



**Education
Scotland**
Foghlam Alba

Education Scotland – Inspection and review

Graeme Brown – His Majesty’s Inspector of Education

Partnership for Education 2030+
Czech study trip to Scotland
Wednesday 30 October 2024

For Scotland's learners, with Scotland's educators
Do luchd-ionnsachaidh na h-Alba, le luchd-foghlaim Alba

Aims of this session

To develop an understanding of:

- The role of His Majesty's Inspectors of Education in Scotland.
- The impact on the education system and individual establishments.
- Interactions with individual establishments.

The first HM Inspectors of Education were appointed in 1840.

- From these early days visited schools to consider “improvements in school management, discipline and in the methods of teaching” and to decide which have been the most effective.
- 1842: first Government Inspectors’ Report on Schools published.



Very significant changes over the years.

2011 – HM Inspectorate of Education became part of a new agency, Education Scotland.

Education Scotland supports the system to gather, analyse, evaluate and share an agreed set of data, including independent external evaluation.

- Inspection and review supports improvement and provides assurance on quality and improvement in Scottish education.
- The inspection programme allows us to gather evidence of what is working well in the Scottish education system, areas which are showing improvement and areas where further development is needed.



HMI inspects and reviews...

- early learning and childcare settings, including nursery classes in schools
- primary and secondary schools
- Gaelic medium education
- independent schools
- special and residential special schools
- community learning and development services
- education functions of local authorities
- educational psychology services
- publicly funded colleges
- private colleges and English language schools
- career information, advice and guidance services
- modern apprentice training
- prison education (at the request of HM Inspectorate of Prisons)

Also other functions such as school consultations and thematic inspections.

School inspections...

HMI inspect on behalf of Scottish ministers.

Currently commit to 250 school inspections per year.

A sample of schools are chosen to be inspected each year...

- Size of school.
- Urban/rural mix.
- Socio-economic background.
- Time since last inspection.
- Range of other factors.

Schools may be inspected for a...

- Full model inspection (5 days).
- Short model inspection (4 days for secondary, 3 days for primary).
- Further inspection (a follow-up inspection).

How good is our school?

4th EDITION



- School staff are expected to use the key document **How Good Is Our School?** (4th edition, 2015) to self-evaluate for improvement themselves, every year.
- When HMI visit, this is also used as a framework to support inspection.

2.3 LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

Themes:

- Learning and engagement
- Quality of teaching
- Effective use of assessment
- Planning, tracking and monitoring

This indicator focuses on ensuring high-quality learning experiences for all children and young people. It highlights the importance of highly-skilled staff who work with children, young people and others to ensure learning is motivating and meaningful. Effective use of assessment by staff and learners ensures children and young people maximise their successes and achievements.

Level 5 illustration:

■ Learning and engagement

The ethos and culture of our school reflects a commitment to children's rights and positive relationships. Our children and young people are eager and active participants who are engaged, resilient, highly-motivated and interact well during activities. Learning is appropriately challenging and enjoyable and well matched to their needs. They have exercise choice, including the appropriate use of digital technologies. They take responsibility as they become more independent in their learning and have opportunities to lead and contribute to their learning and responsible. They contribute effectively to their learning and a range of well-planned activities.

■ Quality of teaching

Our teaching is high quality and effective. It is based on a range of evidence which we use to report on our progress to our learning community we have shared. We have robust arrangements for moderation across

■ Planning, tracking and monitoring

We use a range of data over different timescales to meet the needs of learners across all areas of the curriculum. Learners are fully involved in planning learning. As a result of our manageable processes to monitor and evaluate learners' progress we have clear information on their attainment across all curriculum areas. This includes for those facing additional challenges, for example young carers, looked after children and those living with financial hardship. We use this data to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions designed to improve outcomes for all learners.

Features of highly-effective practice: Challenge

- ✓ The learning environment is built on positive, nurturing and appropriately challenging relationships which lead to high-quality learning outcomes.
- ✓ Learners' achievements in assessment are recorded and recognised. These achievements and successes are used to support next steps in learning.

Our processes for assessment and reporting are manageable and very effective in informing improvements in learning and teaching.

- ✓ Tracking and monitoring are well-understood and used effectively to secure improved outcomes for all learners, including the most deprived children and young people and those who are looked after.
- ✓ All teachers have well-developed skills of data analysis which are focused on improvement.

How do we deploy a wide variety of innovative and creative resources and teaching approaches, including digital technologies?

- ✓ How well do we apply the principles of planning, observation, assessment, recording and reporting as an integral feature of learning and teaching?
- ✓ How well do we make use of a range of valid, reliable and relevant assessment tools and approaches to support the improvement of children and young people's learning?
- ✓ How well do we record, analyse and use assessment information to identify development needs for individual learners and specific groups?
- ✓ How effectively do we involve learners and parents in planning and evaluating learning?
- ✓ How well do we enable all children and young people to engage in self- and peer-assessment to improve their learning? How do we know this benefits learning?

The document includes "very good" and highly effective examples of practice, plus challenge questions to support teachers and school leaders to self-evaluate and improve.

A consistent set of QIs are used during school inspection.

QI 2.3: Learning, teaching and assessment.

This QI is graded in inspection.

QI 3.2: Raising attainment and achievement.

This QI is graded in inspection.

QI 2.1: Safeguarding and child protection.

These 3 areas are inspected on a short model inspection.

QI 1.3: Leadership of change.

This QI is graded in inspection.

QI 3.1: Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

This QI is graded in inspection.

“Learning pathways” theme from QI 2.2: Curriculum.

“Parental involvement: impact on learners” from QI 2.7: Partnerships.

All 7 of these areas are inspected on a full model inspection.



How good is our school?

4th EDITION



School should self-evaluate using a six-point scale.
HMI also use this scale.

- Excellent
- Very Good
- Good
- Satisfactory
- Weak
- Unsatisfactory

A further inspection (return visit to a school) is usually due to a grading of “Weak” or “Unsatisfactory”.

Activities during a school inspection may include...

- Lesson observations.
- Meetings with school leaders.
- Meetings with teachers.
- Meetings with other school staff.
- Meetings with children and young people.
- Meetings with parents and carers.
- Survey analysis.
- Analysis of school evidence and documents.
- Analysis of exam results and attainment.
- Meetings with partners (eg colleges, community learning, nurseries).
- Safeguarding tasks (eg medication, record keeping, bullying).
- Analysis of improvement plans.
- Looking at pupil work and teacher feedback.
- Much more.

The inspection should be “done with” a school, not “done to”. This includes considering the school’s own self-evaluation.

The headteacher is contacted 2.5 weeks before inspection. He or she plans the inspection along with the managing inspector.

By the end of inspection week, school leaders receive draft gradings for QIs and a detailed verbal summary of the team's findings.

A few months later, a full and detailed report is published for all members of the public. A covering letter with key strengths and next steps is also produced, along with details of QI gradings.

Quality indicators	Evaluation
Leadership of change	excellent
Learning, teaching and assessment	very good
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	excellent
Raising attainment and achievement	very good

Soon there will be a separate and independent Inspectorate as part of education reform.

One of its new roles will be to evaluate the impact of education reforms and policies on the education system.

Questions or discussion?