

## Overview of New Inspection Procedures Introduced in August 2011

The information below outlines the major changes to school inspection procedures introduced in August 2011.

- 1 HMIe have moved from a generational cycle of inspection where a school is inspected every 6 or 7 years to a sampling model. This means that they will sample a range of schools in an authority on an annual basis. The Director of Education and the District Inspector will agree the annual programme of inspection. It should be noted that schools may be chosen for inspection, because they have not been inspected for some time, because they are believed to offer examples of very good practice or because they may need additional support or guidance to take forward planned improvements.
  
- 2 Primary schools will receive 2 weeks notice of an inspection; secondary schools will receive 3 weeks. The difference is due to the need to align the inspection of a secondary school with the CLD inspection of the wider learning community.
  
- 3 The inspection will focus on gathering evidence to answer 3 **key questions**. These questions and the quality indicators to which they relate are as follows:
  - **How well do children learn and achieve?**
    - 1.1 Improvements in performance
    - 2.1 Learners' experiences
  
  - **How well does the school support children to develop and learn?**
    - 5.1 Curriculum
    - 5.3 Meeting learning needs
  
  - **How well does the school improve the quality of its work?**
    - 5.9 Improvement through self-evaluation
  
- 4 There is no longer a Head Teacher presentation. The Head Teacher, in close collaboration with the school's Link QIO, will prepare a self-evaluation summary of no more than 3 A4 pages. This self-evaluation will be structured around the 3 key questions above. The Head Teacher will be expected to identify 3 or 4 focus areas of strength for the team to explore further during the inspection. This information is sent to HMIe in advance of the inspection. There are exemplar self-evaluations on the HMIe website. We will create our own Angus self-evaluation exemplars over the course of this session.
  
- 5 A **scoping meeting** is held on the afternoon of day 1 of the inspection, chaired by the Managing Inspector. This is attended by **all** members of the HMIe team (including, in the case of secondary schools, a CLD inspector) as well as by the Head Teacher and the Link QIO. At this meeting, the Head Teacher will have the

opportunity to speak to the self-evaluation summary in the course of a professional dialogue. HMle will want to know more about the school's priorities for improvement, and how these came about through self-evaluation processes. They will also want information about any progress made with specific reference to **impacts on pupils**. At this meeting, the focus areas for inspection (which the school will have outlined in its self-evaluation) will be agreed. In essence, this meeting is intended to be an opportunity for the Head Teacher and the Managing Inspector to collaborate in planning and scoping the inspection activities to be undertaken.

- 6 The Managing Inspector can decide when the inspection should finish. As soon as he/she is confident that there is enough evidence they can decide to end the inspection. An early end does not signify anything other than the HMle team have enough evidence. Please do not be worried if your inspection lasts the whole week. The Link QIO will attend the 'findings' or feedback meeting as he/she does at present. This meeting will provide feedback about the school's performance in relation to the 5 key QIs. The Managing Inspector will highlight the school's areas for development/improvement and indicate the proposed evaluation ratings.
  
- 7 The report to parents is now in letter format based around the 3 key questions listed in section 3 above. There will be no reference to Quality Indicator levels in that letter. The letter will, however, state expressions of confidence in the school's ability to further improve its work, using the following gradations:
  - **Confident** - the school has a track record of continuous improvement and is likely to continue to improve.
  - **Partially confident** - the school has some strengths but also has some important weaknesses. Its previous track record of identifying and improving weaknesses may not be consistent and the school might need support to improve from the local Authority or Education Scotland.
  - **Not confident** – the school has major weaknesses in key areas and does not have the capacity to improve the quality of its provision. It needs sustained and comprehensive action to help address issues.
  
- 8 The formal 'Record of Inspection Findings' will be sent to the Director of Education and Chairperson of the Parent Council (read only copy) and will include self-evaluation levels.
  
- 9 Follow-through inspection commitments will change. Continuing engagement will depend on the levels of confidence expressed. Please note that inspectors may continue to engage with the school to acquire more information about practice they have considered to be innovative and worthy of further exploration.