## Quality of leadership in and management of the school

1. Inspection must examine the impact of leaders at all levels, including governors, and evaluate how efficiently and effectively the school is led and managed. This should include considering the implications of any strengths or weaknesses in early years or sixth form provision. Where schools are making a contribution that seeks to improve the performance of other schools, this will be noted by inspectors but should not inform the judgement on the leadership and management.
2. 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 the school.
3. Many schools are cooperating as groups, federations or chains, with an overarching board and chief executive officer that assume some of the responsibilities formerly shouldered by the individual school governing body. Commonly, this infrastructure is supported by a portion of the budget of each member school. In the case of such extended management arrangements, inspectors should seek evidence of the impact of the overarching board and its staff as well as the school’s local board, committee or governing body.
4. Where children’s centres are managed directly by the school governing body, section 5 inspectors will need to consider the impact of any judgements about the children’s centre or the services and activities offered through or by the centre that might contribute to judgements on the school’s leadership and management.
5. Inspectors should be mindful of a school’s obligations under the Equalities Act 2010 and, in particular, the protected characteristics. Where a school chooses, in exceptional circumstances, to segregate lessons, assemblies and other activities on the basis of, for example, gender or disability, there must be good educational reasons for doing so. The school will need to justify these reasons ‑ for example on the basis of improved achievement for all pupils. It is important for inspectors to explore the educational reasons for any segregation and to talk to pupils about it.
6. Inspectors should consider how well leaders, managers and governors **pursue excellence, modelling professional standards in all of their work** ‑ for example through:
* the creation of a culture of high expectations and aspirations and scholastic excellence in which the highest achievement in academic work is recognised as vitally important
* having the highest expectations for social behaviour among the pupils and staff, so that respect and courtesy are the norm
* the rigorous implementation of well-focused improvement plans that are based on robust self-evaluation
* the consistent application of policies and procedures, in particular in relation to reading, writing, mathematics and behaviour
* the extent to which pupils, parents and staff are committed to the vision and ambition of leaders, managers and governors

the establishment of an orderly and hardworking school community.

1. Inspectors should consider the effectiveness of **monitoring and evaluation** and the extent to which it is shared with governors. This includes monitoring and evaluation of:
* the quality of teaching and the achievement and progress of all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, relative to other schools nationally
* the performance of the school, including, if applicable, the school’s sixth form provision and/or early years provision
* the satisfaction levels of pupils and their parents

how effectively the school uses the primary school PE and Sport Premium to improve the quality and breadth of PE and sport provision, including increasing participation in PE and sport so that all pupils develop healthy lifestyles and reach the performance levels they are capable of. The effectiveness of the school’s use of the premium must be recorded and coded on an evidence form, and summarised in the inspection report.

1. Inspectors should evaluate how well leaders use formative and summative **assessment** to ensure that pupils, teachers and parents know if pupils are achieving the expected standard or if they need to catch up. Inspectors should consider how well:
* assessment information, including test results, is used by leaders and governors to improve teaching and the curriculum
* leaders ensure the accuracy of assessment through internal and external standardisation and moderation

schools adopt the best practice of working together to moderate assessment for year groups and the end of key stages, and come to a common understanding of attainment and share records at points of transfer (within the context of the revised common transfer file).

