

Inspection Handbook



2009-2010

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Section 1

1.1 The purpose of the handbook

Why do we need this handbook? We want to explain how our inspections work so that everyone involved understands what we are trying to achieve. It contains a list of the criteria schools will use as they begin the process of evaluating their own work. It also gives guidelines for school inspectors to support them in their task for the coming year.

1.2 Foreword

Last year, Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau^[1] began inspecting schools in Dubai. This was an important step towards improving the quality of education we can offer our children and young people.

You may have read our first Annual Report, which we published last May. It gave us, for the first time ever in Dubai, a clear idea of where our schools stand, whether private or public, and whichever curricula they follow.

We want our Annual Report to be used by parents to help in choosing schools for their children. At the same time, the independent nature of inspections means they can supply policy makers and planners with the best possible information to make informed decisions.

This handbook of the Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau sets out the framework of quality indicators which inspectors will use to evaluate all schools, and which will also help each school to evaluate its own performance.

Our inspections will evolve over the coming years and this handbook for 2009-2010 contains some changes since last year. We thank you all for your support in our aim of achieving a good and reliable reputation for Dubai's schools, to ensure they are schools where we are happy for our children to spend some of the most important years of their lives.

Jameela Al Muhairi
Chief, Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau

[1] The mission, values and strategic objectives of the Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau appear as Appendix 1.



Section 2

2.1 Introduction

The guidance in this handbook is intended to ensure that inspections are of the highest quality and that the judgements inspectors make about schools are fair, rigorous and consistent.

All inspections should conform to the standards stipulated in the following quality promise, which is derived from the values set out by the DSIB.

2.2 Quality Promise

- In every inspection sufficient valid and reliable evidence will secure the judgements made about the standards achieved and the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and other aspects of educational provision.
- Each school's strengths and the areas where it needs to improve its performance will be clearly identified and reported.
- Inspectors will establish effective working relationships with the staff of every school, based on professionalism, sensitivity and an understanding of their concerns and the circumstances in which they work.
- Inspections will be well planned and effectively managed.
- Through its communications with schools, DSIB will make every effort to ensure a clear and shared understanding of what is involved at each stage of the inspection process.
- Inspectors will readily explore issues through professional dialogue with the staff of schools based on the school's self-evaluation.
- Feedback to school staff and governing bodies, given orally and in writing, will be clear and unambiguous.

Inspectors will aim to leave the staff of each school feeling that they have gained from the experience of inspection. Those involved in running schools should recognise the thoroughness of the evidence base as well as understand and respect the judgements that emerge. The entire school community should feel that the inspection has provided a valuable contribution to its strategy for improvement.

2.3 School self-evaluation

DSIB is committed to promoting self-evaluation as a key aspect of the work of schools. Monitoring and evaluation provide essential information for setting priorities and planning further improvement.

In line with international good practice in school inspections, DSIB places firm emphasis on the role of self-evaluation in line with the schools' growing familiarity and confidence with the processes of self-evaluation and improvement planning. This inspection handbook should be an important tool for schools to use as part of their own self-evaluation procedures.

The effectiveness of school self-evaluation will play an increasingly important part in regular school inspections. Over time, schools will be encouraged to align their self-evaluation with the quality indicators in this and subsequent handbooks and the school's self-evaluation records will become a key part in the evidence gathering as part of the preparation for inspection by DSIB.

The quality of the action plan, written in response to the initial quality inspection, and the extent to which its key actions have been implemented will be key indicators of the effectiveness of school self-evaluation. With well developed self-evaluation systems which permeate all levels of the school management, schools will be able to identify their school's strengths and weaknesses independently. This will speed the progress towards a journey of continuous improvement to run alongside the regular school inspections.

2.4 Code of Conduct for inspectors

Inspectors must not only arrive at fair and accurate judgements about schools, but they must also conduct inspections professionally.

Any assessment of professional competence can cause anxiety, and inspection is no exception to this. Inspectors will treat all the people they encounter as part of the inspection process with interest, courtesy and respect. The right of entry into schools is a privilege.

Inspectors will uphold the highest professional standards in their work and ensure that staff are treated fairly and that schools benefit from the experience of inspection. The process will be transparent and carried out openly with the outcomes clearly communicated to all parties. The standards expected for inspectors are set out in the DSIB Code of Conduct for Inspectors.

School inspectors are expected to:

- make their evaluations objectively, be impartial and have no connection with the school that could undermine their objectivity
- present an accurate, honest, fair and reliable report of what the school achieves and does
- carry out all work with integrity, treating all those they meet with courtesy and sensitivity
- do all that they can to allay worry or anxiety throughout the inspection process
- act with the best interests and well-being of students and school staff in mind
- maintain purposeful and productive relationships and dialogue with those being evaluated and communicate outcomes clearly
- respect the confidentiality of information

Effective inspections are those which schools regard as fair, rigorous and helpful and take account of school self-evaluation. If schools respect and value the quality of inspections they will be more likely to accept and make use of the findings to help them improve.



Section 3

3.1 Framework of Quality Indicators

Introduction

This set of quality indicators has been developed from those of the Initial Quality Inspections and following further consultation.

Quality indicators are at the heart of most high-impact inspection systems worldwide. They provide a framework within which inspectors make judgements on the basis of evidence of observed practice. They serve a number of purposes:

- Indicators create a vocabulary for a conversation with, and between, schools about the key purposes of schooling and the key determinants of educational success.
- The highest level statements provide schools with a picture of educational excellence to which schools can aspire.
- The lowest level statements provide schools with a clear understanding of levels of provision that are considered unacceptable and must be improved.
- The indicators can be used by schools for self-evaluation purposes, and can be linked to school improvement through effective development planning.
- The use of a common set of indicators encourages consistency in judgements across different inspection teams; inspectors base their judgements on the evidence of the practice they actually observe, rather than with reference to set norms or by employing relative ratings.
- The publication of inspection indicators enables schools to see inspection as a transparent process.

The strategic plan for DSIB involved an initial phase during which all schools received an inspection visit. The result was an authoritative view of both the whole school system and the developmental priorities for every individual school. This document sets out the indicators for the next phase of inspections. The criteria are structured as seven central questions:

1. How good are the students' attainment and progress?
2. How good is the students' personal and social development?
3. How good are the teaching and learning?
4. How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?
5. How well does the school protect and support students?
6. How good are the leadership and management of the school?
7. How well does the school perform overall?

One section in the inspection report on every school will set out the inspectors' recommendations for what the school needs to do to improve further.

The choice of indicators is based on research into school effectiveness. While there are legitimate disagreements about some aspects of the purpose of schooling, there is an almost universal consensus that an effective school will seek to secure the best possible academic or cognitive outcomes, while also enabling students to thrive in terms of personal development, interpersonal skills and the affective side of human development.

These two key outcomes – progress and personal development – are the measure of school effectiveness and form the basis for the first two sets of indicators. The next four indicators focus on what the research tells us about the most powerful factors determining school effectiveness: purposeful teaching and learning, an appropriate and challenging curriculum, pastoral care and leadership. The indicators conclude with a final question involving an overall judgement of school effectiveness.

Inspectors will make judgements on a four-point scale. The four levels on the scale are defined as follows:

Outstanding quality – exceptionally high quality of performance or practice.

Good quality – the expected level for every school in Dubai.

Acceptable – the minimum level of acceptability required for Dubai. All key aspects of performance and practice in every school should meet or exceed this level.

Unsatisfactory – quality not yet at the level acceptable for schools in Dubai. Schools will be expected to take urgent measures to improve the quality of any aspect of their performance or practice that is judged at this level.

Consistency in quantitative terminology

The following terms are used consistently throughout the indicators with the following definitions:

All	100% or very close
Almost all	90% and more
Most	more than three quarters but fewer than 90%
Majority	more than half but fewer than three quarters
Minority	more than 15% but less than half
Few	up to about 15%

1. How good are the students' attainment and progress?

Inspectors will make evaluations on the basis of the evidence they gather in relation to each significant age group in the school, taking into account the students' ages and scaling their expectations accordingly. Inspectors will take account of any significant variations in the performance of different groups of students, such as boys and girls and those of different curriculum and different abilities. The descriptors will be applied to certain key subjects:

- **Islamic Education**
- **Arabic**
- **English**
- **The language used for teaching and learning, where it is not Arabic or English**
- **Mathematics**
- **Science**

1.1 Attainment in each key subject in relation to international standards

Key aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attainment in school-based tests and against external and appropriate international standards • Knowledge, skills and understanding in each key subject • Trends in attainment over time
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	Outstanding	Good	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
Brief illustrative descriptions	<p>In school-based tests and the external examinations used by the school, most students attain consistently high levels that are well above the age-related expectations.</p> <p>In lessons and in their recent work, most students demonstrate consistently high levels of knowledge, skills and understanding that are well above international age-related expectations.</p> <p>Attainment in external tests and examinations has been well above the age-related expectations or consistently improving over time.</p>	<p>In school-based tests and the external examinations used by the school, most students attain levels that are above the age-related expectations.</p> <p>In lessons and in their recent work, most students demonstrate levels of knowledge, skills and understanding that are above international age-related expectations.</p> <p>Attainment in external tests and examinations has been above the age-related expectations or improving over time.</p>	<p>In school-based tests and the external examinations used by the school, most students attain levels that are in line with the age-related expectations.</p> <p>In lessons and in their recent work, most students demonstrate levels of knowledge, skills and understanding that are in line with international age-related expectations.</p> <p>Attainment in external tests and examinations is consistently in line with age-related expectations or varies from year to year.</p>	<p>In school-based tests and the external examinations used by the school, less than three-quarters of the students attain levels that are at least in line with the age-related expectations.</p> <p>In lessons and in their recent work, less than three-quarters of students demonstrate levels of knowledge, skills and understanding that are at least in line with international age-related expectations.</p> <p>There are significant gaps in students' knowledge and weaknesses in their understanding.</p> <p>Attainment in external tests and examinations varies from year to year or is consistently below age-related expectations.</p>

Quality of attainment illustrated below would be evaluated as outstanding.

- Using external and other appropriate benchmarks, students' results, at all ages, are well above age-related expectations.
- Most students demonstrate high levels of knowledge and understanding shown in the consistently very high quality of their work, significantly beyond international age-related expectations.
- The school has, over a number of years, raised attainment and/or maintained consistently high standards of attainment for students.

Quality of attainment illustrated below would be evaluated as acceptable.

- In relation to benchmarks used by the school, almost all students' test and external examination results are at least in line with expectations for their age.
- Most students demonstrate knowledge, skills and understanding in the key subjects, in line with international age-related expectations.
- There may be variation from year to year in external test results but, overall, students' attainment is broadly in line with expectations for their age.

