

HOW GOOD ARE WE NOW?



HOW GOOD IS OUR SCHOOL?

HOW GOOD CAN WE BE?

THE JOURNEY TO EXCELLENCE: PART 3



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Please note in the six-point scale a level 3 evaluation where strengths just outweigh weaknesses is now described as 'satisfactory'.

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FORWARD



I am delighted to commend to you this revised edition of *How good is our school?*. It replaces all previous versions. Along with a revised edition of *Child at the Centre*, this document forms the third part of *How good is our school? The Journey to Excellence*. The set of quality indicators continue to provide the core tool for self-evaluation for all schools, but they are now complemented by the very useful materials in other parts of *The Journey to Excellence* series.

The indicators within *How good is our school?* reflect the developing context within which schools now operate. They focus specifically on the impact of schools in improving the educational experience and lives of Scottish pupils through learning and their successes and achievements, particularly the broad outcomes for learners within *A Curriculum for Excellence*¹ and the vision statement for Scotland's children².

This emphasis on impact and outcomes reinforces the principle that self-evaluation is not an end in itself. It is worthwhile only if it leads to improvements in the educational experiences and outcomes for children and young people, and to the maintenance of the highest standards where these already exist. *How good is our school?* is about achieving just that. It builds on good practice in schools and classrooms across Scotland and internationally, and is designed to help staff to evaluate their current performance and to identify priorities for action.

Increasingly, schools are improving the quality of learning through actions which are imaginative and innovative. *The Journey to Excellence* provides sets of tools which can be used to bring about continuous improvement in learning. Creativity, problem solving, innovation and learning from others' experiences are features of such change. *Journeys to Excellence*, the digital resource which forms Part 5 of this series, will provide you with the stories of those who have made significant progress in their own journeys towards excellence.



¹ *A Curriculum for Excellence*, Scottish Executive, 2004

² *Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People: the role of schools in delivering integrated children's services*, Scottish Executive, 2006

Schools and pre-school centres are now part of a wider partnership of professionals, all of whom deliver a range of services to children. This edition of *How good is our school?*, therefore, has evolved by adopting a framework for self-evaluation common to all public services and structured around six questions which are important for any service to answer.

This edition also emphasises a collegiate culture in which staff engage in professional discussion and reflection based on a shared understanding of quality and a shared vision of their aims for young people. All staff should therefore be involved in the self-evaluation process. Individual teachers and groups of teachers evaluating their work together, teachers reflecting on the work of their peers and on how well the school is led and managed are as necessary ingredients of self-evaluation as the observations of lessons and learning experiences by promoted staff. Self-evaluation becomes a reflective professional process which helps schools get to know themselves well, identify their agenda for improvement and promote well-considered innovation.

The quality indicators are a guide in that process and not a set of recipes for success. They must sit alongside professional expertise and other sources of guidance, for example on the curriculum, on learning, on the craft of teaching and on the leadership of change, to contribute to a common search for quality and the factors involved in achieving it in any class or school.

Since the first publication of *How good is our school?*, self-evaluation has become increasingly embedded across Scottish education and has contributed well to improving performance and raising attainment and achievement for all learners. I commented in *Improving Scottish Education*³ on the great strides taken by educational establishments in becoming aware of their own strengths and weaknesses, placing Scotland at the forefront of quality improvement internationally. I commend this third edition of *How good is our school?* to you in taking forward our collective commitment to continuous improvement and excellence.



Graham Donaldson
HM Senior Chief Inspector

³ Improving Scottish Education, HM Inspectorate of Education, 2006



INTRODUCTION



The third part in the Journey to Excellence series is made up of the revised editions of *How good is our school?* and of *The Child at the Centre*.

Both of these have always been about improving schools, about making things better for children, about making all schools ambitious and excellent. *How good is our school?* and *The Child at the Centre* are based on a revised framework of indicators which help you to work out where your school is in improving its quality and aiming for excellence. We have become very familiar with the use of quality indicators in this way in Scotland. The same set of indicators will also be used by quality improvement officers and HM Inspectors to confirm where you are and help you plan your way forward.

SELF-EVALUATION

Self-evaluation is not a bureaucratic or mechanistic process. It is a reflective professional process through which schools get to know themselves well and identify the best way forward for their pupils. It will, therefore, promote well-considered innovation. The framework of quality indicators will guide you in that process. The illustrations are not designed to be used as checklists or recipes. They are there to be used alongside other sources of guidance such as curriculum advice, research into learning and pedagogy, and studies of leadership styles and approaches. As thinking in relation to the curriculum and learning is constantly developing, so our application of the indicators also develops to help reinforce the dynamic nature of Scottish education.

Self-evaluation is forward looking. It is about change and improvement, whether gradual or transformational, and is based on professional reflection, challenge and support. It involves taking considered decisions about actions which result in clear benefits for young people.



At the heart of self-evaluation are three questions:

- ✦ How are we doing?
- ✦ How do we know?
- ✦ What are we going to do now?

Excellent schools focus these questions on learning. Learning is at the heart of an excellent school. Learning is its core business.

All staff reflect on the quality of their work. We do this as professionals who are responsible for the quality of our classroom work and for the achievements and personal and social development of the children and young people we teach, and as members of the staff team which is responsible for the overall quality of education.

As teachers, we take a pride in our own work and naturally reflect on it in relation to our individual responsibilities. For this we can use the quality indicators and other sources of advice such as the Standards for Full Registration, for Chartered Teacher or for Headship and the National Framework for Continuing Professional Development.

Self-evaluation also involves groups of teachers reflecting on their work together. We can do this in a number of ways by:

- ✦ commenting on each other's work, for example plans and assessments;
- ✦ engaging in cooperative teaching and discussion; and
- ✦ visiting each other's classrooms to see how particular developments are going, to experience different methods of teaching or to confirm our views of learners' progress.

This process of peer evaluation is an important professional activity symbolising the professional responsibility of teams of teachers for their work. It complements professional discussion with senior colleagues who might teach alongside teachers or observe practice in classrooms. The indicators in this edition have been written in such a way that they talk directly to teams of teachers. In this way they recognise this important collegiate responsibility.

Collegiate self-evaluation by teachers and with school managers works best when a school community has a shared understanding of what it means by quality. This often stems from a shared vision of a school community for the school and its pupils, perhaps based on an agreed view of what the school should be like in two or three years time.

A shared vision doesn't come easily. There are usually different views and interests across groups of teachers and support staff, children and parents, other professionals and key members of the community. To develop a shared vision, a school must engage with all of these stakeholders in clarifying and agreeing its values and principles. It also needs to agree how these values and principles will influence all aspects of its work, the curriculum, the learning environment, the ethos of the school and the way that everyone is included and how they relate to each other: demonstrating the principles and values in action. A school that achieves a common vision and values has a strong sense of direction and moral purpose.

These activities carried out by reflective professionals underpin leadership at all levels:

- ✦ in the classroom;
- ✦ within working groups and development teams;
- ✦ as promoted staff within departments, faculties and stages;
- ✦ as senior managers; or
- ✦ as the headteacher ultimately accountable for the quality of everything which goes on in the school.

The evaluative activities involved are similar to those which we encourage pupils to engage in as part of their own learning process. Taking part in them creates a community of learners.

MANAGING EVALUATION

It is important to have reasons for evaluating the aspects chosen, and a clear idea of exactly how an evaluation will be carried out, when and with whom. Time is a key resource in busy schools and there is no need to evaluate everything at once. However, we do need to be systematic so that important aspects of the school's work do not 'slip through the net' and we only find out that things are going awry when they have already had an effect on learners. Time spent on diagnosis needs to be balanced against the time to spend on improvement. We also need to keep focusing on the key work of the school - learning and teaching.

Many schools build monitoring and evaluation into a calendar of activities⁴. By keeping a note of their discussion and evidence, they gradually build up a body of evidence which they can use when arriving at evaluations using quality indicators. Some may use an annual calendar, while others may plan their activities against a longer or more flexible time frame. The most important requirement, though, is that such activity is built into the work of the school and has a clear focus on children's learning and success. All the key processes of education, and management and leadership activities need to be tracked through to their impact on, and outcomes for, pupils.

The indicators in this edition of *How good is our school?* are arranged under **six questions** which HMIE, and other agencies, are adopting for evaluation purposes.

- ✦ What outcomes have we achieved?
- ✦ How well do we meet the needs of our school community?
- ✦ How good is the education we provide?
- ✦ How good is our management?
- ✦ How good is our leadership?
- ✦ What is our capacity for improvement?

These six simple but powerful questions are set out in a quality framework of nine **Key Areas** in this edition of *How good is our school?* as shown in appendix 1.





USING THE FRAMEWORK OF QUALITY INDICATORS IN SELF-EVALUATION

The quality framework provides a structure for self-evaluation which can be used in different ways.

It includes indicators which we can use to reach a professional judgement of *How good is our school?*. This set of indicators brings together performance indicators (for example data about attainment and achievements) with indicators of the school's ethos (such as learners' views) and professional judgements based upon evidence of the quality of the provision and practice observed.

Every year it is useful to look closely at aspects of the school's outcomes and impacts (Key Areas 1 to 4) and aspects such as learning, teaching and meeting learning needs (Key Area 5). From this analysis, and from day-to-day professional reflection, you may identify issues for further exploration, observation and analysis using more of the detail of the quality indicators provided within Key Areas 5 to 9.

The aspects addressed within each of the Key Areas are closely inter-related. This means that strengths or weaknesses in one area may have an effect on quality in another area. Expectations can influence learning; working with partner agencies affects children's care and welfare; leadership affects and is affected by staff morale. In other words, the framework can help to diagnose the causes of the strengths and weaknesses found. If self-evaluation is well established in the school, a selective approach based on knowledge of the outcomes and impact in your school and issues which need to be addressed is an effective way of using the framework of indicators.

Sometimes, however, a more comprehensive approach may be needed. For example, a new headteacher who has just taken over a school might find it helpful to work through all or most of the indicators to gain a clear picture of the quality of the school's work in all respects. In fact, all schools will benefit when staff look across the breadth of their work every so often to ensure that everything is working well. In this way you will come across issues where you need to 'take a closer look'. This familiar approach of taking a broad view and taking a closer look is another approach to using the indicators.



USING INDICATORS AND SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

By using a range of indicators and sources of evidence, we can arrive at a holistic view of quality, looking at it from different angles and checking the consistency of evaluations.

The selection of evidence on which to base evaluations should be kept manageable by sampling. The extent and type of sampling should be thought through carefully. It is also useful to test out the strength of evidence through 'triangulation'. This involves comparing one source of evidence with a second and a third source. For example, the effectiveness of a school's policy on meeting the needs of learners could be checked against its implementation in classrooms and discussed with staff, learners and parents⁵. This process of triangulation should help to evaluate the impact of policy in meeting the needs of learners.

The key sources of evidence will come from what we actually observe, from data of various sorts, and from the views of people who are closely involved with the school, such as children and young people themselves, parents, partner agencies, as well as staff. Appendix 5⁶ will give examples of the kinds of evidence to look for. Where weaknesses in practice are identified, it is also helpful to check out written guidance and documentation. Such documentation could include programmes of study, teachers' plans, course materials, policies and guidelines and minutes of meetings. However, what is written down is not necessarily the same as what actually happens. Similarly, progress reports on improvement plans can be helpful but will need to be checked against what has actually been delivered. What really matters is the impact of all the key activities in the school on learners themselves and their learning.



⁵ The term 'parents' throughout this publication includes parents, carers, relative carers, foster carers, etc.

⁶ Appendix 5



The framework of indicators is designed as a tool to help with evaluating and improving the quality of education which we provide for all learners. The nine Key Areas in the framework cover all aspects of a school's work and can broadly be grouped under three headings: the school's **successes and achievements**, its **life and work**, and its **vision and leadership**.

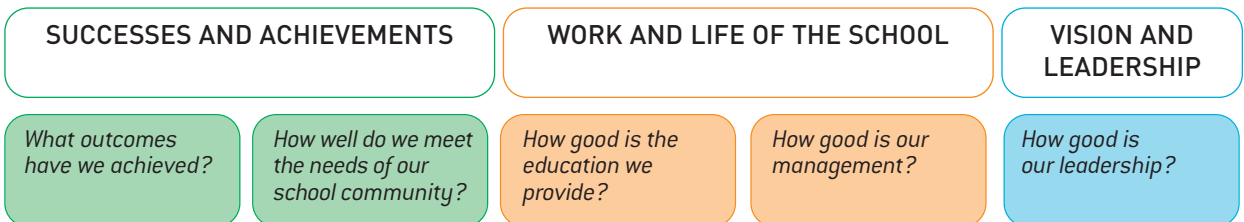
The first two questions in the framework are very important:

- ✦ what outcomes have we achieved?
- ✦ how well do we meet the needs of our school community?

