

Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework

Effective Practice and Self-Evaluation Questions for Special Education

January 2017

ETI: Promoting Improvement in the Interest of all Learners



The Education and Training Inspectorate
Promoting Improvement

Providing inspection services for:

Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments



INSPECTION AND SELF-EVALUATION FRAMEWORK 2017

The Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework

The Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework (ISEF) is effective from January 2017 and is common to all phases inspected by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). Each phase is supported by characteristics of effective practice and self-evaluation questions that are phase specific.

Purpose and rationale of the Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework

In 2003 the ETI published Together Towards Improvement (TTI) as a resource to support schools in the process of self-evaluation and to provide transparency in the inspection process by the publication of key indicators. A similar resource was developed, Improving Quality: Raising Standards (IQ:RS), to support the self-evaluation process in colleges of further education and work-based learning. Following several reviews of both publications, from January 2017, TTI and IQ:RS are being replaced by the ISEF. This update is in response to the changing educational landscape, new government strategies, technological advances, worldwide research and development in how children and young people learn, and has been made in consultation with key stakeholders.

Inspection and reflection

The ETI has developed the ISEF to provide a more holistic overview of the key aspects of education and training at all stages from early years through to further education and work-based learning. In creating a common framework for inspection and self-evaluation the ETI is extending the principle of openness and transparency so that all stakeholders are working together to promote improvement for all learners. The key areas that influence most the quality of education provided to learners are the quality of leadership and management at all levels and the provision for learning and teaching which in turn impact on the outcomes for learners. The framework is designed to provide a balance of inspection and reflection on academic achievement but also the wider skills and dispositions that learners require to live and work in the world today. It is also designed to promote an inclusive learning environment where all learners have access to high quality provision. The safety of children and young people is paramount, therefore safeguarding/child protection is a core element of the framework as is the care and welfare of learners; these are intrinsic to the holistic view of learning and should be visible in every aspect of the work of an education or training organisation.

Application of the Framework

During inspection, the ETI team will use the inspection framework to evaluate the quality of the work of the organisation. All phases in education and training which are inspected by the ETI will use the same key elements during inspection. The principal or leader of the organisation will be aware of the application of the framework during inspection through his or her role as a representative¹.

For the purposes of self-evaluation, the framework is designed to enable organisations, teams or individuals to initiate or continue the process of self-reflection leading to improvement; it should be used to provide a holistic approach to self-evaluation and not as an inflexible check-list. The underpinning phase specific characteristics of effective practice, and the self-evaluation questions, should enable the staff within an organisation to have in-depth professional discussions about specific aspects within the framework and stimulate challenge and debate about: the outcomes for learners; quality of provision; and leadership and management. The framework may also be used to support teams or individuals to reflect on their skills, knowledge and expertise to identify areas for further career-long professional development in pursuit of high quality learning and teaching. Importantly the framework may be used to ensure consistent high quality provision within organisations at important key transition points and ensure effective transitions for the learner from organisation to organisation within cluster or shared education arrangements.

As a result of the debate and challenge stimulated by the characteristics and the questions, the organisation, team or individual should be able to provide a summary of the strengths of the particular aspect under focus, identify areas that require further development and consider the actions that are necessary to continue the improvement process. It is not enough to confirm that actions have taken place but rather to assess the impact of the actions on the outcomes for learners. Therefore an important part of the evaluation process will be gathering qualitative or quantitative data as evidence of improvement that can be presented to the wider community and other stakeholders. This may include taking a wider, more inclusive and objective perspective to evaluation and necessitate consultation with learners, staff, parents, governors/management committees and other stakeholders.

Not all organisations are at the same stage of self-evaluation but the framework, characteristics of effective practice and self-evaluation questions will provide a generic model of reflection for those who are at the beginning of their evaluation journey as well as those organisations that are using well embedded procedures.

¹ <https://www.etini.gov.uk/articles/role-representative>

INSPECTION AND SELF- EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Overall effectiveness

Outcomes for Learners	PL	Quality of Provision	PL	Leadership and Management	PL
Standards attained	S/AFI	Quality of curriculum including (breadth, balance and appropriateness)	S/AFI	Effectiveness and impact of the strategic leadership	S/AFI
Progression		Effectiveness of guidance and support in bringing about high quality individual learning experiences		Effectiveness and impact of the middle leadership	
Wider skills and dispositions/capabilities		Effectiveness and impact of planning, engagement/ teaching/training and assessment in promoting successful learning		Effectiveness of action to promote and sustain improvement, including self-evaluation and the development planning process	
Governance (for schools)	High degree of confidence		Confidence		Limited confidence
Care and Welfare	Level 1. C&W impacts positively on learning, teaching and outcomes.			Level 2. C&W does not impact positively enough on one or more of learning, teaching and outcomes.	
Safeguarding	Level 1: Reflects the guidance		Level 2: Reflects broadly the guidance		Level 3: Unsatisfactory

Overall Effectiveness:

The organisation has a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners.
 The organisation demonstrates the capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the interest of all the learners.
 The organisation needs to address (an) important area (s) for improvement in the interest of all the learners.
 The organisation needs to address urgently the significant areas for improvement identified in the interest of all the learners.

