

INSPECTION PROFILE

BAVARIA, GERMANY

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1 BASIC INFORMATION

1.1 Country name

Germany, State of Bavaria. General information on the German education system can be found in [this publication](#) from the German Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs, and information on the Bavarian school system can be found at [this site](#).

1.2 Structure of inspectorate

School inspection (external evaluation) in Bavaria is organized centrally. The Quality Agency (“Qualitätsagentur”, QA) at the State Office for School Education (“Landesamt für Schule”, LAS) is responsible for internal and external school evaluation. Although local school authorities are organized within regions, the quality framework and standards do not vary between regions or type of school.

1.3 Age of inspectorate

Evaluation of school quality has always been an important objective. However, the high relevance of procedures ensuring quality became more prominent in the late 1990-ies as a result of Germany’s participation in international comparative school effectiveness studies (TIMSS, PISA, PIRLS).

The Bavarian Quality Agency was established in 2003. After a two-year period of implementation, external evaluation became mandatory for all Bavarian schools within the school term of 2005/2006. Before, schools were supervised by local school authorities less systematically and without having a central quality framework and identical standards across regions.

1.4 Size

In order to realize external evaluation every five years in all (about 6,000) schools, there are about 560 inspectors at this time. The inspectors are active teachers and vary considerably in the amount of evaluations they conduct per year. However, our goal is to professionalize the inspectors, by implementing a more intense training and a more consistent higher intensity of evaluation practice. This will result in a smaller number of more qualified inspectors.

The team at the Quality Agency – which is responsible for instrument development,

coordination, quality assurance, guidance and training with respect to internal and external evaluation – amounts to 8 persons with background in teaching and science.

1.5 Remits

All type of schools (from Elementary to Higher Secondary Schools) are evaluated.

1.6 Unit of inspection

Foremost individual schools are evaluated. In some cases (especially with regard to vocational education) different schools belong together. That is, schools under one leadership are evaluated together. The evaluation refers to processes only and no individual teachers, departments or school authorities are evaluated.

1.7 Strapline

The quality agency does not have a strapline. However, the new quality framework might be captioned with “Bayern macht gute Schule”.

1.8 Relationship with government

The Quality Agency is a so called “subordinated authority” of the Ministry of Education and is a department of the State Office of School Education. Thereby, the Agency is not part of the Ministry but also not independent from it. All strategic decisions are made in agreement with the Ministry and have to be approved by it. Reports including information on school evaluation are published in coordination with the Ministry only.

1.9 Accountability

Within the Bavarian law that regulates the education system (BayEUG) it is set what the Quality Agency is accountable for. Furthermore there are policy documents, such as concepts for school evaluation, that define and describe in more detail what the Quality Agency’s responsibilities are. In particular the tasks of the Quality Agency are to support the Ministry of Education with regard to quality assurance of the school system by (1) observing and assessing the quality of processes and outcomes on the basis of scientific knowledge, (2) collecting and analyzing data from empirical education research and providing tested evaluation instruments, (3) reporting results to schools, local authorities and political stakeholders, and (4) supporting schools, local authorities and other stake holders to make use of the evaluation data.

2 EVALUATION PROCESS

2.1 Self-evaluation

We believe that internal and external evaluation are two sides of the same coin. They do not replace, but complement each other. Therefore the law regulating the education system in Bavaria specifies that both forms of evaluation are mandatory for all public schools and should be carried out in alternation.

In the aftermath of an external evaluation, schools have to resolve target agreements with local authorities and are expected to monitor their development by self-evaluation.

2.2 What is examined during inspection

Our focus is on processes (school related processes and quality of instruction). We look at the specific framework conditions of each individual school but not at their finances or legal compliance, as this is part of the local authorities responsibilities. During a 3 day school visit we observe lessons and grade the quality instruction using different data sources.

2.3 Our quality model as inspection framework

Our quality framework basically differentiates between general condition of the school, process quality of school, process quality of instruction, and outcomes of schooling. Whereas general conditions (such as location, student body, staff structure, material and financial resources, organizational peculiarities) and outcomes of schooling (such as student achievement, degrees and alike) are described, quality of school and instruction processes are based on quality criteria that are defined by a set of requirements. If and how far these requirements are met by the school is being rated by the team of evaluators and reported to the school, the local school authority and the Quality Agency.

The quality framework is being revised and renewed at this time. Within the school year 2019/2020 we intend to start external evaluation with the new framework and new instruments to survey different aspects of school and teaching quality.

2.4 Inspection time and resource

Currently, an inspection lasts several weeks in total, starting with an introduction conference at the school with all stakeholders, followed by a pre-visit period in which documents of the school portfolio and results of surveys are analyzed, followed by three days

of school visit where teaching is observed and all groups of stakeholders are interviewed, and ending with a conference where the final report is presented to the school family.

An evaluation team consists of four inspectors, three of them teachers accompanied by one interested non-teacher. Inspectors must complete an intensive training program and must have very profound knowledge about quality of teaching, learning and school development. Evaluators are experienced teachers, very often - but not necessarily - with certain functions (teacher trainer, head of departments, deputy headmaster or headmaster). Interested non-teacher support the inspectors. They have a wide range of professional backgrounds. Including non-teaching staff is supposed to open and widen the view on school quality.

However, the procedures described are also subject to current further development of inspection practice and will change to some extent in the future.

2.5 Frequency of inspections

The inspection cycle for external evaluation is 5 years on average. External evaluation is not risk-based.

2.6 Main business

The Quality Agency (QA) consists of 4 units: QA-1 educational reporting in Bavaria (e.g. “Bavarian Education Report”, every three years), QA-2 student assessment (German and Bavarian assessments, e.g. comparative studies for 3rd and 8th graders), QA-3 and QA-4 for internal and external evaluation. We are not involved in examination of complaints or any kind of teacher or headmaster assessments.

3 CONSEQUENCES OF INSPECTION

3.1 Reporting

The team of inspectors writes a consensual report, which describes the rating of each criteria. Schools have the opportunity to make a statement to justify potential opposing views. The inspection team then decides if content of the schools statement is being added to the final report.

The final report is presented to the school, the local authority and the Quality Agency. It is not intended for the public and it is generally not published. It is exclusively intended for development of the individual school. Regional summaries are presented annually to the local school authorities. The ministry may request reports for monitoring the education system on state level.

3.2 Grade

The quality framework defines standards and requirements for each criteria. If these requirements are met is rated in a four-point scale (major strength, strength, weakness, major weakness). However, there is no system of getting rewards or being punished depending on how the standards are met. The institution itself is not graded as a whole.

3.3 Knowledge sharing

Based on analyses of aggregated results from school evaluation the Quality Agency reports information to the local authorities yearly. This information shall be used by the local authorities for instruction of headmasters and school development. Some basic information is also incorporated in education reports on state level.

3.4 Aftermath of inspection

In the external evaluation aftermath schools have to establish target agreements with their local authorities, who support their schools development and improvement. These are also submitted to the Quality Agency for monitoring of compliance. However, there is no such consequence like shut down of schools.

3.5 Stated purpose of the inspectorate

In general, aim and function of external school evaluation in Bavaria conduces to gain knowledge, implement norms and standards, hold schools accountable, and develop

schools. Comparison of the results of internal and external evaluation allows schools to base and concentrate their efforts in school development on a wide range of objective and reliable data.