These two questions focus on the **successes and achievements** of the school in relation to its key purpose, and its impact on children and young people, parents and the community at large. They relate to how well the school has helped pupils to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors within the community. They also relate to Scotland's Vision for children and young people that they should be safe, nurtured, healthy, achieving, active, included, respected and responsible.

To judge successes and achievements in relation to these two questions and to plan for improvements, it is important to consider the key factors which influence them. For example, if pupils are not developing as effective contributors, we might look at the curriculum that they follow, or the kinds of learning in which they are engaged. Therefore, the first two questions need to be considered in the light of other questions such as:

- ✦ how good is the education we provide through the curriculum or learning and teaching?
- ✦ how good is our management in terms of planning, the use of resources or deployment of staff?
- ✦ how good is our leadership?



This approach enables professional reflection on practice within our own classes, and within our school as a whole, and helps consideration of the inter-relationships between aspects of our work and our successes and achievements. Where best practice is identified, it should be celebrated and shared with others. And if things are not going well, the source of the issues can be tracked down by focusing on some of the indicators.

For example, if children and young people are not learning effectively or are not motivated to learn, we may need to look at aspects of the quality of education the school provides to answer the following questions.

- ✧ Is the curriculum appropriate for their needs?
- ✧ Do the teaching approaches suit the needs of all the children?
- ✧ Can staff, individually and as a team, do more to motivate pupils?
- ✧ Do we need to be more specific about meeting individual needs?
- ✧ How can we involve parents more effectively?

This kind of approach is called a 'proportionate' approach. It enables you to focus on areas of priority rather than routinely covering all aspects of the school's work in turn.

By focusing on the first five questions and coming to a view of *How good is our school?*, we can then focus on the sixth question, form a view of our capacity to improve and decide *How good can we be?*.





THE QUALITY INDICATORS



No.	Quality Indicator	Themes							
Key performance outcomes									
1.1	Improvements in performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Standards of attainment over time ✦ Overall quality of learners' achievement ✦ Impact of the school improvement plan 							
1.2	Fulfilment of statutory duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Financial performance ✦ Compliance with legislation, and responsiveness to guidance and codes of practice 							
Impact on learners									
2.1	Learners' experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The extent to which learners are motivated and actively involved in their own learning and development 							
2.2	The school's success in involving parents, carers and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The extent to which parents, carers and families are committed to, and actively involved in, the life of the school. 							
Impact on staff									
3.1	The engagement of staff in the life and work of the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The extent to which staff are committed to, and actively involved in, the life of the school 							
Impact on the community									
4.1	The school's success in working with and engaging with the local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The extent to which the school engages with the local community. 							
4.2	The school's success in working with and engaging with the wider community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The extent to which the school: encourages and supports creativity and innovation and learns from, and adopts, leading-edge practice; influences wider policy or practice; anticipates and responds rapidly and flexibly to change; and engages in global issues 							
Delivery of education									
5.1	The curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The rationale and design of the curriculum ✦ The development of the curriculum ✦ Programmes and courses ✦ Transitions 							
5.2	Teaching for effective learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ The learning climate and teaching approaches ✦ Teacher-pupil interaction including learners' engagement ✦ Clarity and purposefulness of dialogue ✦ Judgements made in the course of teaching 							
5.3	Meeting learning needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Tasks, activities and resources ✦ Identification of learning needs ✦ The roles of teachers and specialist staff ✦ Meeting and implementing the requirements of legislation 							
5.4	Assessment for learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Assessment approaches ✦ Planning learning experiences and activities ✦ Use of assessment information to identify and plan future learning ✦ Arrangements for recording and reporting 							
5.5	Expectations and promoting achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Staff expectations and use of praise ✦ Learner expectations and sense of achievement ✦ Promoting and sustaining an ethos of achievement ✦ Staff-learner relationships 							
5.6	Equality and fairness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Approaches to inclusion ✦ Promoting equality and fairness ✦ Ensuring equality and fairness 							
5.7	Partnerships with learners and parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Engaging parents in their children's learning and the life of the school ✦ Consulting and communicating with learners and parents ✦ Dialogue with learners and parents about the work of the school 							

No	Quality Indicator	Themes							
5.8	Care, welfare and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Arrangements for ensuring care, welfare and child protection ✦ Approaches to and provision for meeting the emotional, physical and social needs of children and young people ✦ Curricular and vocational guidance 							
5.9	Improvement through self-evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Commitment to self-evaluation ✦ Management of self-evaluation ✦ School improvement 							
Policy development and planning									
6.1	Policy review and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Range, clarity and appropriateness of aims and policies ✦ Coherence of policies ✦ Managing, evaluating and updating policies 							
6.2	Participation in policy and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Active participation in policy and planning ✦ Communication and consultation 							
6.3	Planning for improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Developing, implementing and evaluating improvement plans ✦ Structure and content of improvement plans ✦ Use of management information ✦ Joint improvement planning with partner organisations and services ✦ Planning for sustainability 							
Management and support of staff									
7.1	Staff sufficiency, recruitment and retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Provision of staff ✦ Recruitment, appointment and induction of staff ✦ Care and welfare of staff ✦ Recognition of achievement 							
7.2	Staff deployment and teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Appropriateness and clarity of remits ✦ Deployment of staff, including partner agencies ✦ Effectiveness of teamwork ✦ Communication 							
7.3	Staff development and review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Processes for staff review and support ✦ Training and development ✦ Joint training with staff from partner agencies 							
Partnerships and resources									
8.1	Partnerships with the community, educational establishments, agencies and employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Clarity of purposes and aims ✦ Working across agencies and disciplines ✦ Staff roles in partnerships 							
8.2	Management of finance for learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Sufficiency of available finance and setting budgets ✦ Financial procedures and controls ✦ Management of budgets, including links with the education authority/ Board of Managers ✦ Best value use of finance to support school improvement 							
8.3	Management and use of resources and space for learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Accommodation, display and presentation ✦ Provision of resources and equipment ✦ Organisation and use of resources ✦ Arrangements to ensure health and safety, including security 							
8.4	Managing information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Data collection, storage and retrieval ✦ Sharing information ✦ Analysing, evaluating and using information 							
Leadership									
9.1	Vision, values and aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Appropriateness and coherence with corporate and community vision, values and aims ✦ Sharing and sustaining the vision ✦ Promotion of positive attitudes to social and cultural diversity 							
9.2	Leadership and direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Strategic planning and communication ✦ Strategic deployment of resources 							
9.3	Developing people and partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Development of leadership capacity ✦ Building and sustaining relationships ✦ Teamwork and partnerships 							
9.4	Leadership of improvement and change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Support and challenge ✦ Creativity, innovation and step change ✦ Continuous improvement 							
Capacity for improvement									

1.1 IMPROVEMENTS IN PERFORMANCE

THEMES

- ✦ Standards of attainment over time
- ✦ Overall quality of learners' achievement
- ✦ Impact of the school improvement plan

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the achievements of the school. It relates to the overall performance and improvement of learners' progress in becoming successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors⁷. It also relates to how successfully the school has taken forward its vision. The application of this quality indicator should take account of the nature of the school, its pupil population and its context⁸.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ We have raised attainment and/or maintained consistently high standards of attainment for learners. Learners in our school make very good progress from their prior levels of attainment. The attainment of individuals and groups has improved over time. Our attainment trends compare well with similar schools and with national levels of attainment in, for example, national examinations. We have raised the attainment of those who are at risk of missing out.
- ✦ Overall, our learners are successful, confident, exercise responsibility and contribute to the life of the school and the wider community. They are personally and socially adept and have achieved in a range of activities for personal and wider achievement including, where appropriate, areas such as work and residential experiences.⁹
- ✦ The priorities in our school improvement plan have had a measurable impact on improving the achievements, attainment and well-being of our learners, and the work of our school.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Attainment has remained lower than that of similar schools or has fallen. Learners in our school make limited progress from their prior levels of attainment. There has been little improvement in the progress and achievements of individuals and groups over time. Our attainment trends do not compare well to those in similar schools and national levels of performance. The needs of those who are at risk of missing out, including our lower attaining learners, are not met effectively.
- ✦ Our learners' achievement is limited by their lack of success and confidence, and by their narrow range of learning. We offer few opportunities for personal and wider achievement and many of our learners have low expectations of themselves.
- ✦ Although school improvement planning has led to some improvements in our school, it has not been used effectively to identify or implement priorities which improve learners' attainment and achievements.

⁷ Key performance data will include trends in literacy and numeracy skills; in attainment levels; in Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) results; in other qualifications including for example, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN), City and Guilds awards and enterprise awards. It will also include evidence on coursework, data on overall quality of achievement in comparison to similar schools and national data; aspects of personal and social development and achievements such as success in work experience; engagement with Young Scot and associated citizenship activities; residential courses; and additional activities in and beyond the school day. Data will include school leavers' destinations.

⁸ In evaluating the first two themes, consideration should be given to related quality indicators: QI 5.2, teaching for effective learning; QI 5.3, meeting learning needs; and QI 5.5, expectations and promoting achievement.

⁹ Account should be taken of QI 2.1, Learners' experiences.

1.2 FULFILMENT OF STATUTORY DUTIES

THEMES

- ✦ Financial performance
- ✦ Compliance with legislation, and responsiveness to guidance and codes of practice

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the impact of the school's fulfilment of statutory duties. It focuses on evaluation of the school's financial performance based on financial data and the extent to which arrangements ensure best value, particularly the use of finance to improve and maintain provision for learners. The indicator also relates to how the school takes account of statutory requirements and its arrangements for implementing legislation to ensure that the needs of all learners are met.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Our school's financial performance takes account of local and national standards and priorities. The budgetary management and financial decisions we have made reflect the needs of our school and our learners and have led to clear improvements in learning, teaching, and learners' achievement and attainment.
- ✦ We comply and actively engage with statutory requirements and codes of practice such as the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act, the Additional Support for Learning Act, the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act, the Race Relations Amendment Act, the Disability Discrimination Act, the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act and the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice. Staff, learners, parents and our other partners are familiar with what is expected in these areas and are involved in fulfilling statutory duties.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Our school's financial performance does not take sufficient account of local and national advice and priorities. We do not always make financial data available in good time and a lack of up-to-date information sometimes hinders our decisions on finance allocation. In some cases, we have allocated insufficient financial resources to priorities which would improve our learners' achievements and the work of our school.
- ✦ Our implementation of statutory requirements, legislation and codes of practice has some weaknesses. For example, there are cases of delay in implementing or revising relevant legislation and our learners, parents and other partners are not always fully involved in, or aware of, the implications of legislation for them.

2.1 LEARNERS' EXPERIENCES

THEME

- ✦ The extent to which learners are motivated and actively involved in their own learning and development

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the quality of learners' experiences. Learners are aware of their strengths and needs as learners and are satisfied that their views are taken into account.¹⁰

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Our learners are motivated and eager participants in their learning. They are actively involved in their own learning and development and show increasing skills as learners. High-quality feedback makes them aware of their progress and strengths as learners. They are responsible and contribute actively to the life of the school and the wider community. In our school, learners are treated with equality, fairness and respect. Almost all, including those at risk of missing out and those who are vulnerable, have progressed well and make very good progress from their prior levels of attainment and wider achievement.

Our learners know that their views are sought and acted on. They tell us that they are very satisfied with the school's provision, feel that they are valued, and have appropriate opportunities to express their views which are taken into account in decision making. Our learners feel successful, confident and responsible, and they contribute effectively to the school and its community, and to society more generally. Learners feel safe, nurtured, healthy, achieving, active, included, respected and responsible and help to develop these qualities in others.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Learners are not sufficiently eager participants in their own learning, and have only a general awareness of their progress and strengths as learners. They do not take responsibility for their own learning or contribute well to the life of the school. Not all learners are treated with equality, fairness and respect in our school.

Learners feel that the school does not actively seek out their views, or that the views which they do express have little influence on the life of our school. Responses from direct observation of learners and discussions, surveys and questionnaires indicate that many of our learners lack ambition and are not actively enough involved in their own learning. A significant number of learners report that they do not feel safe, secure or valued.