Performance Levels:

Outstanding
 Very good
 Good
 Important areas for improvement
 Requires significant improvement
 Requires urgent

Additional Terms Used:

S Strengths
 AFI Area for improvement

OUTCOMES FOR LEARNERS

Standards attained

Effective practice

Effective practice is demonstrated when:

- the school has raised attainment of the pupils and they achieve consistently high outcomes across all aspects of their learning;
- where appropriate, the pupils achieve functional literacy and numeracy skills;
- shared education experiences contribute to improved educational outcomes for the pupils;
- the pupils achieve appropriate levels of development in communication social and life skills; and
- the school has effective procedures to recognise and celebrate the personal and social achievement of the pupils.

Self-evaluation questions

- What are the outcomes achieved by the pupils?
- How well is the focus on the development of functional literacy and numeracy skills preparing the young people for life after school?
- Are pupils fully engaged in their learning?
- Are pupils, where appropriate, able to participate in decision-making opportunities?
- Are the young people prepared for and able to move successfully on to positive destinations on leaving school?
- How do the pupils benefit from shared education?

OUTCOMES FOR LEARNERS

Progression

Effective practice

Effective practice is demonstrated when:

- the pupils make very good progress commensurate with their abilities and stage of development;
- through a range of well-planned learning opportunities the pupils acquire appropriate skills and concepts which they can apply across a range of contexts;
- the pupils have their holistic progress tracked accurately to inform their learning;
- the pupils are, where appropriate, engaged in making decisions about their learning pathways and future career aspirations; and
- through targeted intervention and support the pupils develop appropriate social skills to enable them to achieve transition to the next stage of their learning.

Self-evaluation questions

- How do pupils make good progress commensurate with their abilities and stage of development?
- How do the pupils enhance their learning and skills in order to progress to the next stage of their learning?
- What opportunities do pupils and staff have to work with others to contribute effectively to their communities?

OUTCOMES FOR LEARNERS

Wider skills and dispositions/capabilities

Effective practice

Effective practice is demonstrated when:

- the pupils are, where appropriate, motivated, enthusiastic and able to engage with learning activities;
- the school provides opportunities for the pupils to demonstrate positive dispositions to their learning relative to their stage of development;
- the school provides a learning environment in which the pupils feel safe, respected, and nurtured by all staff; and
- the pupils are supported and encouraged to take increasing roles within and beyond the school where appropriate.

Self-evaluation questions

- Within their developmental level, do pupils develop confidence and are they able to contribute to the life of the school and the wider community?
- Are pupils developing personally and are they socially adept through a wide range of activities?
- Do pupils take increasing responsibility for their own learning, where appropriate?
- How do we ensure there is an ethos and culture of inclusion, participation and positive relationships across the whole learning community?

QUALITY OF PROVISION

Quality of the curriculum

Effective practice

Effective practice is demonstrated when:

- the curriculum meets fully statutory requirements and implements fully the current SEN Code of Practice;
- the curriculum is broad, balanced, relevant and flexible, and is tailored to meet the needs, interests and aspirations of individual pupils and includes where appropriate, opportunities for work-related learning and skills development;
- there is an appropriate therapeutic curriculum designed around the needs of the pupils that is responsive to changing circumstances;
- the school provides accurately targeted support that is well matched to the additional learning and social needs of the pupils, including newcomers.
- shared education experiences develop and enrich the pupils' learning;
- the learning experiences contribute to the pupils' fulfilment, personal development and education; and
- the overall curriculum planning is well aligned to the School Development Plan.

Self-evaluation questions

- How appropriate and effective is the curriculum provision?
- Through the curriculum planning process, how well are we overcoming barriers to learning and ensuring equity for all?
- Does the school have effective assessment systems in place to identify the ever-increasing, diverse needs of pupils?
- Is there appropriate support provided within the school to meet the range of needs of the pupils through effective links with external agencies?
- Is the curriculum planned around the needs, interests and aspirations of the young people and are their opportunities for work-related learning and skills development?
- Is there an education plan in place for every pupil?
- How does our provision for shared education contribute to the pupils' learning experiences?

QUALITY OF PROVISION

Effectiveness of guidance and support in bringing about high quality individual learning experiences

Effective practice

Effective practice is demonstrated when:

- the learning environment is built on positive and nurturing relationships which lead to high quality learning outcomes;
- parents/carers and key stakeholders are well informed about all aspects of the learning programme and the opportunities for development and progression;
- individual learning needs are clearly identified, appropriate supportive interventions are planned, and the impact of the support arrangements is effectively tracked and monitored; and
- there is effective and impartial careers education, information, advice and guidance available to pupils informed by local knowledge relating to employment opportunities.

