

OFSTED
preparation
for governors



Written by John Musgrave Bolanos

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About the author

John Musgrave Bolanos is a highly successful teacher, experienced Headteacher, consultant and school governor, with over 25 years experience of teaching in, and leading, a range of challenging inner-city primary schools in London.

John's specialisms include curriculum design, developing teaching and learning, assessment, leadership and management and strategic change management.

In addition to working with individual schools and writing essential documents for school leaders, John also leads training courses in schools and venues - he is driven to inspire schools to achieve outstanding results for the children - not for the purpose of inspection. His training and materials combine best practice with practical OFSTED support, where appropriate, to help schools raise attainment and improve the quality of their teaching and learning.

Introduction



Inspectors want to make sure that you understand your role as a governor and your statutory duties.

More specifically, they want to know how well you fulfil **your role** and **how well you know your school**. They'll likely ask you about:

- Your **vision** for the school
- Your school's **culture**
- What **issues** your school faces
- Its **strengths** and **weaknesses**
- How the governing board **responds to challenges**

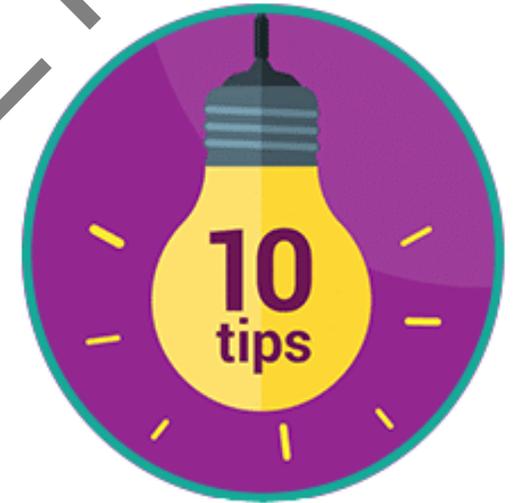
Meeting inspectors

Inspectors would like to meet with as many governors as possible. However, with limited notice (less than 24 hours before an inspection begins), it may be difficult for school governors to come to the school.

- Create a timetable to show who is generally available to meet an inspector at certain times of the day or days of the week – together with their contact details
- If no governors can attend, for whatever reason, governors can speak to inspectors on the telephone

Preparing for OFSTED

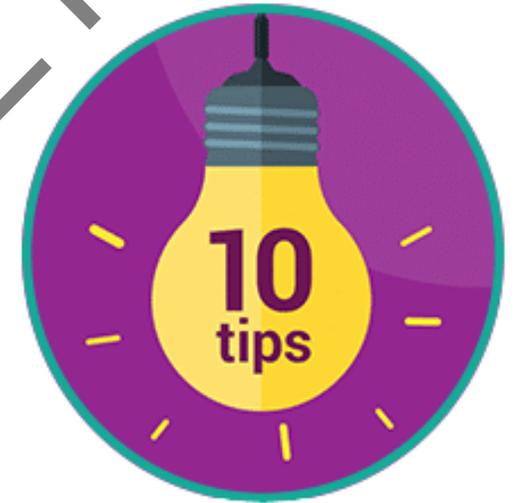
- Understand the role, responsibilities and requirements of governors
- Have a good working knowledge of the school
- Ensure that you can evidence governor challenge
- Ensure that measures are taken to keep pupils and other members of the school community safe
- Ensure that you are familiar with the contents of the self-evaluation form (SEF) and school improvement/development plan



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Preparing for OFSTED

- Familiarise yourself with the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) and the relevant inspection handbook
- Identify the progress that you have made since the last inspection
- Ensure that all policies are up to date
- Have your evidence ready
- Check that the school website is compliant



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Website

You should therefore regularly review the school's website.

The website provides the lead inspector a first view of your school or college's vision, values and aims - plus information about the the curriculum offer and policies.

Is this evident from looking at the school's website?



Key questions

- Are you familiar with the values and vision of the school?
- How do you support the Headteacher in their role?
- How are new staff and Early Career Teachers (ECT) inducted and supported?
- How involved are governors in the strategic direction of the school?
- How effectively are the finances of the school managed? Do you receive information regarding how Pupil Premium funding is used?



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Key questions

- How informed are governors about school self-evaluation outcomes? What are the strengths of the school?
- Do governors participate in self-evaluation activities? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the school and how do governors know?
- Can governors give examples of how they have supported and challenged the school?
- Are you familiar with the School Improvement Plan and the school's priorities? How do you contribute to this?



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Have your evidence ready

Having a comprehensive portfolio of evidence is one way of ensuring that governors feel ready and prepared for inspection.

It can also be a handy point of reference for new governors who are joining the school and can be used as part of their induction process.



Keep up to speed...

Read and regularly check these online documents for updates:

- Governance handbook
- A Competency Framework for Governance
- Governance structures and roles
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE)



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Keep up to speed...