¹⁰ Key sources of evidence will include: direct observation of learners; levels of attendance, retention and exclusion; analysis of incidents of violence, bullying and racially-motivated behaviour; rates of participation and progression in sporting, cultural and citizenship activities including out-of-school learning; rates of participation in peer support activities, mentoring schemes and community involvement; the extent to which the needs of all learners are met, including those at risk of missing out such as lower attaining groups; and analysis of focus group comments and questionnaire responses from learners and other stakeholders indicating the extent of their satisfaction with the school's provision.

2.2 THE SCHOOL'S SUCCESS IN INVOLVING PARENTS, CARERS AND FAMILIES

THEME

- ✦ The extent to which parents, carers and families are committed to, and actively involved in, the life of the school

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the involvement of parents, carers and families and their views on the quality of education their children receive.¹¹ It focuses in particular on their current experiences.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Our parents, including those with vulnerable children, play an important part in their children's learning and development. They participate well in relevant meetings and school events. They contribute as actively as possible to key aspects of their children's education and development, safety and health with effective support from initiatives developed by us and our partners. Parents, and groups representing parents, engage with us with confidence.

Parents, carers and families are satisfied with the quality of education we provide. Parents indicate that we give them clear reports and prompt and helpful responses to their views and enquiries about their child's attainment, development and progress. Parents report that we support and encourage their involvement in discussions about education and their contribution to our school improvement. They are very satisfied with the opportunities they have to contribute to their children's learning and progress.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Some of our parents, including those with children who have additional support needs are not effectively supported. Some parents do not engage well with our school, particularly in supporting their children's learning. Groups representing parents are helpful to the school but there is scope for them to contribute more effectively. Attendance at parents' meetings is low and parents receive only limited information on the curriculum, learning and teaching.

Parents, carers and families are not fully satisfied with the quality of education we provide. Parents feel they have insufficient opportunities to engage with us to discuss and influence what their children learn and how they progress. They feel that they are not always able to raise concerns about, and that they are sometimes given insufficient information on, their children's progress.

¹¹ Evidence will come from observation, direct contacts, ongoing dialogue and appropriate documentation, surveys, questionnaires and discussions with representative groups or individuals. It will include evidence about complaints and compliments from parents and attendance rates at parents' meetings.

3.1 THE ENGAGEMENT OF STAFF IN THE LIFE AND WORK OF THE SCHOOL

THEME

- ✦ The extent to which staff are committed to, and actively involved in, the life of the school¹²

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the professional involvement and commitment of staff. It also focuses on the views of staff about their involvement in ensuring that learners receive a high-quality educational experience.¹³

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ We have a clear and shared understanding of what is involved in providing high-quality education for learners. We are motivated, and meaningfully involved in improving the quality of the school. We readily engage in continuing professional development which improves learners' achievements and attainment. We make very effective contributions to the life of the school and work together well in teams within our school and with partner agencies. We recognise our personal and professional responsibility for the personal and social development and health education of all children and young people.

In our school, we perceive that we are valued, consulted and supported, and that our views and skills, individually and as teams, influence how the school improves the quality of its work and its impact on learners. We have very positive views on conditions of work, facilities and services, career review and professional development opportunities. We feel supported and enabled to provide high-quality education.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ In our school, we lack an agreed view of what is involved in delivering high-quality education. A significant group of staff has low morale. While many seek involvement in development work, some do not respond to consultation exercises, take part in career review or perform to their potential. There are weaknesses in teamwork; some staff see learners' personal and social development as the responsibility of particular teachers or departments in our school.

A significant number of us feel undervalued. We feel that peer and line management arrangements in our school could be more challenging or supportive, and that there are too few opportunities for teamwork. We would welcome more involvement in school forums to suggest ways of improving learning, and aspects such as career review, conditions of work and staff development.

¹² This refers to all staff in the school. For example, it includes social care staff, teachers, youth workers, community police officers, health specialists, therapists, nursery nurses, psychologists and a range of administrative and support staff.

¹³ Evidence would include data about staff absence rates and staff turnover. It would also include direct observation, documentation and discussion at whole school, departmental or individual level.

4.1 THE SCHOOL'S SUCCESS IN WORKING WITH AND ENGAGING WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

THEME

- ✦ The extent to which the school engages with the local community

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the school's effective engagement with the local community. It relates to the community's perceptions of the school's work and the extent to which community members and organisations feel that the school and community engage in partnership working.¹⁴

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Members of the local community are actively involved with our school. We work collaboratively with community organisations and partner agencies to support children and families, for example, to assess learners' needs, broaden their experiences or provide support to reduce barriers to learning. We have a high level of engagement with individuals, families and community groups in school activities and in making decisions which affect the community.

Our local community and employers report positively on the quality of the education we provide. They consider that provision offered by our school has improved the motivation and engagement of learners and their families, including disadvantaged groups. The community perceives that we take account of its views on aspects such as our school's reputation, its use as a community resource, our responsiveness to complaints from the community and the level of community involvement in the life of our school. Partner agencies and statutory organisations indicate that our school has effective partnership arrangements which enrich our provision and their own.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Members of our local community do not engage sufficiently with our school. Community representatives are informed about our activities and services but have insufficient opportunities to influence these. Our support for organisations in the community is inconsistent and lacks focus. There is insufficient use of our school for community activities.

Members of our local community report some involvement with us but they feel that too little attention is given to their concerns or suggestions about how our school might improve or how they might become more involved with us. Partner agencies and statutory organisations feel that we could work more closely with them.

¹⁴ Evidence will come from data, where available, from surveys and questionnaires, and from discussions with community representatives, training providers, voluntary organisations, employers, agencies and statutory organisations.

4.2 THE SCHOOL'S SUCCESS IN WORKING WITH AND ENGAGING THE WIDER COMMUNITY

THEMES

The extent to which the school:

- ✦ encourages and supports creativity and innovation and learns from and adopts leading-edge practice
- ✦ influences wider policy or practice
- ✦ anticipates and responds rapidly and flexibly to change
- ✦ engages in global issues

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator focuses on the impact the school has on the wider community including the wider educational community. It deals with the culture of the school in bringing in new ideas to support creativity and innovation, while taking responsibility, where it can, to share and spread its own good practice more widely. It is about being a school that looks for challenge and deals well with change. It also relates to the influence and impact of the school on wider developments.¹⁵

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ We are well informed about, and in some aspects are involved with, a range of innovative programmes, including links with schools in other parts of the country and overseas. We have adopted, with local adaptations, leading-edge practice from other schools and countries. We work in partnership with other schools, voluntary, charitable and commercial organisations including those with positive wider social, environmental and economic aims. These have led to major improvements in education and services for our learners.
- ✦ We are involved in developments or working parties with the education authority or nationally.
- ✦ Our school places an emphasis on adapting its practices to meet changing needs. We ensure that learners receive consistently high provision.
- ✦ Our school is outward looking. We understand and engage with wider issues affecting people in other areas. We educate for sustainability and prepare our learners for global citizenship.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ We do not have a culture of encouraging creativity or change. The school provides education that broadly meets the needs of our learners but we are seldom innovative and rarely learn from good schools or from abroad.
- ✦ Few staff are involved in committees or advisory groups beyond our school. Our school makes little impact beyond our own locality.
- ✦ We respond too cautiously to change. We do not always respond proactively to the changing needs or aspirations of our learners.
- ✦ While we have some understanding of issues beyond our community, we do not consistently prepare our learners for global citizenship.

¹⁵ Evidence will come from developments that have origins in national or international best practice and/or the experience of staff who have been influential in wider developments.

5.1 THE CURRICULUM

THEMES

- ✦ The rationale and design of the curriculum
- ✦ The development of the curriculum
- ✦ Programmes and courses
- ✦ Transitions¹⁶

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the ways that curriculum areas and subjects, interdisciplinary studies, the life of the school as a community, and opportunities for personal achievement develop pupils' capacities as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. It focuses on the quality of the curriculum across stages and transition points. It highlights the need for the curriculum to be dynamic to take account of innovation, and flexible to meet the needs of all learners.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Our curriculum has a clear rationale based on shared values. It is designed to promote challenge, enjoyment, breadth and depth, progression, relevance, coherence, personalisation and choice in learning for all pupils. The curriculum takes account of our local circumstances and of local and national advice. It leaves scope for teams and individual teachers to introduce well-considered innovations to meet the needs of learners.
- ✦ We develop and refresh our curriculum on a regular basis, involving all staff in the process and taking account of the views of our learners and parents. We reflect in staff teams on the range and quality of experiences for learners, the impact of these experiences on learners and the outcomes they achieve. We plan carefully and in consultation with stakeholders in making curriculum innovations, adaptations to meet the needs of learners, and opportunities for choice and, where appropriate, for specialisation.
- ✦ Our programmes and courses are stimulating, challenging, relevant and enjoyable. We respond to, and meet the needs of, learners. Timetabling supports progression within curriculum areas and links between areas of learning. Teachers develop learners' literacy and numeracy skills appropriate to the curriculum area. Our curriculum promotes wider achievements very well and learners grow as citizens.
- ✦ We ensure that when learners transfer to or from our school, or when they have a shared placement between our school and another, they maintain continuity and progression in their learning. We ensure our learners are creative, enterprising and prepared for the world of work and their future careers.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Our curriculum design has weaknesses, for example, in planning depth or progression in learning or in developing responsible citizenship or in meeting core requirements in national advice. Although it meets the needs of the majority of pupils, we need to make better provision for particular groups of pupils or to address weaknesses in some curriculum areas. There is not enough space for flexibility or innovation.
- ✦ The development of our curriculum is not based on effective self-evaluation and has not made the best use of the expertise and involvement of staff. We have not updated our curriculum well in response to changing needs or adapted it sufficiently to meet the needs of our learners. Choice is limited in opportunity or quality or is offered only to certain groups of learners.
- ✦ The curriculum has weaknesses in supporting learners to fulfil their potential for achievement. Some of our programmes and courses are insufficiently stimulating and challenging. We need to adapt our curriculum to meet the needs of particular groups of learners better. Our arrangements for timetabling and for developing skills across the curriculum, particularly literacy and numeracy, need improvement. Relevant knowledge, skills and understanding and wider achievement do not sufficiently permeate our curriculum.
- ✦ We do not liaise effectively enough with other schools to ensure continuity in learning at times of transition. We do not always effectively ensure that our learners are creative and enterprising or prepared for the world of work.

¹⁶ Reference should be made to theme 2 in QI 5.8: Care, welfare and development

5.2 TEACHING FOR EFFECTIVE LEARNING

THEMES

- ✦ The learning climate and teaching approaches
- ✦ Teacher-pupil interaction including learners' engagement
- ✦ Clarity and purposefulness of dialogue
- ✦ Judgements made in the course of teaching

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the quality of teaching for effective learning in the context of a positive climate and range of experiences that promote active learning by making learners think. It stresses the need for a varied and considered range of skilful and well-paced teaching approaches where teachers and learners interact to ensure that teaching is motivating and relevant to learners' needs. It highlights the use of teacher-pupil interactions to form judgements of how teaching and tasks should be directed to meet learners' needs. The indicator recognises the important role of information and communications technology (ICT) in enriching teaching and supporting and motivating learning.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Building on our shared values, we create a stimulating learning climate using skilful and well-paced teaching and learning approaches. Learners' experiences are well matched to their needs and sustain their motivation and attention. We develop learners' abilities to be curious and creative and to think critically. Tasks and activities in our classes and home-learning activities are well planned and involve learners as effective contributors, working independently and with others cooperatively in solving problems. We make full and effective use of ICT during teaching and learning.
- ✦ We share the purposes of lessons with learners. Learners know what they need to do to improve and to become successful. Our explanations and instructions are clear and build on previous learning and real-life experiences. We ensure that learners have opportunities to take responsibility for aspects of their own learning and their relationships with others. Learners enjoy their experiences and make progress in their skills as learners. They are engaged in learning and aware of themselves as learners. We use feedback effectively to promote learning.
- ✦ Our teaching fully involves learners and encourages them to express views and ask questions. We use skilled questioning and discussion to stimulate learners' interest, make them think and build their confidence. We value, encourage and build upon learners' responses.
- ✦ In lessons, we make sound judgements and respond quickly to ensure that our teaching meets the needs of individuals and provides appropriate support and challenge. We identify and address weaknesses in learners' knowledge and skills.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Our climate for learning encourages learning but lacks stimulation or encouragement to learners to think critically or creatively. Our approaches are not always well paced or well matched to learners' needs. We do not make sufficient use of a variety of teaching and learning approaches. We provide too few opportunities to develop our learners as active contributors who can work well independently and confidently. We do not make full and effective use of ICT in teaching and learning. We provide learners with home-learning activities, but this is not always well planned or well linked to classwork.
- ✦ We vary how well we share the purposes of lessons with learners or explain what they need to do to improve to become successful learners. Our interactions with the class, groups and individuals do not always support and challenge learners. We may allow insufficient time for learners to think before responding. We need to provide more opportunities for learners to take responsibility for aspects of their learning and their relationships with others.
- ✦ Our dialogue with learners is too teacher led. We do not use learners' responses effectively to encourage them to express ideas and ask questions. We do not fully involve all learners.
- ✦ We do not always respond effectively to weaknesses in learners' understanding to ensure that our teaching is matched to their needs. Individual learners have limited opportunities to engage with us and receive feedback about the quality of their work and the steps they can take to improve it.