Self-evaluation questions

- How well are we working with pupils, parents and carers, employers, and other partners to develop an effective approach to ensure pupils benefit from the right support at the right time?
- How effectively do we involve parents and relevant agencies to ensure they are informed about the pupil's education and progress?
- Are interventions effective in supporting pupil development and progression, including at key transition points to the next stage of learning?

QUALITY OF PROVISION

Effectiveness and impact of planning, teaching and assessment in promoting successful learning

Effective practice

Effective practice is demonstrated when:

- there is clear and coherent long- and short-term planning within and across all areas of the curriculum which ensures that there is effective learning;
- learning and teaching strategies match the needs of the pupils ensuring activities are differentiated, motivating, appropriately challenging, well paced and, where appropriate, build on prior learning and the interests of the pupils;
- there is a systematic and agreed commitment to sharing and disseminating best practice in learning and teaching;
- the learning and teaching, provide pupils with consistently high-quality learning experiences which are inspirational, engaging, challenging and result in successful outcomes;
- a wide range of assessment strategies are used appropriately to guide planning, teaching, and training, and to support learning; and
- the school communicates regularly and effectively with parents to provide comprehensive information on pupils' progress and achievement.

Self-evaluation questions

- How effective is planning, for learning and teaching?
- Are learning, teaching and assessment of a high quality, meeting the needs of all pupils and resulting in effective learning?
- How well do our questioning strategies enhance the pupils' experience?
- How well do we deploy a wide variety of innovative and creative resources and teaching approaches, including digital technologies?
- Are there effective baseline assessments in place and are these used effectively to plan strategies to support each young person in their learning and in their social and emotional development?

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Effectiveness and impact of the strategic leadership

Effective practice

Effective practice is demonstrated when:

- there is a shared strategic and vision which is based on the school's values and aims and is learner-centred;
- there is an effective organisational structure with clear roles and responsibilities for staff that support the achievement of objectives, and which build and sustain positive working relationships and supports continuing professional development;
- the leadership team develop productive links and partnerships with key stakeholders to support the work of the school and improve the achievements, outcomes and well-being of the pupils including a whole-school approach to shared education;
- the leadership team fully comply, and actively engage with, the statutory requirements in relation to equality, diversity and inclusivity;
- there is good use of key management information processes, indicators and benchmarking to implement, monitor, evaluate, review and action strategic and operational planning across all the functions school;
- staff are appropriately qualified, trained and experienced and have the necessary expertise to meet learning, curricular and pastoral needs and management responsibilities; and
- the leadership team provide resources and accommodation that are of a high quality, and are managed effectively to support high quality learning, teaching and training.

Self-evaluation questions

- How well informed and effective is strategic management and do we know if the shared vision, values and aims meet the needs of all pupils in the school?
- How effectively do we share our individual and collective learning across the school?
- Does the school access support from specialist services such as allied health professionals to support the young people?
- How extensive and productive are strategic links and partnerships and how do they lead to better outcomes for the pupils?
- Does our teacher/tutor professional development link effectively to the School Development Plan and how do we know it is improving outcomes for pupils?
- How effectively do we support and develop new teachers and staff, including those who have new responsibilities, and build on individual skills and talents?
- Are sufficiently high quality resources used to support learning, teaching and training?
- Is the accommodation fit for purpose and appropriate to meet the challenging and wide ranging needs of the young people?
- How well are we developing our strategic approach to shared education within our school and with others?

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Effectiveness and impact of the middle leadership

Effective practice

Effective practice is demonstrated when:

- middle leaders work collegially and pastorally with other co-ordinators to provide a whole school and cross-curricular approach to the improvement process;
- there are high standards of learning and teaching, which is monitored and evaluated rigorously by middle leaders;
- middle leaders support and challenge constructively at all levels basing the related actions on an accurate understanding of the learning needs of the pupils;
- middle leaders develop effective links and collaborative partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders and external bodies to support learning and teaching; and
- middle leaders use data effectively to review pupil progress to set targets for improvement.

Self-evaluation questions

- To what extent are the priorities for improvement appropriate and aligned to the school development plan, including whole-school strategies for improving functional literacy, numeracy and ICT skills?
- How do we monitor and evaluate the impact of planning, teaching and assessment on the pupils' learning?
- How do we use accurate data effectively to assess, monitor and track the pupils' progress in learning and to inform our understanding of overall development?