Read and regularly check these online documents for updates:

- OFSTED Education Inspection Framework (EiF)
- Section 5 school inspection handbook
- Section 8 school inspection handbook
- Further education and skills inspection handbook
- Early years inspection handbook
- Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills

Education Act 2005

Section 5 and Section 8 inspections refer to the Education Act 2005



Section 5 (full inspection)

Duty to inspect certain schools at prescribed intervals

Section 8 (short inspection)

The Chief Inspector may inspect any school in England in circumstances where he is not required to do so by section 5



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Section 5 – full inspections

- Inspections of **schools judged as requires improvement** at their most recent inspection.
- **Schools that were judged outstanding** for overall effectiveness at their most recent Section 5 inspection, but not prescribed as exempt schools (special schools, pupil referral units and maintained nursery schools).
- A ‘good’ school that has been inspected under Section 8 where **HMI believes the school may no longer be good**.

Section 8 – short inspections

- Inspections of **schools previously judged to be good** (unless they've changed significantly or are flagged by the risk assessment process).
- **Inspections of special schools, pupil referral units and maintained nursery schools previously judged to be outstanding.**
- **Monitoring inspections** for schools previously judged **inadequate or requires improvement.**
- Inspections where there is a **particular cause for concern** (behaviour and attitudes, safeguarding, leadership etc.).

Safeguarding governor

Safeguarding is an important part of the inspection.

A senior board level lead is therefore to take leadership responsibility for your school's/trust's **safeguarding** arrangements (including Prevent) and report back to the board.

OFSTED will **ask governors about safeguarding** arrangements in the school.

Key questions

- How do you know that safeguarding is effective?
- What are the procedures for safeguarding pupils and how have training needs been met?
- Do you know the designated governor and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for safeguarding? How do they report back to the Governing body?
- What do staff understand about County Lines? How do you know?
- What do staff understand about Prevent? How do you know?



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Actions

- Plan the availability of governors to meet with OFSTED inspectors
- Read the online documents related to Governance
- Read the OFSTED online documents - these are on the OFSTED website
- Familiarise yourself with the content of each document as these explain the process of inspection
- Check the OFSTED website regularly to check for any updates
- Ensure that there is a senior board level lead to take leadership responsibility for your school's/trust's safeguarding arrangements



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Deep Dives

‘Deep Dive’ has become a common phrase in our schools as a result of the Education Inspection Framework (EiF) 2019 and the accompanying methodology of inspection by OFSTED.

This also helps school leaders become more familiar with the processes used by inspectors, should the school be visited by OFSTED.



A Deep Dive ...

“

... involves gathering evidence on the curriculum **intent, implementation and impact** over a sample of subjects, topics or aspects. This is done in **collaboration** with leaders, teachers and pupils. The intent of the deep dive is to **seek to interrogate and establish a coherent evidence base** on quality of education.

”



Reading

- Reading is a vital skill and one which has an impact on all stages of a child's education.
- There is a sharp focus on reading with a **mandatory deep dive** into early reading during an inspection for all primary schools.
- There is an **expectation** that reading is a **high priority** for all schools so that all pupils become fluent, confident readers - readers need to actively interact with a text and seek meaning from it.

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There are six parts to the Deep Dive.

Observations of explicitly connected sample of lessons

Work scrutiny of books of other work produced by pupils from classes observed by inspectors

Curriculum leaders' long-term and medium-term thinking and planning to show the rationale for content choices and curriculum sequencing

Teacher discussions to understand how the curriculum informs their sequencing and content to support effective learning

Senior leaders' intent for the curriculum and their understanding of its implementation and impact

Pupil discussions with a group of pupils from the observed lessons



The Eif - overview

Quality of education

Intent

- Curriculum design, coverage and appropriateness

Implementation

- Curriculum delivery
- Teaching (pedagogy)
- Assessment (formative and summative)

Impact

- Attainment and progress (national tests and assessments)
- Reading
- Destinations

Behaviour and attitudes

- Attitudes to learning
- Behaviour
- Exclusions
- Attendance
- Bullying

Personal development

- SMSC
- Fundamental British Values
- Careers guidance
- Healthy living
- Citizenship
- Preparation for the next stage