5.3 MEETING LEARNING NEEDS

THEMES

- ✦ Tasks, activities and resources
- ✦ Identification of learning needs
- ✦ The roles of teachers and specialist staff
- ✦ Meeting and implementing the requirements of legislation

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the school's arrangements for meeting the needs of all learners, including potentially vulnerable groups, and addressing barriers to learning. This includes identifying the needs of, and providing support and challenge for, groups and individuals who may have additional support needs arising from, for example, the learning environment, family circumstances, disability or health needs; or social and emotional factors.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ We match learning activities to the needs of individual learners and groups with differing abilities or aptitudes. Our tasks, activities and resources provide appropriate support and challenge to enable all learners to maximise their progress. Our courses and programmes meet the varying needs of learners. The pace of learning is appropriate for individuals.
- ✦ We identify, review and evaluate learners' needs including those whose needs are significantly different from those of their peers. We do this through working closely with our learners, their parents and partner services.
- ✦ We take positive and proactive steps to ensure that factors such as the learning environment, family circumstances, health needs or disability, or social or emotional factors which may hinder learning are promptly identified and addressed effectively. Learning support staff and partner agencies in our school provide valuable support and advice to staff and individual learners and contribute towards meeting learning needs.
- ✦ Individualised educational programmes and coordinated support plans contain appropriate learning targets for our learners. We involve parents and learners well in reviewing learners' needs and learning plans.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Although some work is matched to the needs of individual learners, we do not always take sufficient account of their prior learning. Our tasks, activities and resources do not always provide the support and challenge needed to help learners achieve their next steps in learning.
- ✦ We take steps to identify learning needs but do not give sufficient attention to those who require additional support or challenge. There are weaknesses in our arrangements to work with learners, their parents and appropriate agencies to identify their needs.
- ✦ When we plan learning activities and additional support, factors which may hinder learning are not given sufficient attention. Learning support staff and partner agencies provide limited advice, support and training to senior managers, staff and learners about how to meet learning needs.
- ✦ We do not make good use of current legislation to help us meet learners' needs. There are gaps in our record keeping and arrangements to review the needs of individual learners.

5.4 ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

THEMES

- ❖ Assessment approaches
- ❖ Planning learning experiences and activities
- ❖ Use of assessment information to identify and plan future learning
- ❖ Arrangements for recording and reporting

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the engagement of staff, learners and parents in using a range of assessment information to improve learning and development, and to reflect on the quality of teaching. It focuses on assessment as an integral part of learning and teaching and planning high-quality learning activities for all learners. It highlights the need for learners, parents and teachers to work together in setting targets for learning. It also relates to the responsibility of teachers for ensuring appropriate progress for all learners.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ❖ Our assessment involves planned and high-quality interactions with learners and is based on thoughtful and probing questions related to learning outcomes. We use a range of approaches to engage them in discussions about understanding and progress. We provide high-quality feedback to learners and help them to understand next steps in learning. Our learners can assess their own progress and regularly engage in peer assessment. We make adjustments during lessons to our teaching and to the support we provide to take account of learners' responses.
- ❖ We plan high-quality learning experiences using our understanding of children's learning and development and of the learning outcomes. We know and respond to individual needs, support particular aptitudes and talents, and build on previous learning.
- ❖ We use assessment information well to evaluate learning and teaching and improve our practice. We observe learners closely. We discuss and share our assessments with colleagues to agree consistent standards, track progress and use the information to plan future learning. Learners are fully involved in discussions on what to learn and how to improve.
- ❖ We have manageable arrangements for record keeping which help us to track and report on learners' progress. Parents receive regular and up-to-date information, including written reports, on their children's progress across the curriculum, their wider achievements and pastoral needs, and their strengths and next steps in learning. There is a good level of involvement of learners and parents in arrangements for reporting and this helps to set learning targets.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ❖ Although we have a general picture of learners' progress, this is sometimes based on a limited range of approaches. We do not always involve learners in discussions about our assessments or provide them with good quality feedback. Learners do not readily assess their own progress. We do not always respond actively to learners' responses during lessons.
- ❖ We plan learning experiences carefully but don't tailor them sufficiently using our understanding of children's learning and development or sources of information such as specialists and support for learning staff.
- ❖ We should make better use of assessment information to improve our practice. In some areas we over assess. We track learners' progress and use some of the information we have to plan, but learners do not always understand what they are expected to learn or how to improve.
- ❖ Our arrangements for record keeping do not track significant steps in learners' progress in a manageable way. We tell parents and learners about general levels of progress, but not how best to improve. Parents are unsure of some of the terminology we use. We do not regularly provide information about learners' wider achievements.

5.5 EXPECTATIONS AND PROMOTING ACHIEVEMENT

THEMES

- ✦ Staff expectations and use of praise
- ✦ Learner expectations and sense of achievement
- ✦ Promoting and sustaining an ethos of achievement
- ✦ Staff-learner relationships

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to expectations of staff and learners, and the extent to which the school promotes an ethos of achievement for all learners. It focuses on setting challenging but achievable expectations for learners and on praising and celebrating achievement. It highlights an ethos of achievement within which there is mutual respect between staff and learners.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Our school community has confidence in its ability to achieve. We set consistently high expectations of learners' achievements, attendance and behaviour and share these with learners and parents. Our use of praise is well judged and discriminating. It targets the personal achievements of individual learners and groups of learners. Learners value well-earned praise and are motivated by it.
- ✦ Learners have high expectations of themselves and others. They have a sense of achievement and respond well to opportunities to exercise responsibility. Their work is displayed in classrooms, in public areas and, where possible, in the community. Learners' achievements in the community are valued and celebrated in our school.
- ✦ We know that everyone can learn and make progress. We demonstrate this in our attitudes and work. We do all we can to ensure that learners are not at risk from missing out on educational opportunities. We enable learners to be successful. Our learners' high aspirations show in their positive approach to coursework, attainment and improvement. We use a wide range of approaches for reporting on and celebrating the success of individuals, groups of young people and staff and our school community as a whole.
- ✦ Relationships across the school community are positive and founded on a climate of mutual- and self-respect within a strong sense of community and shared values. Children and young people are well behaved and show consideration for others.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Our expectations of learners' achievement, attendance and behaviour are sometimes too low. We are not consistent in using praise as a motivating and positive aspect of school life and are not always successful in promoting positive behaviour. This contributes to underachievement and a lack of motivation for some learners.
- ✦ Too many of our learners underestimate their potential. Some lack confidence in their abilities to achieve or to take responsibility. We do not provide learners with challenging but achievable targets which enable them to experience a sense of achievement. There is little acknowledgement of learners' achievements in the community.
- ✦ Not all of us promote an ethos of achievement throughout our school. Our learning environment is supportive but uninspiring and learners show only limited motivation to improve their performance. Although high quality achievement is valued in some areas, we do not extend this across all aspects of school life. We give insufficient attention to recognising or sharing learners' achievements.
- ✦ Staff-learner relationships are generally positive but are not always founded on respect and trust. The atmosphere in classes is satisfactory in a number of respects but it is not always relaxed or purposeful and behaviour is sometimes poor.

5.6 EQUALITY AND FAIRNESS

THEMES

- ✦ Approaches to inclusion
- ✦ Promoting equality and fairness
- ✦ Ensuring equality and fairness

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the steps taken by the school to promote and ensure a strong sense of equality and fairness through the curriculum and across all aspects of its work. It focuses on the parts played by staff in the school working with partner agencies to ensure that all learners are included in the life of the school. It ensures that diversity in the school community and beyond is valued.¹⁷

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ All of our learners and their parents are welcomed in our school and their needs are reviewed and met through staff working where appropriately with partner services. We successfully reduce barriers to development and learning and ensure that learners and their parents are fully included in the life of our school. We have a culture of inclusion, participation and positive behaviour based on respect. We take steps to engage disaffected learners and their families and enable them to experience success and belonging within the school. We maintain a particular focus on vulnerable learners.
- ✦ We stress the importance of putting values into action. Staff and pupils are expected to demonstrate personal responsibility, compassion and support for others, and actively promote fairness and justice in their interactions with each other. We actively promote equality of opportunity and access in our work. We recognise, value and promote diversity in our school and its community whilst stressing what is shared in our values and experience. We discuss equality issues openly and constructively. Our learners feel confident in recognising and addressing discrimination.
- ✦ We welcome and celebrate diversity. Learners, parents, and staff are treated with respect and in a fair and just manner. In our school, culture and language, disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation and additional support needs do not become barriers to participation and achievement.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ We take steps to remove some barriers to learning, but many learners do not feel valued as part of our school community. We work with partner services but not always closely enough to ensure that all learners' needs are identified and met. Some learners and their families do not feel included, or feel unable to participate fully in the life of our school.
- ✦ Equality of opportunity and a sense of fairness do not feature prominently in the work of our school. We do not sufficiently show that we value ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic diversity nor promote cohesion across groups. Some groups of learners are under-represented in school activities. Learners are not well prepared to promote equality and fairness or recognise and address discrimination in their future lives in society.
- ✦ We take many steps to treat learners, parents, and staff fairly and respectfully but we need to monitor and evaluate our success in these areas more systematically. There is variation across staff in our emphasis on equality and fairness issues. Staff, learners and visitors to our school feel safe and secure, but some doubt the extent to which they are genuinely valued.

¹⁷ When applying this indicator schools should use information about the achievements and progress of different groups of learners such as: boys and girls; children of different ethnic groups; refugees; Gypsy/Traveller children; looked after children; those for whom English is an additional language; pupils with disabilities; those with irregular attendance caused by illness, family circumstances or respite care; and any other potentially vulnerable groups within the school.

5.7 PARTNERSHIPS WITH LEARNERS AND PARENTS

THEMES

- ✦ Engaging parents in their children's learning and the life of the school
- ✦ Consulting and communicating with learners and parents
- ✦ Dialogue with learners and parents about the work of the school

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the school's partnerships with parents, carers and families how this impacts on learning and progress. It highlights the way that the school values all parents and their contribution to supporting learning as fundamental to a successful two-way partnership. It focuses on the school's work in promoting parental involvement in their children's learning, seeking and acting on parents' views and informing them about the school's work.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Our approach to parental involvement is planned and purposeful and leads to productive two-way partnerships with individuals and representative groups of parents in children's learning and the life of our school. Our school is a welcoming school. We actively encourage parents to participate in their children's care and education, particularly those who are reluctant to be involved or face barriers to involvement. We support parents well in understanding and taking an active part in discussions about their children's progress and ways of working together on their next steps in learning. As far as possible, we meet parents at times which are most convenient for them.
- ✦ We have effective mechanisms for communicating and consulting with parents and learners on the quality of education and the way our school is run, making good use of face-to-face contacts, newsletters, e-mail, websites and telephone calls. Groups representing learners and parents are involved in decisions about the future work of our school. We have clear complaints procedures and parents understand how to use them. They receive feedback, and when their suggestions are not taken on board they are given explanations. We have effective arrangements for meeting the varying needs of parents, for example, those who need interpreting or translation services or have restricted mobility, visual or auditory impairments.
- ✦ We report annually to parents and learners on our improvement priorities and key outcomes. We provide clear information in appropriate formats on key aspects of our work. Our standards and quality reports give accurate evaluations of key aspects of our work and identify strengths and areas for improvement. We welcome parents being proactive in raising issues and engaging in school improvement beyond the needs of their own children.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ We provide activities and support for parents and representative groups but do not actively involve them in a planned and purposeful way. We encourage parents to be involved in their children's learning, for example through homework, but give insufficient guidance to help them to support their children. We welcome those parents who participate in the work of the school but we have not actively involved all parents. Some parents feel reluctant or apprehensive about engaging with the school. Our arrangements for meetings between staff and parents are not flexible enough to meet the needs of groups of parents.
- ✦ We use a range of methods for communicating with parents and learners, but do not have systematic ways of gathering their views or ideas to improve our school. We communicate well with most parents but have not developed ways of reaching those with minority languages and other groups of parents. We do not give parents feedback when their suggestions are not taken on board and some do not feel involved in decisions about the future work of our school. Parents are unclear about how to raise issues with us or about arrangements to make complaints.
- ✦ We report to parents and learners on achievements and areas for development in aspects of our school's work but the value of the information to parents is reduced through, for example, poor presentation, lack of clarity or gaps in information on key areas.