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Effectiveness of action to promote and sustain improvement, including self-evaluation and the development planning process

Effective practice

Effective practice in promoting improvement is demonstrated when:

- there is a well-embedded, rigorous and systematic process for self-evaluation and quality improvement;
- all staff, pupils parents, carers and partner organisations are involved effectively in the self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes to bring about improvement in the quality of provision;
- actions leading to improvement are clearly focused on improving the quality of learning and teaching; and
- data and key performance indicators are used effectively to monitor and track the progress and attainment of all the pupils.

Self-evaluation questions

- Do self-evaluation and improvement planning processes bring about sustained improvement in the quality of provision?
- Does feedback from key stakeholders, including pupils, inform adequately self-evaluation and quality improvement planning?
- Is a range of data, including benchmarking, used effectively to inform and sustain improvement?
- Where appropriate, is there a reduced number of behavioural incidents over time, demonstrating the effectiveness and support in place?

GOVERNANCE

Governance

Effective practice

Effective practice is demonstrated when:

- the governors are well informed, through communication with senior and middle leaders and their own analysis of first-hand evidence, about the progress of pupils and the effectiveness of the provision;
- the governors support and challenge appropriately the school's priorities for improvement;
- the varied skills and expertise of the governors are harnessed to good effect to ensure resources are managed efficiently and that improvement work is monitored systematically; and
- the governors communicate widely the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school and ensure strong links between the school and its wider community.

Self-evaluation questions

- How do we contribute to a shared strategic vision for school improvement?
- How do we agree and challenge the priorities in the school development plan?
- How do we monitor effectively the school's progress in addressing the priorities for improvement in the school development plan?
- How do we know the progress of pupils, including those with barriers to learning and/or with additional learning needs, is good enough?
- How do we ensure that we meet our statutory obligations and compliance matters?
- How do we monitor the curriculum provision to ensure it meets well the needs and career aspirations of the pupils?
- How do we ensure that we use efficiently all available personnel, financial and physical resources in the best interests of all the pupils?

CARE AND WELFARE

Care and welfare

Effective practice

Effective practice is demonstrated when:

- a positive ethos is evident in the way that all staff provide a safe, secure environment with effective working relationships at all levels that enables the pupils to learn;
- the staff take collective responsibility for the diversity of the community; all pupils are helped to overcome barriers to learning and fulfil their potential;
- the staff, particularly through effective teaching, create a purposeful, positive and well-organised learning environment characterised by high levels of mutual respect, positive working relationships at all levels, trust and confidence;
- the effectiveness of the personal development and preventative education curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure that pupils develop resilience and independence;
- the governors, leaders and teachers are innovative, proactive and adaptive in a rapidly-changing world; equipping pupils to deal effectively with current and future challenges;
- the pupils and their parents/carers are active contributors to the life and work of the school; and
- the school works with outside agencies to support the care and welfare of the pupils.

Self-evaluation questions

- How do we know that everyone behaves consistently in a way that makes our ethos a reality for all pupils?
- In what ways does the collective responsibility of the community for the care and welfare of all the pupils manifest itself?
- How do we promote openness and effective communication? What evidence do we have to show that it works?
- How do we deal with comments and complaints from pupils/parents/carers? Are the leaders and staff approachable and how do we know that they respond appropriately?
- How do we promote appropriate behaviour and understand the causes of inappropriate behaviour, so that we know that we are responding appropriately and effectively?
- How we observe and evaluate the interactions between pupils and adults in the classroom and elsewhere?
- How do we provide for pupils when they are in crisis?

SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding

Effective practice

Effective practice is demonstrated when:

- the pupils feel safe, secure and free from emotional and physical harm; their concerns will be listened to sympathetically and appropriate action taken;
- the school has and implements fully an appropriate safeguarding policy (incorporating a protection policy for children and adults at risk) which is in line with the requirements of the relevant Departments;
- the pupils, parents/carers and all relevant parties are informed of policies and procedures relating to the protection of children, young people and adults at risk;
- the staff monitor and assess the extent to which pupils know how to keep themselves safe and how to seek help;
- the school regularly (at least annually) carries out self-evaluation of its own child protection/safeguarding policy and practice using the phase-appropriate ETI safeguarding/child protection proforma;
- the school regularly reviews policies, procedures and reporting arrangements, for example, child protection/safeguarding, anti-bullying and behaviour management;
- the school works with a range of external agencies to support safeguarding and child protection practices; and
- staff and governors regularly receive training including safeguarding and child protection.

Self-evaluation questions

- Is there a culture of safeguarding vigilance throughout the school? Are all staff mindful of risk and are risks assessments carried out?
- How does the leadership evaluate the quality and effectiveness of safeguarding and does it lead to improvement?
- What oversight do the governors and leadership have of policies and procedures, safeguarding and the impact on practice?
- Is there a record available to show that all staff and those in contact with the pupils (in line with guidance from appropriate Departments) have been vetted and trained appropriately?
- How do we assure ourselves that all requirements regarding child protection and safeguarding are in place?

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