1.2 Progress over time

Key aspects

- Progress against starting points, and over time
- Suitability of expected levels

	Outstanding	Good	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
Brief illustrative descriptions	Assessment data indicate that most students consistently make much better than expected progress in relation to their starting points.	Assessment data indicate that most students make better than expected progress in relation to their starting points.	Assessment data indicate that most students make the expected progress in relation to their starting points.	Assessment data indicate that less than three quarters of the students make the expected progress from their starting points.

Quality of progress illustrated below would be evaluated as outstanding.

- Assessment information shows that in relation to their assessed starting points, students reach much higher levels of attainment than predicted.
- Most students make significant gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding. They make links between subject areas demonstrating high levels of competence and applying their skills successfully in unfamiliar learning contexts.

Quality of progress illustrated below would be evaluated as acceptable.

- Assessment information indicates that most students make expected progress in relation to their starting points.
- Most students make acceptable gains in knowledge, skills and understanding. However, only a few students make links to prior knowledge and lack confidence in applying their skills in unfamiliar contexts.

Attainment and progress are unlikely to be of acceptable quality if any of the following apply:

- Students are working at a level well below what is expected for their age.
- The rate of students' progress is too slow and a significant minority of students do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Very few students are able to apply their skills and knowledge in unfamiliar contexts.

2. How good is the students' personal and social development?

Inspectors will make evaluations on the basis of the evidence they gather in relation to each significant age group in the school, taking into account the students' ages and scaling their expectations accordingly. Inspectors will take account of any significant variations in the performance of different groups of students, such as boys and girls and those of different curriculum and different abilities.

2.1 Attitudes and behaviour

Key aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observed attitudes and behaviour of students in and about the school • Student-staff relationships • Attendance • Punctuality 			
Brief illustrative descriptions	Outstanding	Good	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
	<p>Students are self-disciplined, respond very well to adults and resolve difficulties in mature ways. They always arrive at school and to lessons on time.</p> <p>Attendance for each semester or term is at least 98%.</p>	<p>Good behaviour and relationships prevail throughout the school. Students exercise self-control. Almost all students arrive in good time for lessons and at the start of the day.</p> <p>Attendance for each semester or term is at least 96%.</p>	<p>Behaviour and relationships are acceptable. Rules are respected. The school is orderly and safe. All but a few arrive in good time for lessons and at the start of the day.</p> <p>Attendance for each semester or term is at least 92%.</p>	<p>The poor behaviour of a few students disrupts lessons and/or causes difficulties around the school.</p> <p>Attendance for each semester or term is less than 92%.</p>

The quality of students' attitudes and behaviour illustrated below would be evaluated as outstanding.

- Students' attitudes to work and to others result in excellent standards of behaviour. Students are self-disciplined, respond very well to their peers and adults and resolve difficulties in mature ways. Almost all students are making very good progress in the development of personal skills and self-confidence. Students show independence of mind and co-operate well with others both socially and in their school work. Through behaviour and social relationships they show genuine concern for and tolerance of others.
- Students enjoy excellent relationships with staff. Students report that they feel safe, valued and supported and this, in turn, leads to effective relationships amongst students.
- Levels of attendance are at least 98%. Students are punctual in arriving at school and for lessons throughout the school day. Students are aware of the need for good attendance, recognising the link between their attendance and achievement.

The quality of students' attitudes and behaviour illustrated below would be evaluated as acceptable.

- Students' behaviour and relationships are respectful. Rules are valued and, as a consequence, the school is a safe and orderly environment for learning.
- Student-staff relationships are based upon mutual respect, they are productive and affirming. The students co-operate well with others and report that they feel safe, valued and supported by staff in the school.
- Attendance is at least 92% and students are punctual.

Students' attitudes and behaviour are unlikely to be acceptable if:

- There is any bullying or intimidation and lessons are disrupted by students.
- Students show little respect for teachers.
- In social areas and around the school students do not feel safe.
- Learning and teaching time is compromised through poor time keeping.
- Attendance for each semester or term is less than 92%.

2.2 Students' civic understanding, their understanding of Islam and their appreciation of local traditions and culture

Key aspects				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' civic responsibility • Students' respect for and their appreciation and understanding of Islam • Students' appreciation of local traditions and cultures in the context of Dubai's multi-cultural society 			
	Outstanding	Good	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
Brief illustrative descriptions	<p>Students demonstrate a highly proactive approach to their roles and responsibilities as members of a community, both in and out of school. They readily assume positions of responsibility. They demonstrate an excellent understanding of Islam and its impact on contemporary society in Dubai and the wider world. They respect and appreciate Islamic traditions, heritage and values. Almost all students have an excellent understanding and appreciation of the multi-cultural nature of Dubai and the national identity of the UAE.</p>	<p>Students understand their responsibilities as members of a wider community; they take on positions of responsibility in the school. They understand and reflect on the importance of Islam in contemporary society. They appreciate the multi-cultural nature of Dubai and value the UAE national identity.</p>	<p>Students are aware of their responsibilities as part of a larger community. They have a basic knowledge of Islam. They appreciate the contribution of local traditions and cultures to Dubai's multi-cultural society.</p>	<p>Students have little or no awareness of their responsibilities as part of the school community. They have only a superficial awareness of Islam. They do not appreciate local traditions and cultures nor multi-culturalism.</p>

Quality of civic understanding, understanding of Islam and local traditions and culture illustrated below would be evaluated as outstanding.

- Students are responsible and contribute actively to the life of the school and the wider community. In school and in their classes, students demonstrate maturity, high levels of independence and show respect and consideration for the needs of others. They undertake responsibilities in school through well judged and planned systems. The students show care and consideration for others and develop the skills of active citizenship. Students' civic understanding is evident across all aspects of the curriculum.
- Students' demonstrate a very good understanding of the Islamic faith. They understand the relevance and impact of Islam on contemporary society in Dubai and reflect upon key messages in relation to their own lives and experiences. Where appropriate, students diligently put into practice what they learn from studying Islam and show their understanding of the Islamic faith in practical actions.
- Almost all students understand and appreciate the multi-cultural nature of society in Dubai. They demonstrate a mature grasp of cultural diversity. Traditions and local heritage are well known and understood by students who recognise their importance, relevance and value to people in the UAE.

Quality of civic understanding, understanding of Islam and local traditions and culture illustrated below would be evaluated as acceptable.

- Students contribute to the life of the school and the wider community, through planned responsibilities. They understand their roles as citizens though there may be a limited range of opportunities in school to do so. In school and in their classes, students show respect and consideration for the needs of others.
- Students demonstrate a basic level of understanding of the Islamic faith. They have a secure understanding of the relevance and impact of Islam on contemporary society in Dubai but need support to apply key messages to their own lives and experiences. Where appropriate, students put into practice what they learn from studying Islam and show their understanding of their faith in practical actions.
- Most students demonstrate an age-appropriate understanding of the multi-cultural nature of society in Dubai. They know about their culture and identity. However, their understanding may be in isolation from other work or experiences and students may require support to appreciate the meaning and relevance. Local traditions and heritage are known and understood by students who recognise their value to people of the UAE.

Students' civic understanding, their understanding of Islam and their appreciation of local traditions and culture are unlikely to be acceptable if:

- Students do not assume any positions of responsibility in the school or do not respect and value each other.
- Students have no, or only a superficial, knowledge or understanding of Islam.
- Students have little knowledge and understanding of the traditions of Dubai and the UAE, and of the multi-cultural nature of modern Dubai.

2.3 Economic and environmental understanding

Key aspects

- Knowledge and understanding of the nature of Dubai’s economic planning and progress and its place in the UAE and globally
- Awareness of students’ own potential contribution to Dubai’s progress
- Knowledge and understanding of the implications of local and global environmental issues

	Outstanding	Good	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
Brief illustrative descriptions	<p>Almost all students have a detailed knowledge of how Dubai has developed. Most students understand the reasons for the changes. Most older students have an excellent understanding of economics which underpin the success of Dubai and the other emirates. Students are positive about their potential contribution towards that success.</p> <p>Almost all students show care for their school and local environment. They seek ways to care for and improve the school environment. They initiate and/or take part in schemes which support sustainability and conservation.</p> <p>Older students understand that economic decisions affect the sustainability of the environment.</p>	<p>All students know how Dubai has developed. Most students understand some reasons for the changes in Dubai and the other emirates. They are aware of the contributions which they may make to the continuing prosperity of the UAE.</p> <p>Most students care for their school and local environment. They keep it clean and tidy. They take part in activities to improve the environment.</p> <p>Older students understand the need to protect local, national and world resources.</p>	<p>All students know how Dubai has developed. The majority of students have a basic, age-appropriate understanding of the economic success of Dubai and the other emirates and how they may make a contribution towards that continuing success.</p> <p>The majority of students take care of their immediate surroundings and are aware of some important environmental issues.</p>	<p>Students have only a superficial knowledge of how Dubai has developed. The majority is unaware of the importance of Dubai’s continued economic progress and of their potential contribution to it.</p> <p>Students show little concern for their immediate surroundings and have limited awareness of important environmental issues.</p>

The quality of students' economic and environmental understanding illustrated below would be evaluated as outstanding.

- Students demonstrate an advanced knowledge and understanding of the nature of Dubai's economic context. They have a very good understanding of the factors which characterise the success of Dubai and the other emirates. Through well planned enterprise activities and business projects, students acquire key skills. Students are positive about the potential contributions they may make towards the success of Dubai.
- Students have a clear idea about the ways in which they may make positive contributions towards the success and future prosperity of Dubai.
- Students show a very good understanding of environmental sustainability. They actively seek ways to care for and to improve their school environment. They initiate or take part in schemes to support conservation and understand that economic decisions affect the sustainability of the environment.

The quality of students' economic and environmental understanding illustrated below would be evaluated as acceptable.

- Students have a basic knowledge of Dubai's economic and social development. They understand the key factors which characterise the success of Dubai and the other emirates.
- Students are positive about the potential contributions they may make towards the success of Dubai.
- Students understand the importance of environmental sustainability. They take care of their school environment. A few may take part in schemes to support conservation.

Students' economic and environmental understanding is unlikely to be acceptable if:

- Students have little or no knowledge of the nature of Dubai's economic development and its recent history in relation to the UAE and the world.
- Students are unable to recognise the contribution which they may make, or how they may work within Dubai and the wider world.
- Students take no interest in looking after the school, they drop litter casually, or deface school property; they have little knowledge about the importance of energy conservation and world environmental concerns.

3. How good are the teaching and learning?

Inspectors will make evaluations on the basis of the evidence they gather in relation to each significant age group in the school, taking into account the students' ages and scaling their expectations accordingly. Inspectors will take account of any significant variations in the teaching of different groups of students, such as boys and girls, those of different curriculum and different abilities.