5.8 CARE, WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT

THEMES

- ✦ Arrangements for ensuring care, welfare and child protection
- ✦ Approaches to and provision for meeting the emotional, physical and social needs of children and young people
- ✦ Curricular and vocational guidance

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the school's arrangements for meeting learners' emotional, physical, health and social needs. It is important that such arrangements apply at times of transition. It focuses on the school's procedures for ensuring that learners feel safe and well cared for and on planned approaches to promote their personal and social development. It highlights the need for advice which will enable learners to make informed choices within school and about their direction after leaving school.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Our policies for pastoral care and welfare are clear, appropriate and implemented. Our whole school community takes an active role in promoting the care and welfare of others. We understand our roles and responsibilities in ensuring health and safety. We have been trained and are confident in child protection issues. We deal sensitively and effectively with children's needs and concerns, and our learners have access to effective complaints procedures. We build healthy living and health promotion into our school's culture. Our school has clear procedures for vetting adults who will work with children.
- ✦ We are alert to children's emotional, physical and social needs and recognise and actively promote their personal and social development through all our work. We pay close attention to these at times of transition. Learners are actively encouraged to extend their wider achievements, care for others and develop citizenship skills. Our school has a climate of trust, respect and confidence. Staff and partner services including resources in the community, support children and their families. We make sensitive use of information concerning individuals.
- ✦ Learners are proactive in developing ideas about their future and have acquired the skills and knowledge to plan their careers effectively and gain experience of the world of work. Our vocational guidance is founded on appropriate consultation and accurate, relevant and up-to-date information and advice.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ While we generally take steps to provide a safe and caring environment, there are weaknesses in our practice. Our policies omit some aspects of care and welfare or are not fully implemented by all staff. Staff have some awareness of child protection issues but would benefit from further training. Our policies, for example on anti-bullying, racist incidents, misuse of drugs and safe use of the Internet, lack clarity or are not fully implemented. We recognise health issues but do not always follow these through into practical action. While we address individuals' needs and concerns conscientiously, we sometimes neglect aspects of children's rights, confidentiality, dignity and privacy. Some learners are unsure of how to express their views or complain. Our vetting procedures are not always clear enough.
- ✦ Our approaches to develop learners' personal and social skills are not well coordinated. Not all learners have opportunities to care for others or to develop citizenship skills. At times of transition, not all pupils are fully supported in adjusting socially or emotionally. We do not provide sufficient opportunities for learners to develop personal responsibilities or wider achievement. Our approaches to creating a climate of mutual trust, respect and confidence are not fully effective. There are examples of a lack of sensitivity to background information and our response to learners' emotional needs.
- ✦ Learners are not always given accurate, relevant and up-to-date information and advice which prepare them to make choices in education, training or employment. Our approaches to guide learners in their choices in education are limited or badly timed. Opportunities for work experience, careers guidance and learning about the world of work are limited in range, or of poor quality.

5.9 IMPROVEMENT THROUGH SELF-EVALUATION

THEMES

- ✦ Commitment to self-evaluation
- ✦ Management of self-evaluation
- ✦ School improvement

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the school's arrangements for improvement through self-evaluation and its commitment to this. It highlights the importance of gathering and responding to the views of all partners and stakeholders and involving them. It focuses on the extent to which a school knows itself well and improves the successes and achievements of learners, and the school community more widely.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ As individuals and with colleagues, we evaluate our own classwork as reflective practitioners and make improvements. We work as a school community and with partner agencies to evaluate provision in order to secure continuous improvement, including major change where this is needed. We have very effective systems to gather the views of staff, parents, learners, partners and others about the quality of our work. We work in active partnership with other services for children to secure improvement. Our vision, values and aims are used as the basis for reviewing our work.
- ✦ Our self-evaluation focuses on key aspects of learners' successes and achievements. It draws on a wide range of advice and evidence and is rigorous, systematic and transparent. All our teams reflect on current practice and evaluate any new initiatives, ideas and changes we have introduced. Where appropriate, we use accreditation schemes as a sound basis for improvement. We clearly identify strengths and areas for improvement. We share good practice.
- ✦ Our school community takes a joined-up approach to improvement across all that it does. We are committed to acting on the results of self-evaluation and can show clear evidence of improvement based on our actions as part of our self-evaluation. Our improvements focus particularly on continuing improvements to learning and teaching and the achievement of all learners.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ As individual teachers we vary in the extent to which we evaluate classwork effectively. We regard self-evaluation largely as the responsibility of senior managers and do not sufficiently involve all staff, learners, parents or partners. Our approaches to self-evaluation need stronger professional commitment and teamwork focused on improving the quality of our work.
- ✦ Promoted staff evaluate the work of our school and its teams but use a limited range of approaches which do not focus sufficiently on our learners' successes and achievements to evaluate effectiveness systematically. We are sometimes vague or form views about our strengths and areas for improvement which lack rigour. We are unable to demonstrate the impact initiatives are having on learners.
- ✦ Self-evaluation has little impact on improving learning and teaching and achievements for all learners. Our evidence about these aspects does not always provide key management information and is not used well to evaluate progress and plan improvement. We do not evaluate progress towards meeting targets in the improvement plan systematically. We use the results of self-evaluation to report on standards and quality but the evidence base is insecure.

6.1 POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT

THEMES

- ✦ Range, clarity and appropriateness of aims and policies
- ✦ Coherence of policies
- ✦ Managing, evaluating and updating policies

KEY FEATURES:

Policies are about action. This indicator relates to the need for concise, clearly-stated policies which reflect local and national priorities, provide shared direction for the work of the school and improve provision in classrooms. It highlights the key role of all stakeholders in ensuring that policies promote coherence in our work with other staff and partners. It focuses on the extent to which policies reflect the school's vision, values and aims and highlights the need to keep policies up-to-date so that they guide practice which leads to improved outcomes for learners.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Staff, learners, parents and partners share and are committed to our school's aims and values. Our policies put children first. They provide guidance and take account of local and national priorities and relevant legislation. They are consistent with the aims and policies of the education authority or governing body and with national policies. They provide clear and concise guidance which improves classroom practice.
- ✦ Our school's policies are directed at meeting learners' needs and reducing barriers to learning. Our working links with partnership initiatives and partner agencies are clearly indicated in our school policies and evident in our practice.
- ✦ Staff, learners, parents and the wider community are actively involved in the development and review of our policies. We keep policies updated to reflect changes in our practice and current legislation requirements, particularly those relating to the care, welfare and protection of children.¹⁸

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ The links between our aims and policies are not always evident to our learners, parents and the community. Our policies do not always give clear and concise guidance for staff, learners, parents and stakeholders to help to ensure consistent practice and delivery. Our aims have insufficient focus on providing high-quality learning experiences and enabling all learners to achieve the highest standards.
- ✦ Our school policies are not clear enough about our roles and responsibilities in meeting learners' needs and reducing barriers to learning. Our contribution to partnership working is not well defined and this leads to gaps in provision for some learners.
- ✦ We do not review and amend policies regularly enough. Many of our policies have not been updated to reflect changes in practice or legislation or changing national and local priorities. We have only limited engagement with our stakeholders in the review of policies to ensure that policies effectively guide practice which leads to improved outcomes for learners.

¹⁸ In evaluating this QI, due attention should be paid to evaluations of QIs within Key Areas 1 to 4.

6.2 PARTICIPATION IN POLICY AND PLANNING

THEMES

- ✦ Active participation in policy and planning
- ✦ Communication and consultation

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the involvement of all stakeholders (staff, learners, parents, members of the community and partner agencies) in policy development and planning and the work of the school more generally. It highlights the importance of keeping all stakeholders well informed about the school's work and development, and of consulting them on action for improvement.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ We use the views and expertise of all involved in our school's work to inform the development, evaluation and review of our policies and plans in order to secure improvements for learners. Staff, learners, parents, partner agencies and other stakeholders participate actively in staff meetings, pupil councils, groups representing parents, working groups, focus groups and other stakeholder forums.
- ✦ We are committed to communicating, consulting and engaging with staff teams, learners, parents and partners and have systematic arrangements in place. We interact regularly with an appropriate range of consultative groups and have clear guidelines for communication and providing feedback to our stakeholders. Staff, learners, parents and partners are confident in contributing ideas, expressing concerns and making suggestions.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ We have few structures, such as meetings, working groups and other forums, in place to support and encourage the active participation of staff, learners, parents, partner agencies and other stakeholders in taking forward the work of our school. Some key groups of our stakeholders are not sufficiently involved in developing school policy in a planned or purposeful way. Our stakeholders do not always feel ownership of, or commitment to, our school policies.
- ✦ We provide learners, parents and staff with information about our work and progress but the information is not always clear, comprehensive or up-to-date. We do not have effective ways of consulting and communicating with some groups of stakeholders such as minority language groups or those with disabilities.

6.3 PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT

THEMES

- ✦ Developing, implementing and evaluating improvement plans
- ✦ Structure and content of improvement plans
- ✦ Use of management information
- ✦ Joint improvement planning with partner organisations and services
- ✦ Planning for sustainability

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the school's arrangements for planning for improvement and their impact.¹⁹ It focuses on the school's approaches to implementing plans and evaluating their outcomes for learners. It highlights the need for clear priorities based firmly on information from self-evaluation. It relates to inter-agency planning and implementation to secure improvements which will bring benefit immediately and over the longer term.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ We have a clear and well-understood cycle for improvement planning. We involve our stakeholders at an early stage to shape our plans. Staff are involved in developing our improvement plan and implementing it. In developing, implementing and evaluating our plans, we use well-developed approaches to risk assessment. We rigorously evaluate the impact of the plan on improving outcomes for learners.
- ✦ Our school improvement plan fully reflects our school's shared vision along with local and national priorities and is presented so that the full range of our stakeholders find it accessible. The plan sets challenging but achievable targets and clearly indicates how developments will be resourced, who will be responsible, when they will be implemented, their impact on learners and how success will be evaluated and recognised.
- ✦ In producing our improvement plan, we make effective use of information from self-evaluation and professional review and development. In particular, we draw on evidence about the quality of learning and teaching and learners' attainment and achievements.
- ✦ Our commitment to joint planning with associated schools, partner organisations and services is evident in the use of integrated working to achieve improvement objectives. Our partners are fully involved in planning to ensure that learners are safe, healthy and well cared for; that they achieve to their fullest potential across a range of skills; and that they are confident and responsible citizens who make active contributions to their communities.
- ✦ We have taken careful account of issues of continuity and sustainability in planning improvements.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ We engage in improvement planning but it does not focus sufficiently on improving the quality of learning and maximising learners' achievements. We undertake some evaluation of improvement projects but need to place more emphasis on the direct benefits for learners. Progress towards implementing priorities at school, department and team level is inconsistent. The implementation of plans has not resulted in significant improvements in learners' experiences, achievements or standards of attainment.
- ✦ The structure and presentation of our improvement plan is not clear or helpful as a working document. We have too many or too few improvement objectives and these are not always focused on key priorities for our school. Targets within our improvement plans, tasks, responsibilities and timescales lack clear definition. We are unclear about how we will evaluate or recognise the success of our plans.
- ✦ Our planning process is not well founded on information derived from self-evaluation, quality assurance, or analysis of information on attainment and achievement. We carry out some monitoring and evaluation of the quality of learning and teaching but this does not focus on learners' classroom experiences as a source of key priorities for improvement.
- ✦ We work to some extent with associated schools, professional groups, support agencies and partner organisations to identify priorities and engage in joint planning. However, areas for joint action are not always clearly defined in the plan and partners are not always aware of their respective roles in implementing the plan.
- ✦ Our improvement planning gives insufficient attention to ensuring the long-term viability of projects.

¹⁹ The impact should be judged via the QIs in Key areas 1–4.