1. In evaluating the effectiveness of reporting on pupils’ progress and achievements, inspectors will assess the way the school reports on the progress and attainment of pupils to parents and carers. Inspectors will consider whether reports help parents to understand how well their children are doing in relation to any standards expected and how they can improve.
2. Inspectors see a range of curricula across schools. Schools may develop their own curriculum to respond to the particular needs of their pupils and ensure that they all achieve their potential. Inspectors should verify that good teaching within a broad and balanced curriculum, accompanied by effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is helping to prepare children and young people for life in modern Britain.
3. The statutory requirement from 1 September 2014 is for maintained schools to teach the relevant national curriculum[[1]](#footnote-1) programmes of study by the end of the key stage. (Academies and free schools do not have to teach the national curriculum.) Schools can teach the elements in the programmes of study in any order, even where they are written for separate year groups.
4. Inspectors should consider how well leadership and management ensure that the curriculum:
* is broad and balanced, complies with legislation and provides a wide range of subjects, preparing pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life in modern Britain; inspectors should not expect to see a particular range of subjects but should be alert to any unexplained narrowness in the breadth of curriculum being offered by the school
* actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
* focuses on the necessary priorities for ensuring that all pupils make excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics
* promotes high levels of achievement and good behaviour
* links to the school’s system of assessment and that together they set out what pupils are expected to know, understand and do, and when
* information about what is taught in the curriculum each year is shared with parents and carers, including by meeting the statutory requirement to make curriculum information available on the school’s website
* promotes tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith), races, genders, ages, disability and sexual orientations (and other groups with protected characteristics[[2]](#footnote-2)) through the effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, including through the extent to which schools engage their pupils in extra-curricular activity and volunteering within their local community
* is effectively planned and taught
* does not compromise pupils’ achievement, success or progression by inappropriate early or multiple entry to public examinations, for example in mathematics
* (for schools that do not have a religious character) includes a balanced approach to the pupils’ RE that is broadly Christian but, as appropriate, takes account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Britain (see paragraphs 14–18)
* includes a rounded programme of assemblies that help to promote pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, providing clear guidance on what is right and what is wrong
* is based at Key Stage 4 on a balance between academic and vocational courses that is appropriate for the pupils

fully meets the requirements of the 16–19 study programmes and takes account of course completion rates and the needs of learners.

1. Inspectors should consider how effectively pupils are grouped within lessons and across year groups. For example:
* where pupils are taught in mixed ability groups/classes, inspectors will consider whether the most able are stretched and the least able are supported sufficiently to reach their full potential

where pupils are taught in sets, inspectors will consider how leaders ensure that pupils in lower sets are not disadvantaged or that teachers take into account that pupils within a set may still have very different needs.

1. Inspectors should explore:
* the extent to which the school has developed and implemented a strategy for ensuring that all pupils in Years 8 to 13 receive effective **careers guidance**
* the impact of this guidance in helping young people to make informed choices about their next steps
* how well the school meets the needs of all vulnerable groups of pupils, including reducing the numbers who do not continue to education, employment or training

how well the school works with families to support them in overcoming the cultural obstacles that often stand in the way of the most able pupils from deprived backgrounds attending university.

1. Inspectors should consider how well leaders and managers demonstrate the capacity to bring about further improvement. Good intentions and an aspirational outlook or a recent change of headteacher following a period of poor leadership do not in themselves provide sufficient proof of the capacity for further improvement. For example, inspectors should take account of:
* a track record of improvements in achievement and/or maintenance of high levels of achievement, with particular reference to disadvantaged pupils
* improvements in the quality of teaching over time or the maintenance of good and outstanding teaching
* rigorous self-evaluation that underpins actions and plans that are focused accurately on the areas requiring improvement
* how effectively the school works in partnership with other schools, early years providers, 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, including how well the school gathers, understands and responds to the views of parents.
1. Inspectors should consider the quality of **middle leadership** in the school and:
* the extent to which schools are adequately developing their middle leadership

the succession planning and development of future leaders in the school.

1. Inspectors should consider the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements to ensure that there is safe recruitment and that all pupils are safe.[[3]](#footnote-3) This includes the:
* maintenance of the single central record and appropriate arrangements for child protection
* rigour with which pupil absence is followed up, including appropriate checks when pupils cease attending
* effectiveness with which a school identifies any pupils who may be at risk, using a case study approach based on concerns about individual pupils that may have originated either inside or outside the school
* decision-making process involved in taking pupils off roll
* action taken following any serious incident
* effectiveness of the arrangements for safeguarding pupils who are educated wholly or partly off-site at a unit run by the school or at alternative provision
* approach to keeping pupils safe from the dangers of radicalisation and extremism, and what is done when it is suspected that pupils are vulnerable to these

promotion of safe practices and a culture of safety, including e-safety.

1. When evaluating the effectiveness of leaders, managers and governors, inspectors should gather evidence about the **use of the pupil premium** in relation to the following key issues:
* the level of pupil premium funding received by the school in the current academic year and levels of funding received in previous academic years[[4]](#footnote-4)
* how the school has spent the pupil premium and why it has decided to spend it in the way it has

any differences made to the learning and progress of disadvantaged pupils as shown by performance data and inspection evidence.