3.1 Teaching for effective learning

Key aspects

- Teachers' knowledge of their subjects and how they are learned
- Effectiveness of lesson planning and management of time in lessons
- The use of available resources and space beyond reliance on textbooks and other media
- Teacher-student interactions including the use of dialogue and questions
- Teaching strategies to meet the needs of all students, including students with special educational needs

	Outstanding	Good	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
Brief illustrative descriptions	<p>Consistently high quality teaching stems from teachers' expert knowledge of their subjects, how to teach them and how students learn.</p> <p>Lessons are skilfully planned and timed. Resources are deployed creatively to enrich learning. Teachers' interactions with students ensure they are always active participants in achieving meaningful and relevant learning. The development of enquiry and critical thinking skills is a consistent feature of practice.</p> <p>Teaching strategies successfully meet the individual needs of all students.</p>	<p>Almost all teachers know their subjects well, how to teach them and how students learn.</p> <p>Lessons are imaginatively planned and time is used well. Resources are deployed effectively to enrich learning. Teachers' interactions with students ensure they are active participants in achieving meaningful and relevant learning. The development of enquiry and critical thinking skills is a priority.</p> <p>Teaching strategies are designed to meet the individual needs of all students.</p>	<p>Most teachers know their subjects well, how to teach them and how students learn.</p> <p>Lessons are well planned and timed in most classes. Resources are used appropriately to support learning. Teaching occasionally results in passive student participation. The development of enquiry and critical thinking skills is inconsistent.</p> <p>Teaching strategies address the needs of most students.</p>	<p>More than a few teachers are insecure in their subjects and/or how to teach them.</p> <p>Lessons are poorly planned in most classes. Resources are not used appropriately to support learning. Teaching regularly results in passive student participation.</p> <p>Teaching strategies fail to address the needs of most students.</p>

Quality of teaching illustrated below would be evaluated as outstanding.

- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and are able to put this in a meaningful context for the learners; they understand the difficulty of certain concepts and have a good repertoire of exemplifications to reinforce their relevance to students. Teachers create a positive learning environment, where they encourage the learners to feel respected and valued.
- Lessons are effectively planned so that the purpose of activities is clear and learning is reviewed as an integral part of the lesson. Lesson objectives are clearly stated and reviewed at the end of the lesson so that learners have a clear sense of achievement; there is a good balance of activities with the use, where appropriate, of whole class, individual and group work. Tasks, activities and resources, are used to optimum effect.
- Teachers make full and effective use of many resources, including ICT, to vary their teaching and promote active learning.
- Teachers are skilled in their use of questions and arouse students' inquisitiveness, inspiring them to want to find out more. Their questions are focused and often individualised for particular students. They give time for reflection and require students to think deeply. Teachers adjust the pace of learning as a result of students' responses.
- Classrooms are well organised and the learning activities are very well matched to the needs of individual students and groups with differing learning needs and abilities. The tasks, activities and resources support and challenge all students to maximise their progress. Teachers' expectations are consistently high, and appropriate for students at all levels of prior attainment. They expect students to take responsibility for their own learning and promote collaboration or independent learning, as appropriate.

Quality of teaching illustrated below would be evaluated as acceptable.

- Teachers have sufficient subject knowledge and can share this at a suitable level with students; they appreciate students' needs and include appropriate examples in order to establish relevance. There is a positive climate for learning where students are encouraged to learn from their mistakes.
- Lessons are effectively planned so that the purpose of activities is clear. There is variation in learning activities and time is allocated to review learning.
- Teachers make adequate use of additional resources beyond the textbooks.
- Teachers use questioning to test students' understanding.
- Teachers recognise that different groups and individuals have different learning needs and they adapt their methods and resources accordingly.

The quality of teaching is unlikely to be of acceptable quality if:

- Teachers have poor or inadequate subject knowledge and they have little awareness of how students learn.
- Lessons are poorly planned and time is used unproductively; lessons are monotonous with no variety.
- No resources are used other than textbooks or teacher-talk.
- Teachers make no use of questioning to check understanding.
- There are no arrangements to meet the differing learning needs of groups or individuals.

3.2 Quality of students' learning

Key aspects

- Students' engagement in and responsibility for their own learning
- Students' interactions and collaboration
- Application of learning to the real world and making connections between areas of learning
- Enquiry and research skills
- Students' critical and higher order thinking

	Outstanding	Good	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
Brief illustrative descriptions	<p>Students are enthusiastic and take responsibility for their own learning in sustained ways. They focus well and are able to reflect on their learning to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. Most act on them in order to improve. They can find things out from a variety of different sources and use ICT effectively to support their learning. Students make meaningful connections with other learning and use these to deepen their understanding. Students communicate their learning meaningfully, share achievements and collaborate effectively in a wide range of learning situations. Higher order and critical thinking is a common feature of learning.</p>	<p>Students enjoy learning and take responsibility for their own learning. They are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and take steps to improve. Most students find things out for themselves and use ICT to support their learning. They make connections with other learning and relate these to the real world. They communicate their learning to others. Most collaborate in a range of learning situations. Higher order and critical thinking is a developing feature of learning.</p>	<p>Students have positive attitudes to learning and can work for short periods without teacher intervention. Although they may be passive in their learning, students can explain clearly and confidently what they have learned. They have an adequate understanding of their strengths and weaknesses and how to improve. They occasionally find things out for themselves. They use ICT in limited ways to support their learning. Students make limited connections between new and previous learning and relate learning to real life situations. They are able to work in groups. Students' higher order and critical thinking is sometimes a feature of learning.</p>	<p>Students rarely work without constant teacher direction and lack interest in learning. They are easily distracted and rarely reflect on their learning to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. They do not know how to improve their work. They cannot find things out for themselves and lack ICT skills to support their learning. They rarely make connections with other learning and do not relate their learning to the real world. They find it difficult to discuss their learning and are unable to collaborate effectively in groups. Higher order and critical thinking is rarely found in the students' learning experience.</p>

Quality of students' learning illustrated below would be evaluated as outstanding.

- Students are motivated and eager participants in their learning. They are actively involved in their own learning and development and show increasing skills as learners. Students are aware of their progress and strengths in learning. The questions they ask show they are making connections between new learning and what they already know. They are reflective and analyse learning situations in order to discover the best solution. Their independence shows itself particularly in the ways they use ICT.
- Students choose the best ways to complete tasks within group and individual settings both in leading and supporting their peers. Through effective collaboration with others, by contributing ideas and listening to one another, students demonstrate high levels of skills as independent learners.
- Skills, knowledge and understanding acquired are applied confidently and accurately to new learning contexts. Students demonstrate success in applying their skills to problems reflecting real life situations. They are successful, confident, responsible learners.
- Students demonstrate proficiency in finding out new information and are able to apply successfully their critical skills to tasks. Their work will often reflect maturity and independence of thought and they can find things out for themselves by using books and other resources, including ICT.
- Through the effective use of different sources of information, students are able to make accurate and appropriate conclusions and present their learning with confidence. They make connections between their learning in different parts of the curriculum.

Quality of students' learning illustrated below would be evaluated as acceptable.

- Students occasionally take responsibility for and are active in their own learning. They do what the teacher asks of them but are often passive listeners or watchers, or undertake tasks which do not require much thought. While the majority of students work well in the absence of close supervision, others lack motivation or are easily distracted. They are unclear about what they need to do to improve. The students have only a general awareness of their progress and strengths as learners.
- Students work collaboratively but the composition of groups may lack variety. Whilst working in groups or teams, students, at times, lack the skills they need to co-operate and produce good work. They do not always understand the importance of listening to each other in order to make meaningful contributions.
- Students acquire knowledge and skills from a range of contexts but their understanding may be less well developed. Consequently, students will only demonstrate success in their learning in familiar contexts where they are required to repeat a procedure. When required to apply their learning to new contexts, they may need high levels of support.
- Students demonstrate age-appropriate skills as learners but rarely exhibit skills in critical thinking.

The quality of students' learning is unlikely to be acceptable if:

- A substantial proportion of students are not engaged in lessons and they are unable to explain what they are doing.
- Students are unable to work collaboratively.
- Students cannot relate the learning to their lives.
- Students are unable to find things out for themselves.
- Students make no connections between their learning in different parts of the curriculum.

3.3 Assessment

Key aspects

- Assessment as part of the teaching and learning processes
- Assessment methods and arrangements for record-keeping, including school policy and its implementation
- Use of assessment information by teachers and students
- Quality of feedback, including the marking of written work, and use of assessment data by teachers and students to inform teaching and learning
- Level of teachers' knowledge of their students' strengths and weaknesses

	Outstanding	Good	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
Brief illustrative descriptions	<p>A thorough programme of assessment and review, including students' own assessments of their work, is used consistently throughout the school. Teachers are effective in helping students recognise what they need to do to improve.</p> <p>Assessment data are used well to inform planning.</p> <p>Record-keeping is detailed, comprehensive and used effectively by all staff to meet students' learning needs.</p> <p>Feedback to students is comprehensive and teachers have a thorough knowledge of students' strengths and weaknesses.</p>	<p>Consistent and effective assessment practices are in place for monitoring students' progress. All staff use them to focus sharply on how students are doing and what they need to do to improve.</p> <p>Some adjustments to lessons are made on the basis of assessment information.</p> <p>Students are involved in assessing some aspects of their own work.</p> <p>Organised and thorough record-keeping reflects students' progress in relation to expectations.</p> <p>Feedback to students is good. Teachers have a good knowledge of individual students' strengths and weaknesses.</p>	<p>Assessment is used to monitor the achievements of students, to indicate what they have learned, to involve them in evaluating their work and to help them to understand what they need to do next.</p> <p>There are organised procedures for record-keeping but information may not be used effectively by teachers to plan the learning of students.</p> <p>Feedback to students is given regularly but the quality of marking is variable.</p> <p>Teachers have some knowledge of individual students' strengths and weaknesses.</p>	<p>Assessment is not well developed and may be largely restricted to summative tests.</p> <p>Record-keeping is poor and assessment is rarely used to modify teaching or the curriculum provided for students.</p> <p>Students are not given sufficient feedback on their performance – either orally or through teachers' marking of their written work.</p> <p>Teachers do not have sufficient knowledge of students' progress and achievements.</p>

Quality of assessment illustrated below would be evaluated as outstanding.

- Assessment is used as a tool for teachers to plan each step of learning. An assessment is made of each student early in their time at school in order to diagnose their capacity for learning and to identify any special needs and special talents. Throughout their time at school, assessment is used to check on progress and give feedback to the students. Periodically formal tests are conducted and the results compared with international benchmarks.
- Data from assessment are collected and analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses in students' attainment and to identify trends. Actual attainment is compared with predicted attainment and strengths in provision can be ascertained. All teachers have access to this information and use it to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum and their teaching. Whole school and individual targets are set and students' performance is monitored to ensure students are meeting short and long term targets.
- When teachers assess students' work and mark their books, their comments are constructive in helping students know what their next steps should be. Staff also use the analysis of data to plan lessons and address the individual learning needs of all students. Students and parents are regularly involved in well judged target setting procedures which help clarify clear learning goals for each student.
- Students use objective criteria to evaluate their own and each other's work and to identify the next steps. Informal assessment during lessons, through for example questioning by the teacher, adds to the overall picture of students' attainment and progress.
- Teachers have an excellent knowledge and understanding of individual students' strengths and weaknesses.