Leadership & Management

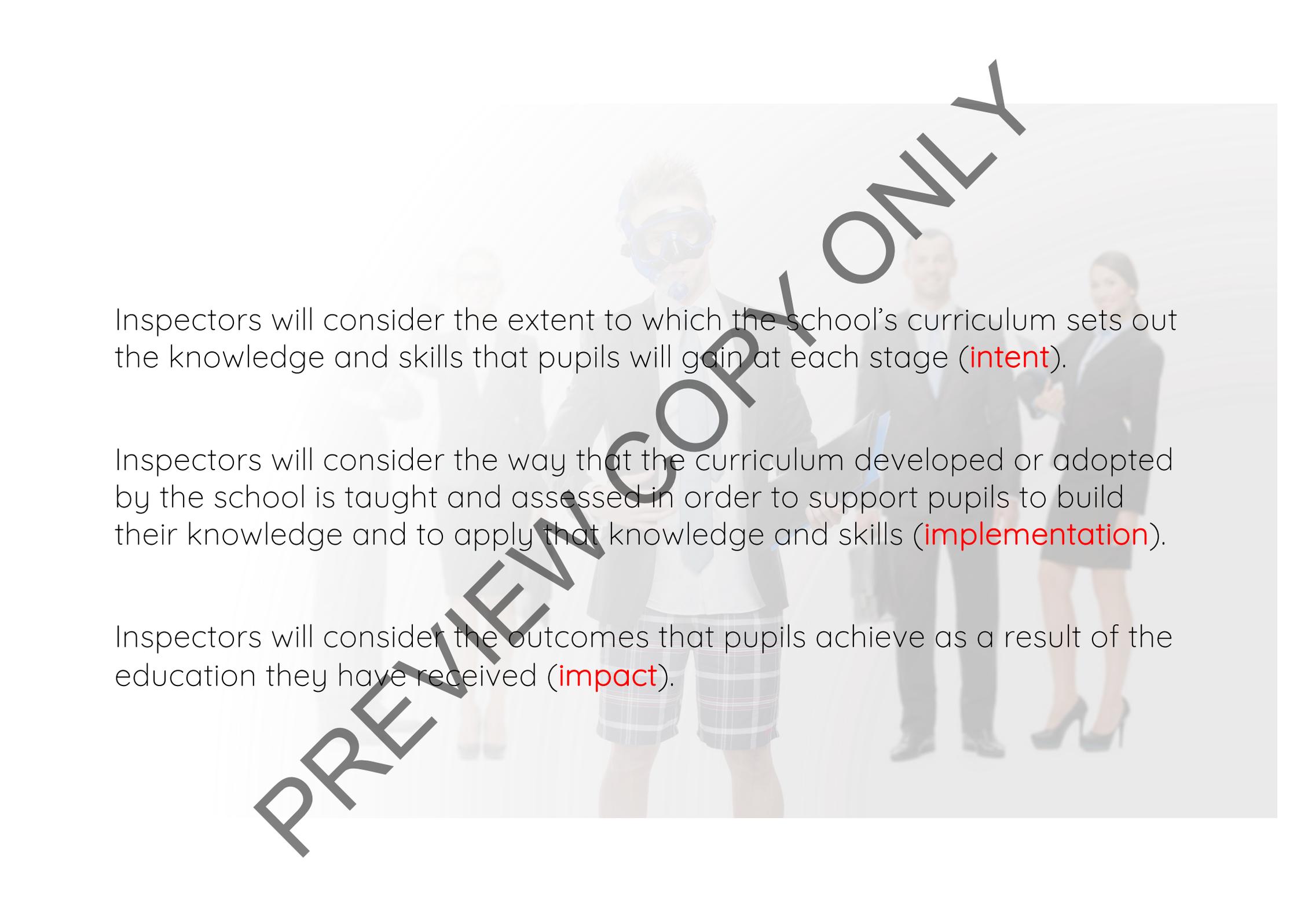
- Vision and ethos
- Staff development
- Staff workload and wellbeing
- Equality and diversity
- Governance/oversight
- Safeguarding

Key questions

- Do you understand the narrative of the school's curriculum?
- If outcomes were below average last year, what changes have been made to address this?
- Are pupils making good progress? How do you know?
- What are the main barriers to learning? What actions have been put in place to overcome these?
- What is the current quality of teaching and learning in the school? How do you know this?
- How does the school track attainment and progress?



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Inspectors will consider the extent to which the school's curriculum sets out the knowledge and skills that pupils will gain at each stage (**intent**).

Inspectors will consider the way that the curriculum developed or adopted by the school is taught and assessed in order to support pupils to build their knowledge and to apply that knowledge and skills (**implementation**).

Inspectors will consider the outcomes that pupils achieve as a result of the education they have received (**impact**).

Intent, Implementation, Impact

INTENT



What the curriculum is intended to achieve – ambitious and inclusive

IMPLEMENTATION



How the curriculum is implemented – planning, teaching, expectations, delivery

IMPACT



What is the impact? Does the curriculum achieve what it set out to achieve?

Intent, Implementation, Impact

INTENT



What the curriculum is intended to achieve – ambitious and inclusive

How can the governing body demonstrate that it is supporting school leaders with **intent**?



Link governors

In addition to having a safeguarding lead governor, the Department for Education (DfE) says you should have:

- A link governor or committee with oversight of special educational needs (**SEN**)
- A member of the board who takes a strategic interest in **careers education and guidance** and encourages employer engagement (if your school provides secondary education)

Link governors

Your board should also consider having a link governor with responsibility for **governor training and development**, who makes sure everyone has the right skills to contribute to the board.

Otherwise, you can choose how you delegate duties and decide whether your board would benefit from link governors for other areas.

As the curriculum is at the heart of the EiF, boards should consider having link governors for different subjects within the curriculum.

The board's specialist

The link governor's job is to (literally) act as the link between governors and staff and to report to the board on things like:

- Subject delivery
- The impact of interventions
- Use of resources
- Attainment and progress

They can help other governors understand what aspects of teaching and learning look like in practice.