7.1 STAFF SUFFICIENCY, RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

THEMES

- ✦ Provision of staff
- ✦ Recruitment, appointment and induction of staff
- ✦ Care and welfare of staff
- ✦ Recognition of achievement

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the provision and recruitment of staff and the effectiveness of the arrangements to ensure their care and welfare and readiness to do the job. It focuses on transparency and equality and fairness in recruiting staff to posts, and on the extent to which staff successes are recognised and celebrated in the school.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ We have sufficient skilled and qualified staff and support from specialist services to provide an appropriate curriculum and learning experience for all learners, including those with additional support needs.
- ✦ Our school has effective and transparent recruitment procedures consistent with legal requirements. Our appointment procedures give due regard to the skills, aptitudes and experience needed for each post. We have effective induction procedures for all new staff including supply teachers and other temporary staff. We operate an effective equal opportunities policy in the recruitment and support of staff. We systematically address and monitor issues of equality and fairness including where appropriate, ethnicity, religion, disability and gender.
- ✦ We have clear procedures for setting the standards of conduct, care and welfare which all staff can expect and which are expected of them. Staff know their responsibilities and rights and relevant professional codes of practice.
- ✦ We support staff to give of their best and recognise and celebrate achievements. Those with leadership responsibilities regularly communicate staff successes and highlight best practice.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Our range of teaching expertise enables broad coverage of the curriculum but there are gaps in some areas, such as support for learning staff or supply teachers. We do not make best use or take full advantage of the expertise of staff from partner agencies and other organisations to support the needs of individual learners.
- ✦ Our recruitment procedures generally operate well but could sometimes be more planned and proactive. Staff induction procedures are helpful but not always sufficiently customised to support the induction and development needs of different groups of staff to prepare for their roles. Our arrangements for supporting supply staff sometimes fail to ensure that they are familiar with our school procedures and are able to work effectively with the classes they are allocated. We are committed to equality and fairness in recruitment but do not always systematically monitor that these principles have been implemented.
- ✦ Our policies for setting the standards of conduct, care and welfare for staff are sometimes unclear and inconsistent. Some staff are unsure of their responsibilities and rights and relevant professional codes of practice and are unclear what they can expect or what is expected of them.
- ✦ Staff sometimes feel that those with leadership responsibilities do not value their achievements sufficiently and that we do not have an ethos of recognising success. We have little formal or public recognition of staff successes.

7.2 STAFF DEPLOYMENT AND TEAMWORK

THEMES

- ✦ Appropriateness and clarity of remits
- ✦ Deployment of staff, including partner agencies
- ✦ Effectiveness of teamwork
- ✦ Communication

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the effectiveness of individual and team contributions. It also focuses on the extent to which staff are empowered to give of their best, and their work is directed towards improving outcomes for learners. It highlights the processes and structures which promote ownership of, and commitment to, this joint endeavour.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Staff, including those from partner services, have clear job descriptions and remits focused on the needs of learners. They are empowered, challenged and supported. Our teams have clear structures, are task focused, and we take responsibility for evaluating their work.
- ✦ Our staff team is deployed effectively to meet learners' needs and improve provision. Staff such as additional teachers, additional support needs auxiliaries and classroom assistants work in classrooms and contribute effectively to our learners' progress. Business managers and staff from partner agencies complement the work of teachers and senior managers and allow them to focus on teaching and learning.
- ✦ We have established a collaborative and collegiate approach to our work. An ethos of team working and professional engagement is evident within our school. We work effectively with learning support staff and visiting specialist teachers. Our arrangements for liaison among staff working jointly with particular learners are clear and implemented effectively. Effective liaison takes place between class teachers and learning support staff, visiting specialist teachers, other specialists, health staff and care professionals to meet learners' needs.
- ✦ Lines of communication and accountability for staff are clear. We all take responsibility for communicating, consulting and sharing information with colleagues. We have good opportunities to raise concerns or make constructive suggestions. Those with leadership responsibilities are responsive, visible and accessible.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Some staff lack clear remits setting out their role in the wider team. Some remits are not well focused on the needs of learners. Staff contributions to the work of our school and involvement in teamwork varies in quality.
- ✦ Better use could be made of our skills through improved staff deployment. Remits and job activities do not always align with the key priorities and improvement objectives of our school. Teachers do not always understand the roles of learning support staff, classroom assistants, visiting teachers and staff from partner services. Senior managers and teachers sometimes spend time on routine tasks which should be undertaken by others.
- ✦ Deployment of learning support staff and visiting specialist teachers does not always match our learners' needs. Staff involved jointly with particular learners or groups of learners are not always fully aware of each other's contributions.
- ✦ Weaknesses in communication and consultation among staff and teams limit their effectiveness. Staff are often unsure of how to have their views and concerns considered or put forward constructive suggestions for service improvement. Some of those with leadership responsibilities are seen as accessible and approachable but ineffective communication or inadequate consultation on major issues sometimes affects work with learners.

7.3 STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

THEMES

- ✦ Processes for staff review and support
- ✦ Training and development
- ✦ Joint training with staff from partner agencies

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the school's arrangements for staff development and professional review for all staff managed by the school. It focuses on clear and systematic procedures for staff review which are supported by a wide range of appropriate opportunities for development. It relates to joint training which is designed to promote professional development and effective partnership working.²⁰

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ The staff review process in our school meets best practice. It identifies the strengths and skills of all staff and meets their development needs. We have a clear and well-supported framework of continuing professional development and review for all staff deployed in our school. Information from staff review and other sources informs staff development activities and supports continuous improvement for learners.
- ✦ We take responsibility for identifying and promoting the aims and priorities for professional development. Staff development is well planned, matched to identified individual and school needs and draws on local and national expertise. Staff are aware of the aims and priorities for staff development and how these relate to review and school improvement. Staff development includes relevant national and local training, work shadowing, peer coaching and mentoring. We follow up and evaluate the impact on our classroom practice and use the findings to influence future planning.
- ✦ Staff learning and professional development is collaborative and collegiate. Staff come together to share understanding and engage in joint staff development on common priorities and practices. Joint staff development with partner services leads to improvements in the arrangements for supporting learners and their families.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ We have procedures for staff review in place, but reviews are not sufficiently systematic or effective in identifying individual development needs. Some staff are unclear about how to make best use of the review process and do not see it as supportive. The outcomes of staff review are not used systematically to support continuous improvement in classroom practice.
- ✦ Some staff are not proactive in promoting their own development. We do not always meet individual development needs or school priorities and the needs of groups of staff are sometimes neglected. Our programme for training and development is limited in scope and does not always make best use of available expertise. Evaluation and follow up of impact on provision for learners is uncommon.
- ✦ We undertake some inter-agency training but many school and partner service staff have limited understanding of each other's contributions. While meetings do take place involving senior school staff and our partner agencies, these are neither programmed regularly nor characterised by shared agendas. We seldom discuss joint training or view it as a priority. Joint staff development sessions do not focus sufficiently on how we can support the needs of all learners.

²⁰ In evaluating this QI, reference should be made to QI 3.1, The engagement of staff in the life and work of the school.

8.1 PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE COMMUNITY, EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS, AGENCIES AND EMPLOYERS

THEMES

- ✦ Clarity of purposes and aims
- ✦ Working across agencies and disciplines
- ✦ Staff roles in partnerships

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the effectiveness and impact of the school's partnership with the community, educational establishments, agencies, employers and others in supporting learners and targeting support to individuals. It focuses on the school's arrangements for consulting, communicating and working with others in supportive and effective ways. Key considerations include the extent to which the school works effectively in a range of multi-disciplinary partnerships and is committed to joint working in planning, delivering, and evaluating joint projects.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ We have effective partnership working which makes a difference to the quality of support for learners. We are clear about those areas for which we take the main responsibility and those where we need the support of our partners to maximise benefits for individual children and young people. We have a clear framework with appropriate aims and effective procedures to evaluate the impact of partnership working on individuals and groups. Staff are committed to the aims of joint working and engage actively with partners, community representatives and agencies.
- ✦ Our links with other educational establishments, community and specialist agencies and employers have enriched learning and improved learners' achievements and targeted support to individuals and their families. Staff work well with others to ensure that those most vulnerable are well supported and their learning and welfare needs are addressed throughout transitions. We provide effective support through partnerships, where appropriate, with employers, industry, community learning and development, Scotland's Colleges, voluntary groups, educational psychologists, health services and social workers. Staff work with these partners to identify their distinctive contributions to enriching experiences for all learners or targeting support to groups and individuals. Staff participate actively in initiatives led by other agencies.
- ✦ We are clear about our respective roles and responsibilities and have very good opportunities to meet and share training with our partners. Our arrangements for communication, assessment, planning, review, recording and reporting are clear and work well. We work with partners providing integrated services to children and community-based projects to identify local priorities and objectives.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Although some partnerships work well in meeting the needs of individual children or young people, there is potential for other partnerships to make a greater contribution. We lack a clear set of aims for partnership working and arrangements to evaluate its impact. Many staff are committed to the aims of joint working but we lack a consistent and coherent approach across our school.
- ✦ Our links with other educational establishments, community and specialist agencies and employers are not always used effectively to improve learning or support development. Some partnership working makes little impact on meeting the needs of learners. Our networks and partnerships provide effective support for some children and young people but the needs of others are not well met.
- ✦ We work in partnership with statutory agencies but are not always clear about each other's roles and responsibilities in partnership working. There are weaknesses in some aspects of our arrangements for communication, assessment, planning, review, record keeping and reporting. Some partnership work shows different staff complementing each other well but we sometimes pursue our own approaches, priorities and objectives rather than implementing shared approaches.

8.2 MANAGEMENT OF FINANCE FOR LEARNING

THEMES

- ✦ Sufficiency of available finance and setting budgets
- ✦ Financial procedures and controls
- ✦ Management of budgets, including links with the education authority/Board of Managers
- ✦ Best value use of finance to support school improvement

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the impact of the provision and management of the school's finances. It focuses on transparency, fairness and best value in managing the school's finances and the extent to which the use of financial resources leads to improved outcomes for learners.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Our finance is sufficient to support our school's work and we make the best use of the finances provided. We consult staff, learners and parents on funding bids and these are clearly linked to the needs of the school, local improvement objectives and national priorities.
- ✦ We have clear procedures for financial control. We manage and monitor our expenditure openly and effectively and take account of local and national advice.
- ✦ Management information systems provide us with comprehensive and current data for budget management and resource allocation. Our arrangements for day-to-day financial management release time for senior managers and for teachers.
- ✦ Our priorities for the use of financial resources are clearly linked to our school improvement priorities. We use our finances to improve the quality of learning and to support specific developments. Our financial performance indicates that our school's budget has been used efficiently to support our improvement priorities which in turn have led to positive outcomes for our learners.²¹

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Our finance is used to support our school's work but we do not consult some staff appropriately about financial arrangements and our financial resources are not always matched to achieving the school's improvement objectives. We often do not consider bids for projects linked to local and national priorities in sufficient depth.
- ✦ Our procedures for financial control are not sufficiently clear or up-to-date and arrangements for managing our budget lack openness and fairness.
- ✦ Information from administrative systems sometimes arrives too late or is incomplete. Our day-to-day financial management involves our headteacher and others unnecessarily with financial detail.
- ✦ Some budget allocations relate to short-term priorities and have only a general link to improving the quality of learning. The allocations we make are not always effectively aligned to school improvement priorities. Our budget decisions do not always take due account of the need for economy, efficiency, value for money, or support our school improvement priorities and improve outcomes for learners.

²¹ Refer to QI 1.2, Fulfilment of statutory duties.