Quality of assessment illustrated below would be evaluated as acceptable.

- Students know the results of assessments and understand the nature of their strengths and weaknesses. The school undertakes some analysis of the test results to identify patterns of attainment.
- Students may be given oral feedback on their work. Exercise books are marked regularly but there may be few informative comments about how to improve.
- Students' evaluation of their own and others' work is not a regular feature of the school's assessment procedures.
- Teachers have some understanding of the different performances of certain groups and individuals, but this is underdeveloped.

The quality of assessment is unlikely to be acceptable if:

- The students are unaware of the results from assessments.
- Teachers make no use of the assessment results to modify their work.
- Teachers give no feedback to students and they seldom mark students' work.
- No use is made of benchmarking (either national or international) to review students' performance in a wider context.
- Teachers have a poor knowledge of students' individual achievements and their learning needs.

4. How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?

Inspectors will make evaluations on the basis of the evidence they gather in relation to each significant age group in the school, taking into account the students' ages and scaling their expectations accordingly. Inspectors will take account of any significant variations in the provision for different groups of students, such as boys and girls and those of different curriculum and different abilities.

4.1 Curriculum quality				
Key aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breadth and balance • Review and development • Continuity and progression • Cross-curricular links and extra-curricular activities • Curriculum links with the community and local environment 			
	Outstanding	Good	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
Brief illustrative descriptions	<p>The curriculum has a clear rationale. It is relevant, broad, balanced and challenging. There is evident progression and choice in learning for all students.</p> <p>The curriculum is reviewed regularly and systematically. Transitions between sections and phases ensure that all students are well prepared for the next stage of education. Cross-curricular links are promoted and extensive extra-curricular activities are available.</p> <p>Regular planned opportunities exist for students to learn within the community and local environment or beyond.</p>	<p>The curriculum has a clear rationale. It is broad, balanced and challenging. Progression is planned and there is some choice in learning for almost all students.</p> <p>The curriculum is reviewed annually to ensure all students' needs are met. Transitions between sections and across schools ensure that most students are well prepared for the next stage of education. Cross-curricular links and extra-curricular activities enhance learning.</p> <p>There are regular opportunities for students to learn within the community and local environment.</p>	<p>The curriculum is soundly planned, broad and balanced. There are no significant gaps in content but there may be limited choice for certain groups of students.</p> <p>The curriculum is reviewed from time to time. Plans exist to promote progression and cross-curricular links are evident across a limited range of contexts. Extra-curricular activities exist but are limited in range.</p> <p>There are a few opportunities for students to learn within the community and local environment or beyond.</p>	<p>The curriculum rationale is unclear and is mostly dictated by the text books. There is discontinuity in the curriculum in some subjects from year to year and significant gaps in content. It is neither broad nor balanced.</p> <p>There is no systematic review of the curriculum to ensure that learners' needs are met.</p> <p>There are limited extra-curricular activities and few opportunities to learn beyond the classroom.</p>

Quality of the curriculum illustrated below would be evaluated as outstanding.

- The curriculum has a clear rationale based on shared values. Its programmes, courses, syllabi and activities promote challenge, enjoyment, progression, relevance, coherence, personalisation and choice in learning for all students. The curriculum has breadth and balance across and within each of its various elements. The curriculum consistently includes creative, physical and practical experiences. All key subjects are given the appropriate amount of time.
- The curriculum is regularly reviewed and updated as part of the school's self-evaluation process and takes account of the views of students and parents. Staff reflect on the range and quality of the curriculum and the impact of the experiences on students and the outcomes they achieve. As a consequence, curriculum innovation is well planned and ensures that the needs and interests of all students are met.
- Planning across the phases of education, both within the school and at the point when students transfer to the next school, prepares students well. It ensures that previous learning is taken into account when preparing for the arrival of new students.
- Cross-curricular themes are systematically and deliberately planned to ensure that students' skills across a range of subjects are developed in meaningful and interesting contexts. A wide range of extra-curricular activities allows students to extend their learning and interests.
- Through a strong sense of the school's shared curricular values and carefully planned opportunities to work with the local community, students are creative and enterprising. Older students are very well prepared for the world of work and further education.

Quality of the curriculum illustrated below would be evaluated as acceptable.

- The curriculum is based on a clear rationale and values. It is generally broad and balanced across and within each of its various elements. The curriculum is largely driven by textbooks.
- The curriculum is regularly reviewed but revisions and adaptations are not always implemented as a result of this work. Most students' needs are met.
- Planning across the phases of education, within the school and at the point when students transfer to the next school, builds on previous curriculum content. However, students are not always well prepared for the next stage of their education. The previous learning of new students is not taken fully into account.
- There is limited development of cross-curricular themes. Opportunities are not always taken to make useful connections between subjects and aspects that would promote greater coherence in the curriculum. Extra-curricular activities occur from time to time. Participation and access may not be possible for all students.
- The school is aware of its place in the community but makes limited use of its surroundings to enhance the curriculum. Visits and other activities are organised but not always effectively integrated with the learning experience. There is occasional collaboration with local businesses.

The quality of the curriculum is unlikely to be acceptable if:

- Any stated key requirements are not provided.
- It fails to cater adequately for the educational needs of particular groups of students.
- There is no systematic review.
- There is discontinuity from year to year and between phases.
- Opportunities for promoting essential knowledge, understanding or skills are neglected.

5. How well does the school protect and support students?

Inspectors will make evaluations on the basis of the evidence they gather in relation to each significant age group in the school, taking into account the students' ages and scaling their expectations accordingly. Inspectors will take account of any significant variations in the provision for different groups of students, such as boys and girls and those of different curriculum and different abilities.

5.1 Health and safety

Key aspects

- Arrangements to ensure health, safety and security in all parts of the school, on school transport and in other environments used by the school
- Suitability of premises and facilities
- Quality of maintenance and record keeping; for example, fire drills and administration of medicines, together with records of incidents and subsequent actions
- Provision for and promotion of healthy lifestyles
- Care and welfare of students including child protection

	Outstanding	Good	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
Brief illustrative descriptions	<p>The school consistently and in all respects provides a fully safe, hygienic and secure environment for students and staff. Buildings and equipment are maintained in excellent condition.</p> <p>Excellent supervision of students prevails at all times.</p> <p>All staff and students are aware of child protection arrangements.</p>	<p>Frequent thorough checks are made and acted upon to make sure that a safe environment is maintained. Buildings and equipment are hygienic and kept in a good state of repair. The students are well supervised in classrooms, playgrounds, as they move round the school and on school transport.</p> <p>Most staff and students are aware of child protection arrangements.</p>	<p>Requirements for maintaining the health and safety of students are met. Buildings and equipment are secure, safe, in sound repair, well maintained and clean. Students are kept safe throughout the school day and accidents are rare.</p> <p>The majority of staff and students are aware of child protection arrangements.</p>	<p>Policies for health and safety are poorly implemented. Health and safety checks are irregular and not rigorous. Some parts of buildings or equipment are unsafe and/or unhygienic. Supervisory practices are weak.</p> <p>Arrangements for child protection may exist but these are not widely known.</p>

Quality of health and safety illustrated below would be evaluated as outstanding.

- There are very effective arrangements in place and these ensure that students are kept safe. Staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities in ensuring health and safety. Practical measures are in place to protect students including, for example, appropriate arrangements for school transport. Students state that they feel safe in the school.
- The school premises, equipment and resources are excellent and very well suited to the educational needs of all students. They ensure that students are safe at all times whilst participating in a wide range of challenging and motivating educational experiences.
- Comprehensive records are kept of regular and routine fire drills, evacuation procedures and other incidents, with clearly stated action taken, to prevent their recurrence. Medical staff are vigilant in their care of students. Routine checks are carried out and detailed records kept. Relevant medical information is shared with staff in the school in a systematic way to ensure students' medical care at all times whilst they are working with different school staff. Medication is kept in a locked room or cabinet and all staff are well-informed about how and by whom it can be administered. Students with special educational needs are provided with the specialist support to enable them to make a full contribution to the life of the school.
- Promotion of healthy lifestyles is a systematic part of the school's provision for students and their families and covers advice on food choices as well as the opportunity to take part in physical education and sport.
- Child protection arrangements are clearly defined and understood by all students, staff and parents. The school has very effective arrangements to protect students. Staff deal sensitively and effectively with students' needs and concerns.

Quality of health and safety illustrated below would be evaluated as acceptable.

- There are effective arrangements in place to ensure that students are kept safe. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities in ensuring health and safety. Practical measures are in place to protect students and arrangements are reviewed to ensure that they are effective. Most students state that they feel safe in the school.
- The school premises, equipment and resources are suitable and provide a safe environment for students.
- Records of health and safety procedures are up to date and appropriate risk assessments are completed in relation to visits and potentially hazardous activities. Routine fire drills and other evacuation procedures take place. There are sufficient medical staff to carry out routine checks. Medication is kept locked away and all staff know how and by whom it can be administered. Students with special educational needs are mostly given the specialist support they need.
- The school has built into its curriculum opportunities for students to take part in physical activity in support of a healthy lifestyle. Parents are, at times, involved in school activities which raise awareness of healthy living.
- Child protection arrangements are in place but the responsibility for their implementation may be in the hands of a few senior staff or members of the administration.

The quality of health and safety is unlikely to be acceptable if:

- Policies and procedures for health and safety, including those for school transport, are poorly implemented.
- Health and safety checks are irregular and/or not rigorous.
- Some parts of the school buildings or school equipment are unsafe and/or unhygienic.
- Supervisory practices are weak.

5.2 Quality of support

Key aspects

- Staff–student relationships
- Student advice and support, including guidance regarding future education and career paths
- Staff handling of behaviour issues
- Tracking and supporting students’ overall well-being and academic progress
- Management of student attendance and punctuality

	Outstanding	Good	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
Brief illustrative descriptions	Staff have very good relationships with all students. Individual students’ academic progress is tracked effectively to provide individualised guidance and support. Consequently changes in students’ well-being and personal circumstances are monitored and the information is used to provide effective support.	Students’ educational and personal well-being is a high priority for staff. There are well-developed systems for tracking students’ academic progress and for giving good advice and guidance.	Teachers know their students’ needs well. Teachers show students respect and respond to their personal and academic needs with appropriate advice and guidance.	The school is slow to diagnose and respond to students’ needs. Assessment and care arrangements are weak or are not applied consistently. The students receive insufficient advice and guidance.

Quality of support illustrated below would be evaluated as outstanding.