1. In reaching their judgement on leadership and management, inspectors should consider the school’s use of **performance management** and effectiveness of strategies for improving teaching, including the extent to which the school takes account of the ‘Teachers’ Standards’.[[5]](#footnote-5) This is demonstrated through:
* the effectiveness of procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, and the extent to which underperformance is tackled
* a strong link between performance management, appraisal and salary progression
* how well the headteacher/principal and, where relevant, other senior staff are managing staff performance and using the staff budget to differentiate appropriately between high and low performers; however, inspectors should not consider or report on any individual’s performance or on whether the school’s evaluation of the quality of teaching of an individual is accurately reflected in that individual’s progression on the salary spine
* 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 induction needs of NQTs and teachers at an early stage of their career, and the involvement and impact of school leaders

the accuracy with which best practice is identified, modelled and shared.

1. Where teachers’ performance is less than good, inspectors will seek evidence that this is rigorously managed and that appropriate training and support are provided. Where teachers’ performance is good, inspectors will expect to see evidence that this is recognised through the performance management process.
2. Inspectors should ask the headteacher for anonymised information about performance management, appraisal and salary progression from the last three years. Inspectors should take account of the particular concerns of those working in small schools. The information provided should include information about patterns of progression through the different salary scale points, and comparisons between subject departments and/or teachers deployed in different key stages. In all cases, the information provided:
* must be recorded in such a way that individual members of staff are not identified on inspectors’ evidence forms or in inspection reports
* must not leave the school site

must not be sent to inspectors electronically.

1. Inspectors should compare this with the overall quality of teaching and determine whether there is a correlation between the two. If there is none, they should find out why, taking into account the length of time the headteacher has been in post.
2. Examples of the information headteachers could provide include:
* the proportion of staff who progressed through thresholds over the last three years
* the proportion who did not progress through thresholds over the last three years
* a table showing for each salary point, the number of staff, points they have moved from and the number that met their performance management objectives
* the performance management information the school provides to governors

any other relevant information with regard to the performance management process.

1. Inspectors must evaluate leaders’ and managers’ use of **alternative provision** through taking account of:
* how well the school identifies provision that matches pupils’ needs and interests and enables them to gain appropriate knowledge and skills
* how well the school assesses the quality and safety of the provision
* the quality of information that the school gives to the alternative provider ‑ for example about the pupil’s special educational needs, behaviour and/or literacy levels
* how well the school monitors and evaluates pupils’ progress, attendance and behaviour, and intervenes to support pupils where needed
* the progress that pupils make while attending alternative provision
* whether any qualifications being taken are at the appropriate level

the quality of support that pupils receive while attending the alternative provision.

1. Inspectors should consider whether governors:
* carry out their statutory duties, such as safeguarding, and understand the boundaries of their role as governors
* ensure that they and the school promote tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith), races, genders, ages, disability and sexual orientations (and other groups with protected characteristics[[6]](#footnote-6)) and support and help, through their words, actions and influence within the school and more widely in the community, to prepare children and young people positively for life in modern Britain
* ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction, including long-term planning (for example, succession)
* contribute to the school’s self-evaluation and understand its strengths and weaknesses, including the quality of teaching, and reviewing the impact of their own work
* understand and take sufficient account of pupil data, particularly their understanding and use of the school data dashboard
* assure themselves of the rigour of the assessment process
* are aware of the impact of teaching on learning and progress in different subjects and year groups
* 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 the data dashboard, other progress data, examination outcomes and test results; or whether they hinder school improvement by failing to tackle key concerns or developing their own skills
* use the pupil premium and other resources to overcome barriers to learning, including reading, writing and mathematics
* ensure solvency and probity and that the financial resources made available to the school are managed effectively
* are providing support for an effective headteacher
* monitor performance management systems and understand how the school makes decisions about teachers’ salary progression , including the performance management of the headteacher, to improve teaching, leadership and management
* engage with key stakeholders

are transparent and accountable, including in terms of recruitment of staff, governance structures, attendance at meetings, and contact with parents and carers.

## 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 that relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team. There is detailed guidance on evaluating safeguarding arrangements in ‘Inspecting safeguarding in maintained schools and academies’.