8.3 MANAGEMENT AND USE OF RESOURCES AND SPACE FOR LEARNING

THEMES

- ✦ Accommodation, display and presentation
- ✦ Provision of resources and equipment
- ✦ Organisation and use of resources
- ✦ Arrangements to ensure health and safety, including security

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the impact of the provision and management of the school's resources and space on the environment for learning. It focuses on the extent to which learners are stimulated by the accommodation and facilities, and on the school's health and safety arrangements.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Our accommodation, including corridors and playgrounds, provides a safe, pleasant and stimulating environment for learning, social and leisure activities. We have appropriate spaces for classes, staff, storage, display and learners' social provision. We meet statutory duties on accessibility for disabled users. Our displays of learners' work fully support learning and teaching and create a stimulating atmosphere. We create an appropriate balance between learners' work, printed text and commercial displays.
- ✦ Appropriate resources, including ICT, are sufficient, up-to-date and well maintained. Our resources enable teachers to teach well and learners to learn effectively.
- ✦ Our resources are well organised, accessible, used effectively and managed in a sustainable way. Learning and teaching in our school is enriched through planned use of ICT, the local environment, the world of work and resources from outwith our school. We encourage learners to make independent and responsible use of resources including specialist resources. We monitor and evaluate the use of resources to ensure that the needs of all of our learners are met.
- ✦ Our buildings are secure and health and safety aspects of accommodation and facilities are identified and addressed. We implement relevant health and safety legislation and are vigilant in ensuring the security and safety of our learners.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Our accommodation generally provides a safe environment but needs to be adapted to support learning, teaching, social and leisure activities. Lack of space or noise levels in some areas hinder learning and teaching. Our accommodation is in need of decoration or repair, and access is difficult for some users. Our displays of our learners' work and items of interest are seldom changed and often contribute little to learning and teaching. Commercial materials often dominate displays.
- ✦ Most of our resources are functional but many need updating and/or repair. We have a limited range of ICT equipment and other resources which will motivate our learners. This limits several aspects of the work of our school.
- ✦ Our resources are generally well organised. The use we make of resources supports the delivery of our curriculum at a basic level but is at times not well matched to the purpose intended and does not provide high-quality support for learning and teaching or for enriching additional experiences. Some teachers enrich learning through imaginative use of resources but we make little use of the environment and resources from outwith the school. Our learners make little independent use of resources.
- ✦ We do not monitor the security of school buildings with sufficient rigour. We have identified some related health and safety issues but these are not always addressed effectively.

8.4 MANAGING INFORMATION

THEMES

- ✦ Data collection, storage and retrieval
- ✦ Sharing information
- ✦ Analysing, evaluating and using information

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the school's arrangements for managing information. It focuses on the school's systems for collecting and processing information and on the extent to which it is shared to help staff improve outcomes for learners. It highlights the extent to which information is used to monitor learners' progress.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ We use effective approaches for collecting and storing data to improve learning and raise achievement. Our management information system provides useful information to monitor our learners' achievements, inform planning and target support and resources. We have appropriate access to external data on comparative performance. We manage information to meet our users' needs and enable appropriate access to information. Our arrangements to store, file and retrieve information comply with legislation.
- ✦ We understand and follow protocols for information sharing. We share information including data on budgets, staffing, attainment, attendance and exclusions appropriately among staff to improve outcomes for individual learners. Our management information system enables relevant partners to have access to the information necessary to ensure young people's wellbeing and improve their learning. Our learners and their families are aware of any information held about them and with whom it might be shared.
- ✦ Our school is data rich. We use data analysis alongside professional judgement to track learners' progress, promote, monitor and demonstrate improvement, benchmark performance and identify trends. This helps us to identify high and low performance in our school's work in order to target support and challenge learning. We use data to help us to intervene promptly where this is needed.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ We collect and store a range of data but this does not include some key data needed to improve learning and raise achievement. Our system provides staff with some support for planning improvement. We make some use of external data on comparative performance. Our management of information meets the needs of some users but does not always enable appropriate access. Our arrangements for managing information comply with legislation.
- ✦ Our protocols for sharing information are not well developed and we have not reached agreement on the core set of data needed to support our planning for improvement. Staff have had little or no training on the interpretation or use of management data to plan improvement. We do not share enough information among staff to provide an overview of our school's work and enable us to improve outcomes for our learners.
- ✦ We collate and analyse a range of data but do not always use it effectively to monitor and demonstrate improvement, benchmark performance and identify trends. We have systems in place to track learners' attainment but more vulnerable groups, for example looked after children, are not specifically identified. We do not always use data to provide prompt intervention when this is needed.

9.1 VISION, VALUES AND AIMS

THEMES

- ✦ Appropriateness and coherence with corporate and community vision, values and aims
- ✦ Sharing and sustaining the vision
- ✦ Promotion of positive attitudes to social and cultural diversity

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator focuses on how the school works with others to create a shared vision and sense of purpose and direction which is ambitious and challenging. The indicator focuses on the extent to which vision, values and aims guide planning for, and have an impact on, improvements in the quality of learning and teaching and outcomes for learners and their families.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ We work with learners, parents and other partners to develop and shape a common vision for our school and community through reflection, debate and ongoing consultation. Our vision is firmly based on outcomes for learners and is in line with local and national priorities. The work of our school gains direction from our clear statements of our vision, values and aims.
- ✦ We continually revisit and reinforce our vision, values and aims through our events and activities. This results in a strong sense of common purpose throughout our school community. We take full account of our school's vision, values and aims when we review our work, implement improvements and shape future direction.
- ✦ Our vision, values and aims set out clear expectations for, and positive attitudes to, diversity. We are strongly committed to equality. We promote equity and celebrate diversity and inclusion and this is reflected in our improvement plan.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ The statement on vision, values and aims in our school generally accords with national and local priorities. Members of our wider school community and our partner organisations have had little involvement in shaping the vision, values and aims of our school. As a result, our aims have only limited relevance to different groups within our school community or are insufficiently linked to the main activities of our school.
- ✦ There is no strong sense of shared values, vision or common purpose in our school community. Values are generally not revisited or reinforced through our daily interactions, communications, events and activities. When evaluating our work, we do not take sufficient account of our vision, values and aims.
- ✦ While our vision, values and aims set out clear expectations for, and positive attitudes towards, diversity and inclusion, these are not fully embedded in the work of our school.

9.2 LEADERSHIP AND DIRECTION

THEMES

- ✦ Strategic planning and communication
- ✦ Strategic deployment of resources

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator focuses on leadership to map out future developments, linked to vision, values and aims. It focuses on leadership skills and knowledge, professional and personal commitment and the creation of processes which give direction.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Continuous improvement and successes and achievements for learners are central to our school's strategic direction. We ensure that learning is the central focus of our improvement plans, and that improvement priorities are linked to classroom practice. We communicate a clear view of our school's aims so that the wider staff team and learners are clear and committed to their part in achieving them and aware of the implications for what happens in the classroom.
- ✦ We make transparent and evidence-based decisions on the allocation of resources to target key agreed objectives and achieve best value. Those with leadership responsibilities in our school demonstrate that they are committed to learning by making class visits, modelling good practice, giving feedback, sharing insights widely and stimulating self-evaluation. We reinforce a culture where staff feel able and confident to take lead roles within and beyond the classroom.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ We have established a broad direction for the work of our school, but this has not been communicated sufficiently well to all our learners, parents or partners. School improvement, partnership working and pursuing high standards are key components in our strategic plan, but we do not always give a clear lead on how to achieve these or their implications for classroom practice. Our future direction is ambitious, but not always guided by analysis of appropriate data.
- ✦ We give learning sufficient emphasis in our improvement plans but resources are not well targeted to support this. Those with leadership responsibilities in our school are not sufficiently engaged in activities which have a direct impact on learning and teaching.

9.3 DEVELOPING PEOPLE AND PARTNERSHIPS

THEMES

- ❖ Development of leadership capacity
- ❖ Building and sustaining relationships
- ❖ Teamwork and partnerships

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator relates to the effectiveness of the school in building capacity for leadership at all levels and securing positive working relationships and successful outcomes with stakeholders and partner agencies. The indicator relates to the ethos and culture of the school, developed through interactions within the school and joint working with partner agencies. The effectiveness of those with leadership responsibilities, their deployment, responsibilities and team working in relation to organisational requirements and key strengths are relevant. Delegation to, and empowerment of, staff and partners and support of effective teamwork are important features.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ❖ We focus on learning and teaching as the key to school improvement. We adapt leadership styles to the context and situations in our school, and are sensitive to relationships. We deploy a wide range of skills, and motivate and support others. Our approach is consultative and collegiate, securing shared commitment. When required, we drive action forward directly. Those with leadership responsibilities reinforce a culture where staff and learners feel able to exercise initiative and take lead roles within and beyond the classroom. We make good use of learners' views and of the collective knowledge, experience and interests of staff. We have made an impact individually, within teams and across our school.
- ❖ We have developed a supportive work environment in which people share a sense of responsibility to ensure successes and achievements for learners. Our working relationships are built on trust and a genuine concern for staff and partners. We help people tackle challenging problems, share information and deal with difficulties. We reinforce an atmosphere of collective responsibility and mutual support across the school community. We create, review and improve our structures for management, learning and support to build positive relationships. We encourage staff and recognise and celebrate their achievements.
- ❖ We use partnership working and team development to secure continuous improvement. An ethos of teamwork is evident in our school. We engage actively with relevant partners and have high levels of participation by partners in our own work and improvement. We evaluate team performance regularly against agreed objectives.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ❖ A number of individuals display weaknesses in their leadership skills or in corporate working. Leadership styles do not meet the needs of the school to make improvements. We support some initiatives suggested by others but do not motivate staff to propose improvements. Leaders place insufficient focus on learning and teaching, and the culture of our school, although positive, does not convey a full sense of challenge or progress.
- ❖ We generally have a supportive work environment in which most people share a sense of responsibility to improve the quality of learning and teaching. Overall, the quality of relationships and the culture of the work environment are too variable across our school. Our working relationships are not always characterised by trust. We give little attention to creating, reviewing and improving structures for management, learning and support to build positive relationships. We do not regularly recognise or celebrate achievements of staff and partners.
- ❖ We have built and sustained effective teamwork with some key partners and have some examples of effective partnership working, but the overall picture is inconsistent. We do not systematically demonstrate commitment to partnership working or take an active role in activities initiated by partner agencies. In general, teamwork in our school is not well established, and we do not regularly evaluate team performance against agreed objectives.

9.4 LEADERSHIP OF IMPROVEMENT AND CHANGE

THEMES

- ✦ Support and challenge
- ✦ Creativity, innovation and step change
- ✦ Continuous improvement

KEY FEATURES:

This indicator is concerned with the effectiveness of the leadership of the school in maintaining high levels of quality and promoting continuous improvement and excellence in the provision for all learners.²² An important component of leadership is the need for those with leadership responsibilities to challenge staff to improve the quality of provision for learners, by setting demanding but realistic targets and by providing high-level support to assist them to achieve these. The indicator also relates to the ability of those with leadership roles at all levels to encourage and support innovative practices which bring about positive changes in learners' experiences.

LEVEL 5 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ We are committed to planning and implementing strategies for improvement. We understand the need for support and challenge, have demanding targets, manage change effectively and use best practice in self-evaluation to improve learning. Improvement in our school takes account of our capacity for improvement and staff have time to consider and embed changes.
- ✦ We have a coherent vision of what is important for our school, its community and our learners. We innovate in line with that vision. We guide and manage the pace of agreed change. We win over hearts as well as minds. We deal effectively with potential divisions among staff. We routinely use the results of self-evaluation to consolidate what we do well and welcome innovative approaches aimed at improving the quality of learning and teaching and outcomes for learners. We lead and manage effectively and strategically by prioritising and focusing on a manageable number of high-priority initiatives and communicating them well.
- ✦ Leaders at all levels play a very strong role in leading improvement and innovation, learning and teaching, with a focus on impact and outcomes. All have clear roles and responsibilities in quality improvement. Our school constantly explores ways to support improvement through developing talents and skills. We provide opportunities for staff to undertake lead roles in a variety of contexts and nurture and develop their expertise and confidence. Leadership has led to high-quality provision and promoted continuous improvement.

LEVEL 2 ILLUSTRATION

- ✦ Some staff resist developments even where it is designed to achieve improvements for learners. The pace of change is not well managed. Those with leadership roles do not consistently support and challenge staff or focus sufficiently on setting targets for improvement. Our processes for self-evaluation are not well developed or targeted to improve learning and teaching. We do not allocate sufficient time and resources for some developments or take sufficient account of our school's capacity for improvement, or the need to gain the commitment of staff.
- ✦ We have a vision of what is important for our school and our community but innovative and effective practice is not systematically identified, supported, evaluated or disseminated across the school. We are aware of examples of good practice within our school but have not yet focused on the key levers which will improve the quality of learning and teaching. Our communication is often insufficient to enable staff to understand the reasons for, or the anticipated benefits from, implementing change.
- ✦ Leaders at all levels do not adopt a sufficiently high profile or strong leading role in driving forward the school's commitment to maintaining high levels of quality and continuous improvement in learning and teaching and outcomes for children and young people. There is a lack of effectiveness in quality improvement. In the implementation of their remits, those in leadership roles tend to focus on systems, functions and processes rather than on improved outcomes and impact for learners. Staff across our school generally work hard, but we do not build their talents and skills sufficiently and provide them with opportunities to undertake lead roles.