- Teachers know all their students well, including those who find learning difficult, and are fully aware of their individual social, physical, emotional and intellectual needs. Teachers have very good relationships with students and respond to them in supportive ways. Mutual respect, trust and confidence characterise interactions between and among staff and students. All members of the school community demonstrate care and concern for the needs of others at all times.
- All students have ready access to known and trusted members of staff who provide well-informed advice and guidance about a range of important matters, including their academic progress, health and future career. Students' questions, needs and concerns are handled sympathetically and, when appropriate, in confidence. Students have recourse to an effective complaints procedure. High quality advice and guidance results in actions that bring about improvements in student performance.
- The school's approach to managing behaviour is clearly defined and well understood by the students and the whole staff, who implement the policies wisely and are supported fully by the senior management team. Students are involved in discussions about the effectiveness of the approaches used and contribute their views constructively. Although the behaviour of almost all students is exemplary, firm action is taken when necessary. Parents receive comprehensive information about the school's expectations of standards of behaviour and of how staff will deal with any instances of misbehaviour. External agencies provide effective specialised support to individual students and their families when required.
- The school maintains highly effective processes for checking the academic and personal development of all students. The teachers monitor and record students' progress efficiently by regularly assessing their written, oral and practical work. They frequently discuss with students the rate of their progress and how they can achieve key targets. Action is taken as necessary to ensure improvement. Reports to parents are expressed in positive language and set out clearly what the students are doing well and the respects in which their work needs to improve. Students and parents comment on these reports and respond well to them.
- The school keeps accurate records of attendance and punctuality. Prompt action is taken when levels fall and parents fully recognise and support the importance of maintaining high levels of attendance and punctuality. Parents are contacted immediately when students fail to arrive when expected.

Quality of support illustrated below would be evaluated as acceptable.

- Teachers know most of their students well and are aware of their social, physical, emotional and intellectual needs. They have good relationships with students and respond positively to them. Teachers and students respect one another and generally show care and concern for the needs of others.
- Students receive advice and guidance from staff on a range of matters, including their educational progress, health and future career, and most feel confident to ask adults for help. Students' questions, needs and concerns are usually dealt with efficiently and, when appropriate, in confidence.
- The school has an effective approach to managing the behaviour of its students. The staff know how to implement the policies and are supported in doing so by the senior management team. Parents receive information about how staff will deal with any instances of misbehaviour. External agencies are involved in supporting individual students and their families as necessary.
- Teachers monitor the rate of students' progress by assessing their work, but they may not always do so regularly or systematically. This is not always linked to tracking of personal development. Reports to parents set out the student's strengths and areas for development.
- The school records attendance and punctuality but may not systematically analyse the data. Monitoring procedures are known to students, staff and parents and are intended to ensure the safety and well-being of the students. Parents receive feedback about improved attendance and punctuality and understand the action the school takes when it is required.

The quality of support is unlikely to be acceptable if:

- There are antagonistic relationships between staff and students.
- Advice, support and guidance are uninformative.
- Inappropriate behaviour management strategies are used.
- There is no tracking to support students' academic progress.
- Arrangements to manage student attendance and punctuality are absent or ineffective.

6. How good are the leadership and management of the school?

Inspectors will make evaluations on the basis of the evidence they gather in relation to the leadership and management of the school as a whole and of key sections within it.

6.1 Quality of leadership

Key aspects

- Leadership qualities
- Professional competence and commitment
- Vision, direction and guidance
- Development of relationships, teams and leaders at all levels

	Outstanding	Good	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
Brief illustrative descriptions	<p>Leadership and management are good or better in all respects and dedicated to high standards. Leaders set a clear direction and empower the teachers.</p> <p>There is a clear focus in the school on consultation and collegiate working and this secures high levels of commitment from staff. The school is successful in creating an ethos of collective responsibility and mutual support. Effective performance management arrangements help the school to evaluate accurately and address the professional needs of staff and fulfil the aims of the school.</p> <p>Leaders are observant and perceptive, with the capacity to plan, anticipate and solve problems and further the school's development.</p>	<p>Leadership and management provide a clear sense of direction. Senior staff focus strongly on raising standards. The staff team shares common purpose and vision.</p> <p>Leaders share responsibilities with middle managers and staff as necessary. Effective teams are evident in many areas of the school and they are accountable for ensuring quality outcomes. The teams are successful in identifying professional development needs through effective performance management systems.</p> <p>Leaders have the capacity to devise practical strategies to secure further improvement.</p>	<p>Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Leaders are competent and committed.</p> <p>The roles of leaders are defined. Some members of staff, other than senior leaders, have defined roles and responsibilities. Most of the staff show a strong commitment to the ethos of the school, its values and success. Performance management arrangements are in place, but they may not sufficiently inform professional development. The school analyses its performance and uses the results to inform change.</p> <p>Leaders are not complacent and they are aware that further improvements can be made. They demonstrate the capacity to make required improvements.</p>	<p>Leadership and management exert little positive influence over the way the school works. Leaders pay insufficient attention to, and have little impact on, standards. Leadership and all decision making resides wholly with the Principal. Teams and staff are underdeveloped and there is no plan for professional development. There is no commitment to or leadership of change. The school is only reactive to external demands and merely repeats routines from year to year with little acknowledgement of the need for improvement or change.</p> <p>Leaders may be complacent, insecure or insular, and their capacity to improve the school is limited.</p>

Quality of leadership illustrated below would be evaluated as outstanding.

- Senior staff are highly effective, skilled practitioners and display a high level of professional competence. They communicate a clear view of the school's aims so that all staff are clear and committed to their parts in achieving the school's vision. The roles of senior staff are clearly defined, understood and aligned to school priorities. Senior leaders in the school influence decision-making and initiate and lead improvement activities. School leaders ensure that the focus for development priorities results in improved learning outcomes for students.
- All staff in the school are committed to planning and implementing strategies for improvement. Change is led and managed effectively and strategically by prioritising and focusing on a manageable number of high priority initiatives, involving stakeholders in the process. Analytical appraisal of all aspects of performance leads to the successful implementation of change.
- The school works with students, parents and other stakeholders to develop and shape a shared vision. This is communicated effectively to all stakeholders. The work of the school gains direction from the clear values and aims. Staff in the school regularly review the vision, values and aims and this results in a strong sense of purpose throughout the school. Staff take full account of the schools' vision, values and aims when developing new initiatives.
- There is a clear focus in the school on consultation and collegiate working and this secures high levels of commitment from staff. When necessary, the leaders of the school drive forward improvement directly. Distributive leadership builds and empowers individuals and teams. There is a high level of competence and commitment at all levels. The school is successful in creating an ethos of collective responsibility and mutual support. Effective performance management arrangements help the school to evaluate accurately and address the professional needs of staff and fulfil the aims of the school.

Quality of leadership illustrated below would be evaluated as acceptable.

- Senior staff discharge their duties competently. They communicate the school's aims but staff are unclear about how initiatives relate to the school's vision. The roles of senior staff are defined, but not always aligned to school priorities. Senior leaders contribute to decision-making but rarely initiate and lead improvement activities. School leaders ensure that some development priorities result in improved learning outcomes for students.
- Most staff in the school are committed to planning and implementing strategies for improvement. The school has analysed aspects of performance and use the results to inform change within those aspects.
- The school consults students, parents and other stakeholders when developing the school vision but there is no analysis of this consultation and it does not inform the vision. All staff are aware of the school values and aims. The school lacks a formal process to review the vision, values and aims. Some staff take account of the schools' vision, values and aims when developing new initiatives.
- There is a variable focus in the school on consultation and collegiate working and this results in mixed levels of commitment from staff. There has been some allocation of leadership roles and additional professional development to a few staff. There are variable levels of competence and commitment at all levels. Performance management arrangements are in place and confirm lines of responsibility and accountability.

The quality of leadership is unlikely to be judged as acceptable if:

- The quality of the senior leadership is weak and has little impact on the life of the school.
- The leadership lacks professional competence, there is complacency about standards and quality, and commitment to improvement is lacking.
- The vision is not explicit and/or it is not known or shared amongst all stakeholders and, consequently, the direction is unclear.
- No leadership and management responsibilities exist beyond the senior leadership team.

6.2 Self-evaluation and improvement planning

Key aspects

- Processes for school self-evaluation
- Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance, including teaching and learning
- The processes and impact of school improvement planning, including post-inspection plans

	Outstanding	Good	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
Brief illustrative descriptions	Systematic and rigorous self-evaluation is embedded in the school's improvement planning and in its practice at all levels. Strategic thinking is clear. Ambitious improvement planning combines successfully with achievable goals. All the recommendations from the previous inspection have been met in full.	Through effective self-evaluation, which takes into account the views of parents, school leaders know their school well. They use the outcomes to plan and take effective action promptly to make necessary improvements. There has been significant progress in addressing all of the recommendations in the previous report.	The school's priorities are based on sound analysis of its performance. The work of the school is monitored, including the performance of staff and students, and actions are taken. There is evident progress in addressing most of the recommendations from the previous report.	Self-evaluation is poorly developed so managers do not have a realistic view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Planning for improvement is not based on realistic priorities. Little or no progress has been made in the implementation of the recommendations from the previous inspection.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning illustrated below would be evaluated as outstanding.

- Staff are fully involved in systematic self-evaluation, which has the explicit purpose of improving the quality of students' experiences and their standards of attainment. Self-evaluation is rigorous and generates valid and reliable evidence, which contributes significantly to procedures for assuring quality. Its results are used effectively to identify a realistic and achievable number of priority areas for action. Performance measurement and review take appropriate account of best practice as embodied in local and national guidance. Positive steps are taken to gather the views of parents, students and others about the quality of service provided by the school, and effective action is taken in response. Parents, students and others help to identify the school's strengths, development needs and planning priorities. Information from staff review and other sources is used to inform the school's self-evaluation and planning process.
- Senior staff monitor teachers' plans, evaluate students' classroom experiences, track students' attainment and evaluate their progress towards meeting agreed targets. Senior managers systematically monitor the effectiveness of staff teams. Staff rigorously monitor and evaluate progress in implementing the improvement plan and in meeting agreed targets.
- Self-evaluation provides valid, comprehensive and reliable evidence for identifying key priorities for the preparation of the improvement plan and involves staff, parents and students as appropriate. The strategies adopted in the plan are fit for purpose, implemented thoroughly and intelligently and result in genuine improvement. Arrangements for reporting on the standards and quality of the school always include a focus on the impact of developments. The objectives of the action plan arising from the previous inspection report are being met.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning illustrated below would be evaluated as acceptable.

- Evidence to support self-evaluation is gathered from a range of sources. It is analysed and provides a workable basis for procedures for assuring quality. Information from staff review and other sources feeds into the planning process.
- Performance measurement and review take account of best practice. The school receives feedback and takes formal steps to find out what parents, students and others feel about the quality of service, and engages them in consultation. The outcomes of feedback received are visible in subsequent action. Promoted staff evaluate the school's work and use a range of methods, which include a focus on the quality of students' experiences and their attainment. Senior managers have an overview of the work of staff teams and evaluate their effectiveness by focusing on the outcomes of their work. Progress towards meeting targets in the improvement plan is evaluated.
- The school prepares an improvement plan on the basis of a limited range of suitable evidence. There is evidence that recent plans have brought about intended improvements. Reports on the standards and quality achieved by the school are mainly descriptive, but include evaluations of some developments, and refer to areas for improvement as well as strengths.

