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Inspection - Day one, Part Two

Last time, we discussed the arrival of the Ofsted inspector and what to expect during lesson observations. Today, we focus on the all-important meetings...

Meetings with Key personnel

- The lead inspector would normally meet with governors and explore a range of key issues (a future article will cover this in more detail). A meeting must take place too with a representative of the local authority or, if an academy trust, the most appropriate person. These discussions make a significant contribution to the leadership and management judgements in the inspection.
- Other meetings are held with other senior leaders, subject leaders, the school SENCO, person responsible for attendance and behaviour, year heads etc. Again these meetings are key in coming to a judgement on leadership and management.

Meeting with pupils

- A formal meeting with pupils is normally arranged and there is a great deal to be covered. How safe do pupils feel? How does the school encourage, teach them to be safe?

What is behaviour like typically? How does the school handle bullying? Who would they talk to if they had a problem? Do they enjoy their lessons? Do they know how well they are doing? How much homework do they have? Do they find their work challenging? How do teachers help them to do better? Does the marking of their work make clear to them how they can improve their work? How does the school help them to become healthier? What opportunities have they had to engage in out of school activities, trips, competitions? What opportunities are they given to take on positions of responsibility? How well did they settle into school and how well are they being prepared for the next stage of their education?



About the Author:
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Elaine Long has been a teacher for over 35 years and 17 of those have been in senior management positions; being a qualified headteacher since 1999. In September 2011 Elaine started her own company BEST4Solutions (Bespoke Educational Support and Training) and became an OFSTED inspector. She has become a lead inspector and is qualified to conduct inspections in primary and secondary schools.



more...

- A number of the areas raised above would also be asked of pupils in a more informal way e.g. at pre-school clubs, breakfast sessions, break-time, lunchtime, after school sessions.

Meeting with the Headteacher/Senior Leaders

- The lead inspector meets with these on Day 1, aiming to cover a number of areas. Firstly, what actions have the school taken to address the key issues raised at the last inspection? What evidence can they provide which shows that they have made progress and impact?
- A detailed discussion will also take the last set of results which have appeared in Raise on Line and the lead inspector will provide the school with an opportunity to give the context and any issues surrounding these results.
- Another discussion will also take place around current progress and achievement in the school. Is this showing an improvement or decline and if so why? How confident is the school about its current data and how secure is it?
- Schools present data in a variety of ways and it is important that the lead inspector is able to have a very secure overview of where the school currently is. The school's finding will then be triangulated by what the inspectors are seeing in the classrooms and also in the detailed work scrutinies which they undertake. Any anomalies, and concerns are shared and discussed fully.

The progress and achievement of specific groups needs to be clearly identified by the school who must show robust evidence that they are tracking this consistently and frequently. School governors in their meeting will also be questioned in detail about the school's data and whether they understand what it is showing.

Team Meeting- Day 1

- The inspection team and the headteacher, perhaps a deputy headteacher if requested, would meet at the end of the day to explore their findings. Whilst this is designed as an opportunity for the team to share and discuss their findings, the head is allowed to listen and, when invited, contribute. This meeting is recorded on an evidence form, along with any provisional judgements which might be made.

- The inspection evaluation schedule is referred to during this meeting and the head is requested to bring their copy. The lead will seek the views and observations of the whole team and then, if ready to do so, refer to the grade descriptors and come to an initial observation of where they feel the school is currently sitting.
- The team will come to some conclusions as to what more needs to be seen and done on Day 2 and the head's views on this will also be sought. The head will have listened to what the team has found and might well wish to provide some additional context, information etc which might help.

As a lead, I very much encourage this. It is very important that the head realises that they have an active role to take and that there is another whole day of inspection left.

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- A provisional timetable is agreed for Day 2. Before the meeting concludes, the lead will ask the head if they are happy with the way that the inspection has been conducted so far and if there have been any concerns, issues raised. This is minuted. It is really important that this meeting is succinct and yet detailed. There must be an agreed end of meeting time decided at the beginning, to make sure that everyone leaves at a reasonable time in order that any actions can be undertaken prior to Day 2 but also to allow some "down" time for all involved that evening.

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