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# Building a Culture of Consensus and Challenge

Gary Johnstone, HM Inspector

For Scotland's learners, with Scotland's educators

# Context

In Scotland, scrutiny activity is a crucial tool which supports improvement, as well as providing assurance and public accountability. The scope of our inspection activities at a local level gives us a unique evidence base drawn from observing practice at first hand across the country. HM Inspectors of Education inspect quality and improvement of education across Scotland's schools using the quality indicators and the six point scale as set out in How Good is Our School? (4th edition) (HGIOS4?) and How Good is our Early Learning and Childcare? quality improvement frameworks. Evaluations of the quality indicators across a sample of schools feed directly into the evidence base for the National Improvement Framework (NIF).

# Purpose of inspection

- provide assurance for stakeholders
- promote improvement
- provide evidence-based advice to inform policy-making



# Collaboration and Consensus

In Scotland, the frameworks used by HM Inspectors during school inspections were informed by, and in collaboration with, external stakeholders (including headteachers and teachers, professional associations, local authorities as employers and learners). These are used by schools, centres and local authorities as tools to support self-evaluation. In this way, there is a clear understanding, widespread use and strong ownership of the frameworks.

## Range of work

**Annual programme of  
inspection activity - target of  
250 inspections**

**Led by around 60 HM  
Inspectors**

SECTOR
early learning and childcare settings
primary schools
secondary and all-through schools
special schools
community learning and development services
independent schools
public and private colleges
English language schools
local authorities
prison education settings
modern apprentice training
career information, advice and guidance services
voluntary organisations
children's services



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# PRAISE framework

## Sharing and Enabling

## Best practice framework for inspections and reviews (PRAISE framework)

The following principles were identified as underpinning best practice:

**Purpose** – being clear about the overall purpose of the inspection/ review and retaining this throughout. Creating a shared agenda with staff in the organisation and amongst members of the inspection/review team

**Relationships** – building and maintaining constructive relationships throughout the process as the basis of a high quality inspection/review

**Awareness** – maintaining a high level of awareness of the context in which staff are operating, of their feelings and reactions to the process and of the inspector's own approach and its impact

**Information gathering** – careful inquiry to gather and analyse evidence. Retaining an objective stance, testing assumptions and assimilating data before evaluating

**Sharing information** – communicating effectively throughout the process to prepare and inform staff. Encouraging staff to be open in providing their perspective and sharing findings as the inspection/review progresses

**Enabling** – treating people with respect, engaging them in professional dialogue, recognising their efforts and sharing findings in a constructive way to encourage ownership and learning to take place

# The six point scale

<b>Excellent</b>	An evaluation of excellent means that this aspect of the school's work is outstanding and sector-leading. The experiences and achievements of all children and young people are of a very high quality. An evaluation of excellent represents an outstanding standard of provision which exemplifies very best practice, based on achieving equity and inclusion and a deep professional understanding which is being shared beyond the school to support system-wide improvement. It implies that very high levels of performance are sustainable and will be maintained.
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<b>Very good</b>	An evaluation of very good means that there are major strengths in this aspect of the school's work. There are very few areas for improvement and any that do exist do not significantly diminish learners' experiences. An evaluation of very good represents a high standard of provision for all children and young people and is a standard that should be achievable by all. There is an expectation that the school will make continued use of self-evaluation to plan further improvements and will work towards improving provision and performance to excellent.
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<b>Good</b>	An evaluation of good means that there are important strengths within the school's work yet there remains some aspects which require improvement. The strengths have a significantly positive impact on almost all children and young people. The quality of learners' experiences is diminished in some way by aspects in which improvement is required. It implies that the school should seek to improve further the areas of important strength, and also take action to address the areas for improvement.
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<b>Satisfactory</b>	An evaluation of satisfactory means that the strengths within this aspect of the school's work just outweigh the weaknesses. It indicates that learners have access to a basic level of provision. It represents a standard where the strengths have a positive impact on learners' experiences. While the weaknesses are not important enough to have a substantially adverse impact, they do constrain the overall quality of learners' experiences. The school needs to take action to address areas of weakness by building on its strengths.
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<b>Weak</b>	An evaluation of weak means that there are important weaknesses within this aspect of the school's work. While there may be some strength, the important weaknesses, either individually or collectively, are sufficient to diminish learners' experiences in substantial ways. It implies the need for prompt, structured and planned action on the part of the school.
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<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	An evaluation of unsatisfactory means there are major weaknesses within this aspect of the school's work which require immediate remedial action. Learners' experiences are at risk in significant respects. In almost all cases, this will require support from senior managers in planning and carrying out the necessary actions to effect improvement. This will usually involve working alongside staff in other schools or agencies.
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# The Quality Indicators

What is our capacity for improvement?		
Leadership and management	Learning provision	Successes and achievements
How good is our leadership and approach to improvement?	How good is the quality of the care and education we offer?	How good are we at ensuring the best possible outcomes for all our learners?
<p><b>1.1</b> Self-evaluation for self-improvement</p> <p><b>1.2</b> Leadership of learning</p> <p><b>1.3</b> Leadership of change</p> <p><b>1.4</b> Leadership and management of staff</p> <p><b>1.5</b> Management of resources to promote equity</p>	<p><b>2.1</b> Safeguarding and child protection</p> <p><b>2.2</b> Curriculum</p> <p><b>2.3</b> Learning, teaching and assessment</p> <p><b>2.4</b> Personalised support</p> <p><b>2.5</b> Family learning</p> <p><b>2.6</b> Transitions</p> <p><b>2.7</b> Partnerships</p>	<p><b>3.1</b> Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion</p> <p><b>3.2</b> Raising attainment and achievement</p> <p><b>3.3</b> Increasing creativity and employability</p>



# Inspection types

**Full model :- QIs 1.3, 2.3, 3.1 and 3.2**

**Short model :- QIs 2.3 and 3.2**



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# The HM Inspector

# The Team

# The Process



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# Consider your own system

How are the arrangements:-

a) similar

b) different

to the Scottish approach?

What are the strengths in your system?



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# The Team

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# The Process

**Pre-**

**During inspection**

**Post-**

# Consider your own system

How are the arrangements:-

a) similar

b) different

to the Scottish approach?

What are the strengths in your system?



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# Reflections and further questions...



Contact details:

[gary.johnstone@educationscotland.gov.scot](mailto:gary.johnstone@educationscotland.gov.scot)