Self-evaluation and improvement planning are unlikely to be acceptable if:

- Self-evaluation is regarded as the responsibility of senior managers and does not involve a significant number of staff.
- The evidence gathered is too narrowly focused and does not include any outcomes of staff review.
- Self-evaluation lacks rigour and is not systematic; some areas receive frequent attention while other key areas are neglected.
- The school does not consult or act on any feedback it receives.
- Evaluation methods are limited in scope and do not focus on the quality of students' experiences and standards of attainment, or on improving these.
- Targets in improvement planning are too many, unrealistic and unachievable.
- Progress towards meeting agreed targets for improvement is not evaluated, and there is little evidence of the impact of the improvement plan.
- Reports on the standards and quality of the working of the school do not accurately identify strengths and areas for improvement, and are descriptive rather than evaluative.

6.3 Partnership with parents and the community

Key aspects

- Parents' involvement with their children's learning and the work of the school
- Procedures for communicating with and reporting to parents
- The school's role in the local and wider community

	Outstanding	Good	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
Brief illustrative descriptions	<p>There are highly productive links with parents, which help improve their children's learning and raise standards.</p> <p>Both school and community benefit from strong and extensive partnerships, including those with other schools that effectively support students' development.</p>	<p>The school has productive links with parents, which strengthen students' learning and contribute to good standards.</p> <p>Relevant links with the wider community, including other schools, impact positively on the educational experiences of all students.</p>	<p>There are some established links with parents, which support students' progress and personal development.</p> <p>There are some productive links with other schools and the local community, including local businesses.</p>	<p>The school does not have sufficient links with parents, from which students would benefit.</p> <p>The school has no effective links with outside organisations and other schools.</p>

Quality of partnership with parents and the community illustrated below would be evaluated as outstanding.

- Parents are highly supportive of the school and the senior leadership team. They participate in the life of the school in a planned and purposeful manner. They are actively encouraged to be partners in their children's learning in a variety of ways, including, for example, with homework, classroom activities, participation in out-of-school activities and in school governance. The success of these measures is evident in the good attendance by parents at school consultation events. Parents are consulted about the work of the school on a regular basis and their views are valued. When developments are planned, the views of parents are influential in defining priorities.
- The school uses a wide range of effective methods, including ICT, to communicate with parents. These methods take full account of the home language of parents. Parents receive regular reports regarding their children's progress and attainment. These give helpful information to parents regarding the students' achievements and targets for improvement. The school gives all parents regular and useful summaries of school priorities for the future and parents report high levels of satisfaction with the opportunities they have to contribute to their children's learning and progress.
- Both school and community benefit from a very strong partnership that effectively supports students' development. The school actively seeks links with external partners, including other schools, businesses and community organisations. Such links are productive in enhancing and improving students' learning experiences. Members of the local community are very supportive of the school, and help to provide additional resources for learning as well as a significant number of opportunities to enhance the curriculum through, for example, visits of students, visiting speakers to the school and work experience.

Quality of partnership with parents and the community illustrated below would be evaluated as acceptable.

- The school informs parents regularly on matters relating to their children. Parents are invited to respond and play their parts as full partners in learning; parents are aware of the school's priorities and their views are sought on school development and improvement planning. Many parents attend school consultation events. The views of parents are influential in the school's shaping of new policies and priorities for improvement planning.
- Established and reliable means are in place to communicate with parents – for example, they are contacted immediately in the event of unexpected absence. The school does not solely rely on letters conveyed home by students in order to communicate with parents. Parents feel welcome at the school and, when they have a problem, all of their concerns are satisfactorily addressed by the school.
- Productive links exist with the local community, including the local business community; these links enhance the quality of learning and contribute towards improved resourcing and curriculum opportunities.

The quality of partnerships with parents and the community is unlikely to be acceptable if:

- Parents are not encouraged to be active partners in learning.
- Parents do not feel welcome at the school.
- Parents are not involved in the development of new policies.
- Arrangements for reporting are poor, and the parents are not sure how well their children are doing at school.
- There are few, if any, links with other schools and the local community.

6.4 Governance

Key aspects

- Providing advice and guidance, and ensuring accountability
- Representation reflecting the school community

	Outstanding	Good	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
Brief illustrative descriptions	<p>Effective governance makes a significant contribution to the leadership of the school. It works successfully in support of the educational leaders.</p> <p>The school is fully accountable to the governing body/advisory group for its performance and quality; the school reports to the governing body/advisory group on a regular basis.</p> <p>It includes wide representation from all stakeholders.</p>	<p>The governing body/advisory group exerts a positive influence on the work of the school. It plays a significant role in leading school improvement.</p> <p>The school is accountable to the governing body/advisory group for its performance and quality.</p> <p>The membership of the governing body/advisory group includes representation from many stakeholders.</p>	<p>The governing body/advisory group is in place and ensures that statutory requirements are met.</p> <p>The school is accountable to the governing body/advisory group for some aspects of its performance and quality.</p> <p>The membership of the governing body/advisory group includes representation from certain stakeholders.</p>	<p>The school does not benefit from effective governance.</p> <p>There are no arrangements in place to help school leaders and stakeholders review and evaluate the work of the school.</p> <p>The school is not accountable to parents and other stakeholders for its performance and quality.</p>

Quality of governance illustrated below would be evaluated as outstanding.

- The governing body/advisory board provides strategic guidance to the school and holds the leadership of the school to account for its performance. The school gives sufficiently regular and detailed accounts of its performance to the governing body/advisory board and includes comprehensive information regarding the achievement of students and future school priorities. Governance in the school is effective in ensuring that the school meets its commitment to parents.
- The school has a governing body/advisory board which is representative of the school community and the context in which it operates. It provides an objective and independent view of the school. There are effective processes in place to ensure that governance in the school reflects the views of all stakeholders. The governing body/advisory board meets regularly to review the schools' work and the meetings are fully minuted and relevant information is distributed amongst stakeholders. This leads to informed and responsive decision-making, helping to direct change and manage school resources efficiently.

Quality of governance illustrated below would be evaluated as acceptable.

- The school has a governing body/advisory board, or has well developed plans to establish such a group. The governing body/advisory board includes some representatives of the school community and the context in which it operates. It provides information to parents via notices, the school website and meetings. It informs about its structure and responsibilities, and provides opportunities for parents to influence decision making that affects student outcomes.
- If a governing board does not yet exist, there is a planned timeframe to ensure that a new governance structure will be in place within the current academic year. While a revised/new governing body/advisory board is being developed, the school is seeking increased involvement from parents and other stakeholders regarding its performance. The school ensures that most statutory requirements are met.

The quality of governance is unlikely to be acceptable quality if:

- There are no plans for the school to form a consultative body to oversee its work, take part in decision-making or offer advice.

6.5 Staffing, facilities and resources

Key aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficiency of suitably qualified staff and their effective deployment • Appropriateness of the premises and the overall learning environment, including off-site facilities • Use of the space and resources for effective teaching and learning 			
	Outstanding	Good	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
<p>Brief illustrative descriptions</p>	<p>All teachers are well qualified and suitably experienced. There is a comprehensive range of ancillary staff to support learning. Staff members are deployed effectively and the creation of innovative staff roles may enhance the learning experiences of students.</p> <p>The premises are of the highest quality, with many specialist facilities that are designed well to allow access for all. The library/resource areas contain good quality and appropriate learning materials and are used well to promote independent study.</p> <p>Resources for learning, including ICT, are plentiful. Their deployment and use are carefully monitored in order to verify their effectiveness in terms of enhanced learning outcomes.</p>	<p>Teaching staff are well qualified, with a suitable number of support staff to enhance learning. Deployment is efficient and effective.</p> <p>The premises and specialist facilities are sufficient and of good quality; they enhance learning. All areas for learning are accessible to students, including those students with additional needs. The library/resource areas are used well and stocked with appropriate learning materials.</p> <p>There are sufficient resources for learning, including ICT to support and enhance students' work, including independent study. These resources promote high quality learning and a degree of student independence as students use resources to explore, research and reinforce concepts.</p>	<p>There is enough staff and their breadth of expertise is sufficient to cover all subjects. Their deployment is mostly appropriate but there may be inequitable teaching loads across the school.</p> <p>The premises are adequate but specialist facilities are somewhat restricted. Access into and within the school premises is appropriate for all students including those with additional needs.</p> <p>There are enough appropriate resources, including ICT, to enhance the learning. The use of some resources may be inefficient with limited impact on learning.</p>	<p>The school is not adequately staffed and/or the premises are unsuitable or deficient. Access for those with additional needs is limited. The absence of suitably qualified staff, appropriate facilities or learning resources adversely affects students' learning and impedes their progress and attainment.</p>

The staffing, facilities and resources illustrated below would be evaluated as outstanding.

- There are sufficient, appropriately qualified teachers to provide a curriculum of high quality for all students, including provision of support from specialist agencies for those with additional learning needs. Teachers are complemented in their work by the provision of sufficient support staff and other professionals, as appropriate. Teachers' skills and experience are used effectively. The school has ready access to appropriately qualified supply staff and has good arrangements for ensuring that they are able to operate effectively when they are in the school. There is a very good balance of experience among staff. Individual members of staff are well qualified and, taken as a whole, they have qualifications, skills and training relevant to their responsibilities and the needs of the school and its students. Teachers are knowledgeable about the processes of child development and learning. Teachers and support staff are deployed effectively.
- The premises and facilities provide a safe, pleasant and stimulating environment, well suited to supporting the curricular and extra-curricular activities of students, the work of staff, and social and leisure activities. Appropriate space is available for the size of the classes. There are suitable work areas for teachers and adequate social provision for students. Storage provision and facilities for display are plentiful and convenient. Accommodation is very well maintained. Fixtures, fittings and furniture match educational needs, are of high quality and are in very good condition. Access is suitable to the needs of all users.
- Timetabling is efficient and ensures the best use of space. The school is extremely well equipped with all necessary and relevant, up-to-date resources including textbooks, practical materials and equipment, and information and communication technology. Resources are well matched to the needs of the students, are in very good condition, catalogued and easily accessible. Effective use is made across the school of all appropriate resources to meet the needs of students. Use of resources is monitored and improvement in the overall provision is planned carefully.

The staffing, facilities and resources illustrated below would be evaluated as acceptable.

