council records and minutes of meetings	
	SDP last 2	
	SEF Reports – last 3	
	Professional Development Monitoring records	
	Mentoring – PD	
	Checklists of monitoring activities	
	Community Links / Partnership and communication	
	Sample of Student record cards from each level	
	Mentoring / Conferencing documents	
SIT	Log book	
	PDF Journal	
	SDP School Development Plan	
	Self Evaluation Reports (SEF) from last three years	
	School progress reports	
	Minutes of meetings	
	Audit report and tools	
	Monitoring records (DP)	
	PD Plans (for the term)	
	PD Evaluation Reports	

Middle Managers (HODs/HOCs/SCs/SENCOs)		As above, In addition:	
		Minutes of Subject/Dept. Meetings	
		Subject reports, including SENCO / special needs reports	
		Department/cycle analysis (inclusive of sample scripts)	
		Moderation of exams / assessments	
		Teachers' and students' targets	
		Departmental /Cycle reports	
		Termly assessment plans	
		Department/Cycle Progress reports	
		Monitoring Records	
		Professional Development file/records	
		Mentoring / Conferencing documents	
Pastoral Team		Pastoral team meetings	
		Behaviour Log book	
		Pastoral records:	
		▪ SENST report	
		▪ HOC report	
		▪ SEP students(s)	
		▪ Truancy: School and Class	
		▪ Analysis of punctuality / attendance	
		▪ Disciplinary committee records	
		▪ Staff Development records	
		Student Bodies records:	
		▪ Student council	
		▪ Peer Educators	
		▪ Peer tutors	
		▪ Prefects	
		ECA at school level	
		Community Links / partnerships / communication	
		Records of DoE personnel – visits, assistance	
		ROA/ Profiles	
		Register (class)	

Counsellor		Log book	
		Counsellors' reports	
		Catalogue of cases	
		At risk register, including Drop outs	
		Referral forms	
		Interventions – Individual / class level	
		Truancy	
		Community Links / partnerships / Communication	
Office Manager		Log book	
		Staff movement file	
		Teaching staff Register	
		Non teaching staff Register	
		Security staff Register	
		Students' movement:	
		▪ Health log book	
		▪ Punctuality	
		School Fund Records	
		Fund raising documents/records	
		Special funds	
		Dedicated Fund records	
		Donations (cash and kind)	
		Income/expenditure (records and reports)	
		School budget records	
		Tuck-shop - income	
		School statistics – Admission book	
		Inventories including Write offs	
		Visitors' Book	
		Sample of staff appraisal per Inspection Team list	
All		Professional Development file/records	
		Mentoring / Conferencing documents	

Teacher (Each)		Termly Plan	
		Weekly Scheme/Plan	
		Daily Plan/Notes	
		Mark book	
		Homework Record	
		Homework given	
		Homework Register	
		Attendance Register	
		Behaviour Log Book	
		Assessment File	
		Scripts of Exam Papers	
		Assessment/Exam Analysis	
		Policies	
		Reading Records	
		Communication book (Primary)	
		Personal Target	
		Students' Targets	
		Class targets	
		ECA activity; documentation related to other activities	

Other Documents presented by the School (those which may have different titles but similar content as those listed above or those not requested but contain valuable information/data for the inspection)

Team /Person		Document	Notes

Head teacher's Signature Date:
(as to correctness of documents made available)

Team Leader's Signature Date:

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