

Preparing for Ofsted: an inspection checklist for headteachers

Area	What to check	Complete?
Admin staff	Office staff know what to do when the Ofsted phone call happens. They know who Tribal, Serco or CfBT are and what the call is likely to mean. They know who to contact if the headteacher is out.	
	The school business manager is able to explain the school's budget and has information ready should inspectors request it.	
	Office staff are prepared to discuss attendance and how absent pupils are followed up. They know when the registers close and what happens when pupils are late. Absence figures are quickly available for the year to date.	
Assessment	I can explain how RAISEonline data, local data and school tracking systems are used to set targets for individuals, groups, classes and cohorts of pupils.	
	The school has an effective policy for written feedback and all teachers implement it rigorously. It provides pupils with clear guidance about what they need to do to improve their work and how they can achieve it. Marking is followed up and has a measurable impact.	
Behaviour and safety	There is an identified group of pupils who will be able to talk to inspectors about behaviour and safety. This group should not necessarily be the school council. Inspectors may want to talk to two groups of pupils. It helps if these pupils can talk confidently.	
	Behaviour in the school is well-managed and practice is consistent among all staff. There are behaviour plans in place for challenging pupils which lead to an improvement in behaviour.	
	Support systems are in place so that, during the inspection, challenging behaviour is managed smoothly and effectively.	
Data	RAISEonline data is understood by key staff and they can explain variations from national averages.	
	There is easy access to in-year progress data for classes, groups and individuals. This is in a form that can be presented to inspectors if they request it.	
	Leaders, governors and teachers understand progress in terms of average points, not simply as sub-levels.	
	Leaders and governors can explain the school's performance against national and local data.	
	Where the school has high mobility, data can be presented to show the progress of the stable pupils separately from all pupils.	
	In an Early Years/Key Stage 1 setting senior leaders understand the data from the Year 1 phonics check and can explain variations from the national average.	
Environment	The school environment is neat and tidy, especially reception and cloakroom areas.	
	Notice boards and displays in public areas are up-to-date and well presented.	
	Where the school promotes specific values, these are	

	evident in displays around the school. In a faith school, its faith distinctiveness is evident in signage and displays around the building.	
Governors	There is an inspection plan for governors, with people identified to be available to speak to the inspection team, alternative arrangements in place in the event of unavailability and a way for the lead inspector to talk to the Chair.	
	Governors' minutes clearly show how the headteacher is challenged and supported.	
	Governors are actively involved in monitoring all aspects of the school. They can explain the school's strengths and weaknesses accurately against the four inspection areas and articulate their role in the school's self-evaluation.	
Inclusion	Relevant staff are briefed and prepared to talk to the inspection team about pupils with SEND, those with EAL, looked-after children and any other vulnerable group. They can articulate both the school's provision and its impact on achievement.	
	'Ever 6' FSM pupils are identified and school leaders can articulate how pupil premium money is used to support them and how its impact is measured. They know about the Sutton Trust Toolkit and can explain their strategy in relation to it.	
	Case studies are prepared for the inspection team should they request them.	
Inspection	Leaders are familiar with the inspection documentation.	
	Leaders know they should check out the Ofsted updates for Inspectors for the latest information.	
	Where relevant, leaders also know the subject inspection documents.	
	A list of staff and class timetables are ready for the inspection team for Day 1.	
Reading	In an Early Years/Key Stage 1 setting there is an effective and progressive scheme for teaching systematic synthetic phonics. Teachers understand the Simple View of Reading.	
	There is an identified group of pupils ready to read to inspectors. They include those who struggle with reading but also some who are good readers in case inspectors ask for them. These are pupils who can talk about the way the school is helping them to improve their reading.	
	Teachers can talk knowledgeably about the way that reading is taught and promoted, how it links to writing and how English is promoted across the curriculum.	
Safeguarding	The Single Central Record is complete; it records all teachers, support staff and supply staff with their CRB (or DBS) check number and date, details of their qualifications where appropriate and, where necessary, permission to work in the UK. It also includes governors, parents and volunteers who have direct contact with children.	
	Child Protection training is up to date for the Designated Person(s) and for all staff.	
	The Child Protection/Safeguarding policy is available for	

	inspection.	
Self-evaluation	There is a current summary of the school's self-evaluation that is brief enough to be quickly accessible and can be emailed to the lead inspector immediately after their call.	
	The evidence that supports the summary is readily accessible if inspectors request it.	
	Senior staff and governors know the headlines of self-evaluation and can articulate their story	
SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development)	I can explain how the school promotes pupils' spiritual development and provide examples.	
	I can explain how the school promotes pupils' moral development and how this relates to the values that the school espouses.	
	I can explain how the school promotes pupils' social development and the way this impacts on behaviour and safety.	
	I can explain how the school promotes pupils' cultural development and helps them to become useful citizens of a diverse Britain.	
SMT (senior management team)	Members of the SMT understand their roles and responsibilities in preparing the school for inspection.	
	There is a plan for the deployment of the SMT during the inspection.	
	For primary schools: Literacy, numeracy, assessment and curriculum leaders are briefed and prepared for discussion with the inspection team. For secondary schools: Core subject HODs/faculty leaders are briefed and prepared for discussion with the inspection team.	
	SMT members know who will take part in joint lesson observations with the inspection team. Their judgements are accurate and they know how to give accurate feedback.	
Teaching	There is a coherent and transparent regime of lesson observations that are recorded and inform leadership about the quality of teaching across the school.	
	Leaders and teachers understand the Teachers' Standards, which are used to monitor and improve the quality of teaching.	
	Teachers are held accountable for the progress of their pupils through effective systems.	
	Teachers are able to articulate how performance management systems are helping them to develop their teaching skills.	
Website	The school's website is up to date and complies with the School Information Regulations.	