- There are sufficient, qualified teachers to provide a broad and appropriate curriculum for all students, including provision of support from specialists for students with additional learning needs. Teachers are deployed appropriately and are assisted by enough support staff and other professionals. The school has suitable arrangements for obtaining appropriately qualified supply staff when necessary and supports them in school. There is a satisfactory balance of expertise among staff. Teachers and support staff are deployed across the school appropriately.
- The premises and facilities provide a clean, safe environment for learning and teaching, and extra-curricular activities. The teaching areas are of an acceptable size. Furniture and fittings are well maintained. Storage and display facilities are in good order. Playing fields/games areas are in acceptable condition and regularly used.
- Timetabling makes satisfactory use of all available areas to meet the needs of students and staff. The school is equipped with modern resources including textbooks, practical materials and equipment, and information and communication technology. Resources are matched to the learning needs of the students, are well looked after and stored efficiently. Resources are updated or replaced as funds allow.

The staffing, facilities and resources are unlikely to be of an acceptable quality if:

- There are too few teachers or a significant number of them do not hold suitable qualifications.
- There are gaps in teachers' skills or arrangements are inadequate to manage teaching when absence is high.
- The facilities are inadequate to meet curriculum requirements.
- Resources for learning are insufficient to meet the learning needs or demands of the curriculum.

7. How well does the school perform overall?

Outstanding	Good	Acceptable	Unsatisfactory
<p>All key aspects of the school's work operate highly effectively. There are significant examples of excellent practice.</p> <p>The school delivers fully on an ambitious set of promises to parents.</p> <p>The attainment and progress of almost all students are at least good across all key subjects. Standards of attainment have been maintained over several years.</p> <p>Through effective and rigorous monitoring of all aspects of school life, the school accurately evaluates strengths and areas for development. Effective action leads to continuous improvement.</p> <p>The needs of all students are fully met.</p>	<p>The school performs effectively in almost all key aspects of its work. The senior staff are capable of leading further improvement.</p> <p>The school delivers well on all the key aspects of its promise to parents.</p> <p>The attainment and progress of most students are at least good across all key subjects.</p> <p>Self-evaluation arrangements are embedded and accurately identify the main priorities requiring improvement.</p> <p>The needs of almost all students are fully met.</p>	<p>The school performs at an acceptable level although there may be weaknesses in certain aspects of its work. The senior staff are aware of the weaknesses and understand what will be involved in overcoming them.</p> <p>The school fulfils most aspects of its promise to parents.</p> <p>The attainment and progress of most students are at least in line with expectations.</p> <p>The school's priorities are based on sound analysis of its performance. The work of the school is monitored effectively, including the performance of staff and students, and appropriate actions are taken.</p> <p>The needs of most students are fully met.</p>	<p>The school has evident weaknesses. It lacks the capacity to improve significantly without considerable support.</p> <p>The school does not deliver on key aspects of its promise to parents.</p> <p>More than a few students do not make the progress expected of them and levels of attainment are unsatisfactory in one or more key subjects.</p> <p>Self-evaluation is inadequately developed so managers do not have a realistic view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Planning for improvement is not based on realistic priorities.</p> <p>The needs of more than a few students are not fully met.</p>



Appendix 1.

Mission, vision, values and strategic objectives of the Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau

The Mission of the Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau is as follows:

'To contribute to the improvement of educational outcomes and parental choice by providing independent, comprehensive, authoritative assessment of education quality in Dubai.'

Vision

The Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau will make a major contribution to Dubai's reputation for educational excellence through:

- identifying strengths and weaknesses and thereby enabling improvement and innovation, in partnership with federal ministries, and authorities
- building on local skills to develop and sustain a high-calibre sustainable inspection organisation over the long term
- empowering parents and others to make informed choices about learning provision
- enabling the development of an outstanding education system that will meet Dubai's demand for a highly professional and competent workforce, and enhance the global reputation of Dubai as a world centre for social and economic development.

Values

(a) Commitment to Educational Quality and Improvement

We will promote education of the highest quality in schools throughout the Emirate of Dubai in order to improve the learning and life chances for all children. The key contribution of inspection to improving educational provision is to supply well-founded information about the performance of schools that can be used to increase parental choice and bring about positive change.

(b) Excellence in Inspection Delivery

We will provide service users with highly reliable, evaluative judgements underpinned by a secure evidence base and an excellent inspection methodology.

(c) Respect

School inspection will be conducted at all times in accordance with the highest standards of professional conduct, including courtesy to all involved in school inspection and a profound respect for the culture and religions of students, teachers and parents in Dubai.

(d) Impartiality and Independence

We will at all times take an objective view of school quality. We will not be unduly influenced by the perceptions of those who disagree with well-founded inspection judgements.

(e) Transparency

We will be open and transparent in our communications, and ultimately school reports and the details of the inspection methodology will be placed in the public domain.

(f) Partnership

We will work in close partnership with appropriate governmental bodies in Dubai, the UAE, and internationally. We will work closely with the other Agencies of the KHDA, particularly the Schools Agency, and a range of other partner organisations. This partnership will be based on a clear definition of the respective roles of the Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau and the other Agencies.

(g) Efficiency

We will run the Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau efficiently and in way that seeks to maximise educational outcomes. As a result, the Inspection Bureau will be cost effective. We will seek to measure its impact so that judgements can be made about 'value for money'.

Strategic objectives

- To ensure that the educational quality of all schools in Dubai has been assessed using an authoritative inspection methodology
- To develop a high-calibre local workforce capable of building and sustaining a world class inspection organisation
- To assist the improvement of all schools through school inspection
- To ensure that effective remedial action is taken when inspection indicates that schools have serious weaknesses
- To give parents useful and reliable information about school quality which will assist informed school choice
- To provide policy-makers and others with an authoritative picture of school quality issues across all the schools of Dubai

Appendix 2.

Self-evaluation – using this framework to evaluate the work of your school

This framework is intended as a tool for school self-evaluation and not simply as a handbook for DSIB inspectors. Schools in Dubai should use the framework alongside other self-evaluation processes to review their performance and evaluate priorities for the future.

The quality indicator relating to students' learning has been amended in this 2009-2010 version. The Initial Quality Inspection Handbook included quality indicator 3.3 Quality of students' learning as part of the key question "How good are teaching and learning?". This quality indicator has been amended to place greater focus on students' skills as learners and the ways in which schools can support the progressive development of these skills.

Schools may wish to use the simple evaluative tool below in reference to the revised quality indicator regarding students' learning and use the evidence listed to review the quality of students' learning. The tool can be adapted to use with other quality indicators. The list of sources of evidence is not exhaustive.

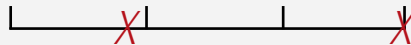
Students' engagement in and responsibility for their own learning

Completed example

Where we are

Where we'd like to be

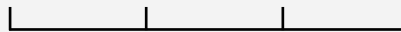
A substantial proportion of students are not engaged in lessons and they are unable to explain what they are doing. Students are unaware of their strengths and weaknesses.



Students are actively engaged in and able to reflect on their learning to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. Most act on them in order to improve.

Students' engagement in and responsibility for their own learning

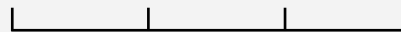
A substantial proportion of students are not engaged in lessons and they are unable to explain what they are doing. Students are unaware of their strengths and weaknesses.



Students are actively engaged in and able to reflect on their learning to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. Most act on them in order to improve.

Learner interactions and collaboration

Students are unable to work collaboratively



Students collaborate effectively in a wide range of learning situations

Application of learning to the real world and making connections between areas of learning

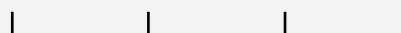
Students make no connections between learning and cannot relate learning to their lives



Students make connections between learning and applying this confidently and accurately to new learning contexts


Research skills

Students have no skills to be able to find things out for themselves



Students can find things out from a variety of different sources and use ICT effectively to support their learning.

Students' critical and higher order thinking

Students lack critical thinking and are unable to find things out for themselves		Higher order and critical thinking is a common feature of learning. Students find things out for themselves.
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School leaders wishing to obtain a strategic overview of learning may find it useful to conduct an analysis using the above tool. This is given as an example only and may be amended to suit the needs of individual schools. The tool is designed to be completed by all personnel involved in the learning process.

Any self-evaluation tool requires the school to consider supporting evidence for the judgements made. Suggested supporting evidence may include:

Lesson observations	International benchmarking data
Feedback from students	Teacher discussions
External examination data	Feedback from parents
Ongoing assessment data	Student work samples
Accreditation evidence	Student presentations

Appendix 3.

Plain language guide to the quality indicators

Inspectors use the quality indicators to evaluate the performance of schools.

QI 1 How good are the students' attainment and progress?

Inspectors judge a combination of two aspects:

- The level students reach in each key subject in school-based tests, external examinations and compared to students in other countries;
- The gains students make between two points in time, such as the beginning and end of a year. Students can be described as having made unsatisfactory, acceptable, good or outstanding progress in relation to where they started.

QI 2 – Personal and social development

This quality indicator covers three areas:

- Attitudes and behaviour - how the students behave, what relationships are like between them and teachers, how regularly the students come to school and whether they keep good time;
- Students' civic understanding, their respect for and their appreciation and understanding of Islam and local traditions and culture;
- Economic and environmental understanding - the extent to which students understand Dubai's economy, its progress and its place in the world. Students are asked about their understanding of local and global environmental issues and how they might contribute to the progress of Dubai.

QI 3 – Teaching and learning

This quality indicator covers:

- Teaching for effective learning – how well the methods chosen help students of all abilities to learn, how well lessons are paced and how effectively teachers use questions to develop students’ thinking. This also includes how well teachers know the subjects they are teaching and how to teach them without relying on a single source of information, such as a textbook;
- Quality of students’ learning - how well the students apply themselves to learning and find things out for themselves; how well students’ knowledge, understanding and skills develop as a result of the teaching and, when appropriate, how effectively the students work together or alone without the teacher telling them what to do. Students are expected to apply what they learn to real-life situations and think critically to solve problems;
- Assessment as part of the teaching and learning process – how well the teachers allow the students to think about and understand what they need to do to improve their work, getting them to judge their own work and sometimes that of others; how well teachers provide feedback, which includes the marking of written work, to support learning and how effectively examination and test results are used to help students and enable teachers to know each student’s strengths and weaknesses.

QI 4.1 Curriculum quality

- The curriculum includes everything a school deliberately teaches including such things as educational visits and extra-curricular activities. Inspectors judge the quality of the curriculum, its breadth, its range and the mix of subjects offered and how these link together; how much choice there is for older students and the challenges the curriculum presents for them. Inspectors assess how relevant the curriculum is to the students’ needs, especially those who are very able and those who have learning difficulties as well as how well the curriculum links with the community and the opportunities for students to learn in the local area;

QI 5 Protection and support of students

This quality indicator covers two areas:

- Health and safety – the arrangements the school makes to ensure that the students are safe, the suitability and safety of the buildings, safety on the school buses, how clean and hygienic the premises are, how regularly fire drills are carried out and the medical and social care of students. Inspectors also investigate the extent to which schools promote a healthy lifestyle for the students, for example by educating them about diet and exercise and how well they respond if a child is in danger of being physically or emotionally hurt;
- Quality of support – how good the relationships are between staff and students, how well staff handle student behaviour and the quality of the advice and guidance they provide, including future education and career guidance. Inspectors assess how well schools keep a check on the welfare and academic progress of individual students and how well they manage attendance and punctuality.