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| **Outstanding (1)*** 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.
* Governors, or those with a similar responsibility, stringently hold senior leaders to account for all aspects of the school’s performance.
* Excellent policies underpin 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 newly qualified and at an early stage of their careers. This is underpinned by searching performance management that encourages, challenges and supports teachers’ improvement. As a result, the overall quality of teaching is at least consistently good and improving.
* The school’s curriculum promotes and sustains a thirst for knowledge and understanding and a love of learning. 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 well-being, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
* The school’s actions have secured improvement in achievement for disadvantaged pupils, which is rising rapidly, including in English and mathematics.
* The school has highly successful strategies for engaging with parents to the benefit of pupils, including those who find working with the school difficult.
* Senior leaders in the school work to promote improvement across the wider system including, where applicable, with early years providers to raise the proportion of children who are well prepared to start school.
* The school is adept at identifying any child at risk of harm and engaging with partners to respond appropriately. 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 such as the pupil premium funding. This leads to the excellent deployment of staff and resources to the benefit of all groups of pupils.
* Leaders have ensured that early years and/or sixth form provision is highly effective.
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| **Good (2)*** 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.
* Well thought out policies ensure that pupils make at least good progress in literacy.
* 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 understanding and a love of learning. It covers a range of subjects and provides opportunities for academic, technical and sporting excellence. It contributes well to pupils’ academic achievement, their physical well-being and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It promotes good behaviour and a good understanding of safety matters.
* The school’s actions have secured improvement in achievement for disadvantaged pupils, which is rising, including in English and mathematics.
* The culture of the school is characterised by high expectations and aspirations for all pupils.
* The school works well with parents, including those who might find working with the school difficult, to achieve positive benefits for pupils.
* Leaders ensure that staff are well trained in identifying pupils at risk of harm and responding appropriately. The school’s arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.
* Governors ensure the efficient management of financial resources. This leads to the effective deployment of staff and resources.
* Leaders work effectively with early years providers and other schools to ensure children’s smooth transition into school.
* Leaders have ensured that early years and/or sixth form provision is effective.
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| **Requires improvement (3)*** Leadership and management require improvement because they are not good but are demonstrating the capacity to secure improvement in the school.
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| **Inadequate (4)**Leadership and management are likely to be inadequate if **any** of the following apply.* Capacity for securing further improvement is limited because current leaders and managers have been ineffective in securing essential improvements.
* Improvements that have been made are unlikely to be sustainable, are 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. The organisation of the curriculum and classes is resulting in some pupils achieving less well than they should.
* Leaders and managers are not taking sufficiently effective steps towards securing good behaviour from all pupils and a consistent approach to discipline.
* The curriculum fails to meet the needs of pupils or particular groups of pupils, or pupils are entered for public examinations inappropriately early. Pupils’ achievement, physical well-being and enjoyment of learning are significantly impaired. The range of subjects is too narrow and does not provide preparation for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in modern Britain. Too little is being done to promote the effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.
* The progress in English or in mathematics of disadvantaged pupils is falling further behind the progress of other pupils with similar prior attainment nationally or in the school.
* Poor literacy is not being tackled urgently and this is impeding pupils’ progress.
* 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.
* Leaders and governors, through their words, actions or influence, undermine the promotion of tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith) races, genders, ages, disability and sexual orientations (and other groups with protected characteristics[[7]](#footnote-7)) and so do not support and help prepare pupils positively for life in modern Britain.
* The school’s strategies for engaging with parents 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. The school fails to identify pupils at risk of harm when it might reasonably have done so.
* Leaders have neglected early years and/or sixth form provision such that it is ineffective.
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1. The national curriculum is disapplied in 2014/15 in English, mathematics and science for Years 2, 6, 10 and 11; in 2015/16 in English, mathematics and science in Year 11, and in science in Year 10; and in 2016/17 in science in Year 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. As defined by the Equality Act 2010 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. For full details, see *Inspecting safeguarding in maintained schools and academies*,Ofsted, 2015*:* [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140143](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140143). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Since April 2014, the grant allocation for looked after children must be managed by the designated virtual school head in the local authority that looks after those children, whose responsibilities are set out at: [www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-virtual-school-heads-responsibilities](https://www.gov.uk/search?q=pupil-premium-virtual-school-heads-responsibilities.) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Academies are not required to apply the ‘Teachers Standards’ as part of their performance management arrangements. However, inspectors should examine closely how the academy promotes high quality teaching through its performance management and professional development arrangements. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. As defined by the Equality Act 2010 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. As defined by the Equality Act 2010 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)