QI 6 Leadership and management

This quality indicator covers five areas:

- Leadership qualities – how competent and committed the leaders are to improving the school and whether they have the vision, direction and guidance to bring about that improvement, how well the school leaders develop relationships, teams and leaders at all levels;
- Self-evaluation and improvement planning – how well the leaders know the school’s strengths and weaknesses, and how effectively they plan to develop and improve the quality of the education it provides; how systematically the school leaders check on the quality of teaching and learning and the school’s overall performance and how well they use this information and that provided from inspection to plan for improvement and so impact positively on students;
- Partnership with parents and the community – how well the school keeps parents informed and involved in their children’s learning and the work of the school and how well they report to parents on the progress of students. Inspectors also consider what the school does to link with the local and wider community in order to support students’ development;
- Governance – inspectors consider how well the group which governs the school has a positive influence on the work of the school, supports the school’s leaders and the extent to which this group helps the school to improve and holds it accountable for how well it does. Inspectors consider how well the governing group represents the school community;
- Staffing, facilities and resources – the quality of the school’s environment for learning, how well it uses the facilities it has, the quality of its human resources and how well they are deployed to provide the best possible education for students.

DSIB Quality Indicators

Quality Indicators	Key Aspects	
<p>How good are the students' attainment and progress?</p>	<p>1.1 Attainment in each key subject in relation to international standards</p>	<p>Attainment in school-based tests and against external and appropriate international standards</p> <p>Knowledge, skills and understanding in each key subject</p> <p>Trends in attainment over time</p>
	<p>1.2 Progress over time</p>	<p>Progress against starting points, and over time</p> <p>Suitability of expected levels</p>
<p>How good is the students' personal and social development?</p>	<p>2.1 Attitudes and behaviour</p>	<p>Observed attitudes and behaviour of students in and about the school</p> <p>Student-staff relationships</p> <p>Attendance</p> <p>Punctuality</p>
	<p>2.2 Students' civic understanding, their understanding of Islam and their appreciation of local traditions and culture</p>	<p>Students' civic responsibility</p> <p>Students' respect for and their appreciation and understanding of Islam</p> <p>Students' appreciation of local traditions and cultures in the context of Dubai's multi-cultural society</p>
	<p>2.3 Economic and environmental understanding</p>	<p>Knowledge and understanding of the nature of Dubai's economic planning and progress and its place in the UAE and globally</p> <p>Awareness of students' own potential contribution to Dubai's progress</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of the implications of local and global environmental issues</p>

How good are the teaching and learning?

3.1 Teaching for effective learning

Teachers' knowledge of their subjects and how they are learned

Effectiveness of lesson planning and management of time in lessons

The use of available resources and space beyond reliance on the textbook and other media

Teacher–student interactions including the use of dialogue and questions

Teaching strategies to meet the needs of all students, including students with special educational needs

3.2 Quality of students' learning

Students' engagement in and responsibility for their own learning

Students' interactions and collaboration

Application of learning to the real world and making connections between areas of learning

Enquiry and research skills

Students' critical and higher order thinking

3.3 Assessment

Assessment as part of the teaching and learning processes

Assessment methods and arrangements for record-keeping, including school policy and its implementation

Use of assessment information by teachers and students

Quality of feedback, including the marking of written work, and use of assessment data by teachers and students to inform learning and teaching

Level of teachers' knowledge of their students' strengths and weaknesses

<p>How well does the curriculum meet the educational needs of all students?</p>	<p>4.1 Curriculum quality</p>	<p>Breadth and balance</p> <p>Review and development</p> <p>Continuity and progression</p> <p>Cross-curricular links and extra-curricular activities</p> <p>Curriculum links with the community and local environment</p>
<p>How well does the school protect and support students?</p>	<p>5.1 Health and safety</p>	<p>Arrangements to ensure health, safety and security in all parts of the school, on school transport and in other environments used by the school</p> <p>Suitability of premises and facilities</p> <p>Quality of maintenance and record-keeping; for example, fire drills and administration of medicines, together with records of incidents and subsequent actions</p> <p>Provision for and promotion of healthy lifestyles</p> <p>Care and welfare of students including child protection</p>
	<p>5.2 Quality of support</p>	<p>Staff–student relationships</p> <p>Student advice and support, including guidance regarding future education and career paths</p> <p>Staff handling of behaviour issues</p> <p>Tracking and supporting students’ overall well-being and academic progress</p> <p>Management of student attendance and punctuality</p>

How good are the leadership and management of the school?

<p>6.1 Quality of leadership</p>	<p>Leadership qualities</p> <p>Professional competence and commitment</p> <p>Vision, direction and guidance</p> <p>Development of relationships, teams and leaders at all levels</p>
<p>6.2 Self – evaluation and improvement planning</p>	<p>Processes for school self-evaluation</p> <p>Monitoring and evaluation of the school’s performance, including teaching and learning</p> <p>The processes and impact of school improvement planning, including post-inspection plans</p>
<p>6.3 Partnership with parents and the community</p>	<p>Parents’ involvement with their children’s learning and the work of the school</p> <p>Procedures for communicating with and reporting to parents</p> <p>The school’s role in the local and wider community</p>
<p>6.4 Governance</p>	<p>Providing advice, guidance and ensuring accountability</p> <p>Representation reflecting the school community</p>
<p>6.5 Staffing, facilities and resources</p>	<p>Sufficiency of suitably qualified staff and their effective deployment</p> <p>Appropriateness of the premises and the overall learning environment, including off-site facilities</p> <p>The use of the space and resources for effective teaching and learning</p>

Glossary

This glossary is intended to make sure that users all mean the same thing when speaking about a particular aspect of education. The meanings given here should not be regarded as definitive in all circumstances. However, for purposes of school inspections, we recommend that words and terms should be used according to the definitions given below.

The list is not exhaustive and DSIB welcomes suggestions for further words to be included, with their suggested definitions.

Word or acronym	Meaning
Accountability	Schools being answerable for their actions and performance.
Achievement	A measure of the success that students gain in any area of learning or life. For example, academic, sporting, artistic and creative.
Accreditation	The system whereby a school or similar organisation is assessed against agreed standards and, if deemed as having achieved the standards required, is provided with some form of certification. Accreditation usually demonstrates the competence and performance capability of privately owned schools.
Assessment	The process of finding out how well students learn what they are taught. This is a continuous process using a variety of forms for different purposes. Formative assessment includes the regular marking and evaluation of students' work and includes feedback on how to improve. It also includes students' assessment of their own work and that of their peers. Summative assessment is a formal process at the end of a year or unit of work, often taking the form of public examination or internal testing.
Assessment for Learning	Assessment that goes beyond just marking and giving a grade. This is aimed at enhancing learning by telling students exactly what they need to do to improve their work, revisiting their progress in making these improvements. This process involves students in judging their own and others' work.
Attainment	The level students reach, usually measured by reference to benchmarks, such as test and examination results.
Benchmarking	Comparing levels of attainment with other schools in similar circumstances or following the same curriculum. International benchmarking is the process of comparing the school's performance with other schools around the world. Benchmarking provides a snapshot of the performance and helps schools to understand where they stand in relation to a particular standard.
Collaborative Learning	Learning activities which involve students working together in order to achieve a learning outcome.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)	Any training or development designed to improve skills and understanding and develop expertise. This includes a wide range of opportunities including courses, seminars or observations of other teachers.
Creative Thinking	A way of thinking which uses the imagination to create new ideas or things.
Curriculum	Everything a school deliberately teaches, including subjects and activities inside and outside the classroom such as extra-curricular activities and educational visits and visitors.
Faculty	A division within a school which usually includes one or more subjects. For example, a Faculty of Communications may include languages, information technology, art, library studies, literature and other similar subjects.
Foundation Stage	In the English system this term applies to education for children before Key Stage 1, i.e. children aged below the compulsory school age, which in England is five years.
Governance	An objective system for managing a school which ensures it achieves what it says it will achieve.
Graduation	Commonly used as the process which ends a university student's studies and results in an award such as a degree. Graduation may include a ceremony but can also be used simply to mean that the student has completed his/her university studies. Graduation is also used similarly in many high schools to designate the end of that stage of education. It is even used to mean the end of each stage of education, e.g. primary school, secondary school.
Groups	Significant categories of students, for example those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, girls, boys, high attainers, gifted and talented students.
Group Work	Learning activities carried out by a group of students who work together.
Improvement Planning	The process of planning to make a school better. This should involve all those who have an interest in the school such as parents, students, teachers, leaders and owners.

Key Stage	The age-related year group in English curriculum schools. Key Stage 1 (ages 5 – 7 years) Key Stage 2 (ages 7 – 11 years) Key Stage 3 (ages 11- 14 years) Key Stage 4 (ages 14 – 16 years) The sixth form is sometimes referred to as Key Stage 5.
Kindergarten	Pre-school provision for children under the statutory school age.
Leadership	Leadership at any level (for example, principals/headteachers, governors/board members, team/subject leaders) involves setting direction, empowering staff to work effectively, creating a suitable environment for learning and setting an example to others. It entails different skills from those required for management.
Learning	How students undertake the tasks that lead to gains in knowledge, skills and understanding. Most students have a preference for learning in an auditory, visual or kinaesthetic way. Ways of learning also include a spirit of enquiry; researching; working independently of the teacher, alone or with others.
Management	The practical business of running a school, department or aspect of the school's work in an efficient and organised way.
Off-site facility	Any place, outside the school, that is used to further students' learning, for example the location of a field trip; another school; the work place.
Progress	The gains in learning between two points in time. Students may make unsatisfactory, acceptable, good or outstanding gains in relation to their starting point.
Quality Indicators	Performance measures within the inspection framework against which inspectors evaluate schools.
Special Educational Needs (SEN)	Educational needs that are different from those of the majority of students. They include those who need additional support or challenge in their learning.
Tracking Progress	Systematic processes which allow schools to check students' academic and personal development.
School Self-Evaluation	The identification by the staff of its strengths and weaknesses across the main areas of its performance. Effective self-evaluation focuses on the impact the school's work has on the outcomes for students. The findings from self-evaluation should be used to decide on the school's future priorities for improvement.

Self Assessment	Students making judgements about their work and their learning in order to improve.
Staff	A reference to any person working within a school including senior leaders, teachers, office staff, bursar/business manager, social workers.
Standards	The levels of knowledge, understanding and skills that students should display at a particular point in time.
Teaching	All activities undertaken by the teacher aimed at enhancing students' learning.



Inspection Handbook

Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau

Knowledge and Human Development Authority
Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Contact us:

P.O.Box: 500008, Dubai

United Arab Emirates

Tel: +9714 364 0000

Fax: +9714 364 0001

Email: inspection@khda.gov.ae

www.khda.gov.ae