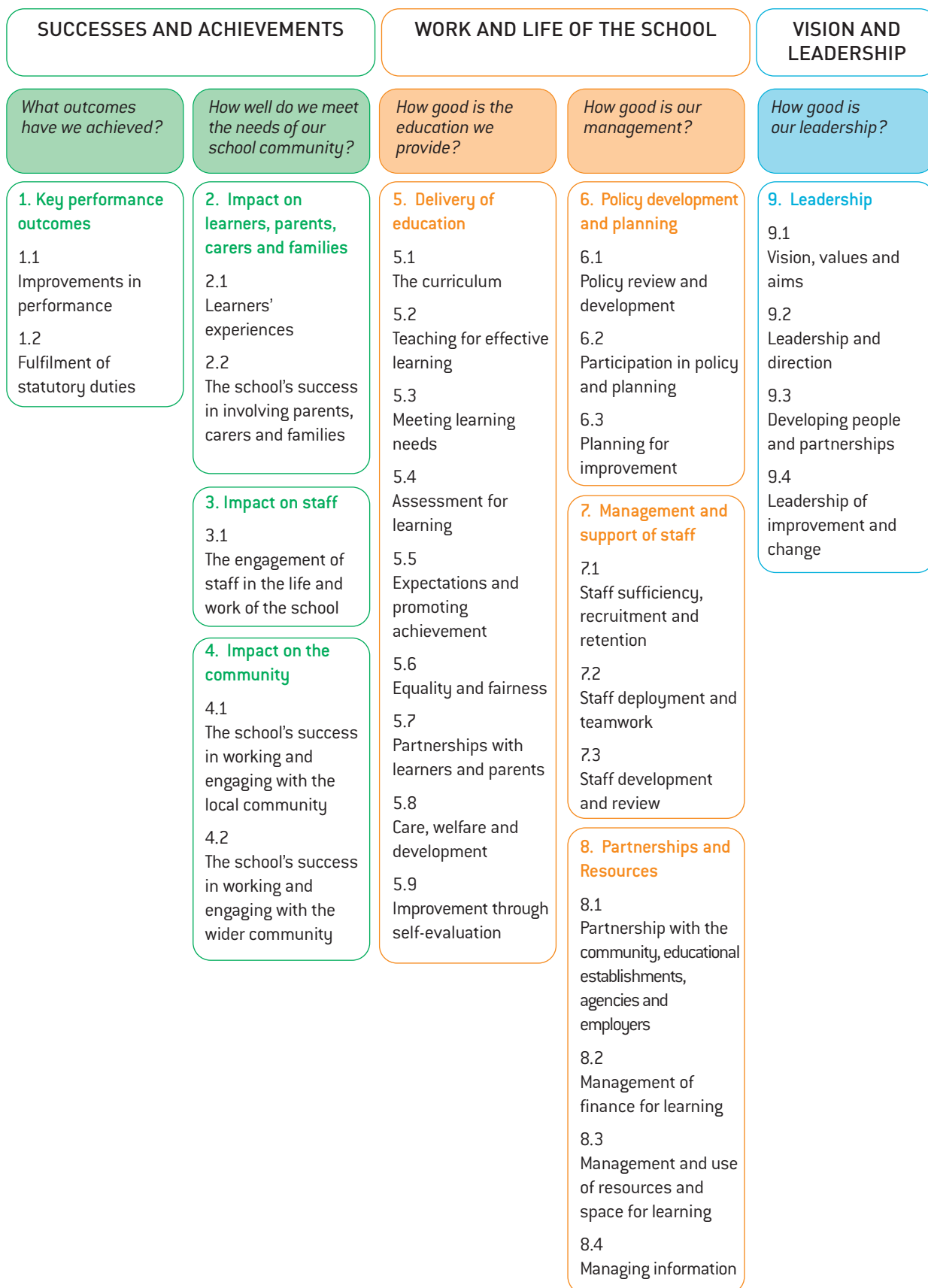
²² In evaluating this indicator, consideration should be given to indicators in key areas 1–4 outlining the school's successes and achievements.



APPENDICES



APPENDIX 1: The quality framework



APPENDIX 2:

The six-point scale

The quality of what you observe within each indicator can be judged against six levels.

LEVEL

LEVEL 6	<i>excellent</i>	outstanding or sector leading
LEVEL 5	<i>very good</i>	major strengths
LEVEL 4	<i>good</i>	important strengths with areas for improvement
LEVEL 3	<i>adequate</i>	strengths just outweigh weaknesses
LEVEL 2	<i>weak</i>	important weaknesses
LEVEL 1	<i>unsatisfactory</i>	major weaknesses

In education, an evaluation can be arrived at in a range of contexts. We need to bear in mind that awarding levels using a quality scale will always be more of a professional skill than a technical process. However, the following general guidelines should be consistently applied.

An evaluation of ***excellent*** applies to provision which is sector leading. Pupils' experiences and achievements are of a very high quality. An evaluation of ***excellent*** represents an outstanding standard of provision which exemplifies very best practice and is worth disseminating beyond the school. It implies that very high levels of performance are sustainable and will be maintained.

An evaluation of ***very good*** applies to provision characterised by major strengths. There are very few areas for improvement and any that do exist do not significantly diminish pupils' experiences. Whilst an evaluation of ***very good*** represents a high standard of provision, it is a standard that should be achievable by all. It implies that it is fully appropriate to continue to make provision without significant adjustment. However, there is an expectation that the school will take opportunities to improve and strive to raise performance to excellent.

An evaluation of ***good*** applies to provision characterised by important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh any areas for improvement. An evaluation of ***good*** represents a standard of provision in which the strengths have a significantly positive impact. However, the quality of pupils' 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, but take action to address the areas for improvement.

An evaluation of ***adequate*** applies to provision characterised by strengths which just outweigh weaknesses. An evaluation of ***adequate*** indicates that pupils have access to a basic level of provision. It represents a standard where the strengths have a positive impact on pupils' experiences. However, while the weaknesses are not important enough to have a substantially adverse impact, they do constrain the overall quality of pupils' experiences. It implies that the school should take action to address areas of weakness by building on its strengths.

An evaluation of ***weak*** applies to provision which has some strengths, but where there are important weaknesses. In general, an evaluation of ***weak*** may be arrived at in a number of circumstances. While there may be some strengths, important weaknesses will, either individually or collectively, be sufficient to diminish pupils' experiences in substantial ways. It implies the need for prompt, structured and planned action on the part of the school.

An evaluation of ***unsatisfactory*** applies when there are major weaknesses in provision requiring immediate remedial action. Pupils' experiences are at risk in significant respects. In almost all cases, staff responsible for provision evaluated as ***unsatisfactory*** will require support from senior managers in planning and carrying out the necessary actions to effect improvement. This may involve working alongside other staff or agencies in or beyond the school.

APPENDIX 3:

The relationship between the quality framework of indicators and the ten dimensions of excellence

The framework of *indicators* in this edition of *How good is our school?* provides a set of tools to help to evaluate the quality of education in a school. The indicators cover the full range of a school's work and are designed to help identify strengths and priorities for improvement which can be built into an improvement plan. Over the years, staff in schools have become accustomed to using indicators in this way to help them to manage the process of continuous improvement. A school will always need to know how well it is doing across the full range of its work, and the indicators will help you to do this.

Each of the *dimensions* of excellence in Part 2 of *The Journey to Excellence* is associated with one of the key areas in which the indicators in *How good is our school?* are organised. The dimensions can help a school to move forward on those aspects of its work where it judges that it is ready to go from good, or very good, to great. They can help to make real changes to those aspects which are at the heart of what a school is about - learning and success for all. The dimensions are not audit tools. They do not cover everything which goes on in a school. They focus on those aspects which have a direct impact on learning and outcomes for all young people. They are levers for transformational change, moving straight into the activities and practices which are associated with excellence. The dimensions and their related features give ideas of some of the things which can make a school an excellent school.

How and when a school uses the dimensions will depend on the stage the school has reached on its journey to excellence and the kinds of improvements which are necessary. It will also depend on features of its capacity for improvement, that is how well prepared your school is for making the kinds of changes which can transform the lives of its learners:

- ✦ how well the school 'knows itself', its strengths and weaknesses;
- ✦ how strong leadership is at all levels of the school;
- ✦ how successful your 'track record' of improvement has been in the past; and
- ✦ how ambitious you are as a community of staff for the learners you serve.

Planning for Excellence, part 4 of *How good is our school?: The Journey to Excellence* looks in more detail at the various ways in which a school can engage in developing its vision and values, its approaches to self-evaluation and planning for improvement so that approaches can be tailored to meet the needs of the individual school.

APPENDIX 4:

A common approach across all public services

Schools are not islands. They work with other schools, colleges, employers and a number of other services to improve the quality of the curriculum for learners, to provide them with the support which they need and to help them to achieve to their highest potential.

The framework of indicators in this edition of *How good is our school?* is used by a number of public services. Education authorities use the framework as it is described in *Quality Management in Education* to evaluate the quality of the service they provide across the range of their work. The same framework is used by youth workers, by social workers and by teams of professionals working in children's services. Using the same framework provides a common language about quality which makes it much easier for everyone who works with children and young people to share their findings and to support each other in improving the experiences and achievements of young people.

HM Inspectorate of Education and other inspectorates are working towards using this common framework in all inspections. When HMI inspect schools, they will use a group of indicators selected from the overall framework. These indicators focus in particular on the outcomes and impact of the education provided by the school and the important factors which contribute to these.

The quality framework has been developed to be compatible with a number of quality models and awards, for example Investors in People, Charter Mark and the Excellence Model of the European Foundation of Quality Management, and can be used in conjunction with them. For example, the results of a Charter Mark assessment, and the evidence it was based on, can contribute to your evaluations using the quality framework, and vice versa.

The framework has been designed to be used at more than one level. For example, it can be used:

- ✦ across the whole authority;
- ✦ within a group of schools, or a neighbourhood;
- ✦ by individual schools or services;
- ✦ by individual teams or departments; and
- ✦ in relation to a specific issue or theme.

This means that the evaluations you arrive at in your school, and the evidence on which they are based, can also contribute to evaluations in other contexts. For example, they could be used in evaluating the quality of services to children within your neighbourhood. They could also be used together with evaluations from other schools, pre-school centres and teams to contribute to evaluations of the effectiveness of your education authority.

APPENDIX 5:

Evidence for self-evaluation

QUANTITATIVE DATA

There is a range of quantitative data which you can use to help you reach an evaluation. This list is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive:

- ✦ examination results
- ✦ STACS analysis
- ✦ 5-14 levels of attainment
- ✦ value-added measures of performance
- ✦ pupils' progress from prior levels of attainment
- ✦ pupils' progress in meeting targets
- ✦ overall progress towards set targets
- ✦ data collected nationally or locally
- ✦ analysis of other key performance data, such as: finance, pupil attendance, pupil exclusion rates, progression rates and leavers' destinations

PEOPLE'S VIEWS

You can ask people what they think. This list provides some suggestions for you:

- ✦ individual interviews with members of staff
- ✦ individual interviews with parents
- ✦ group discussions
- ✦ discussions with members of the pupil forum
- ✦ focus groups
- ✦ working parties
- ✦ questionnaires and surveys to gauge satisfaction and to elicit suggestions for improving effectiveness
- ✦ written responses and detailed comments
- ✦ team meetings at all levels

DIRECT OBSERVATION

You can engage in direct observation of learning and teaching. For example:

- ✦ shadow individual pupils
- ✦ follow a class
- ✦ observe lessons
- ✦ video record your own teaching
- ✦ exchange classes
- ✦ observe each other in pairs
- ✦ work alongside other teachers

You can engage in direct observation of a range of documents. For example:

- ✦ pupils' work
- ✦ reports to parents
- ✦ profiling of pupils' responses to tasks
- ✦ diaries or records of work
- ✦ programmes of study or schemes of work
- ✦ teachers' plans
- ✦ progress reports on the development plan
- ✦ course materials across the ability range
- ✦ policies and guidelines
- ✦ minutes of meetings

APPENDIX 6:

Calendar of activities

Many schools carry out regular monitoring as part of their normal activities. By drawing together all your routine monitoring in an annual calendar, you can spread it evenly throughout the year. If you also link it to quality indicators, you can use the evidence you gather for your school's standards and quality report. Here is an example of one school's calendar for monitoring.

HOW WELL DO WE DO?	FREQUENCY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
The curriculum	Annual programme			✓								✓
School attainment data		✓				✓			✓			
National qualifications and other forms of accreditation		✓				✓			✓			
Assessing, planning, monitoring and reporting progress and achievement	Six-weekly	✓		✓			✓		✓			✓
Homework diaries	Termly		✓			✓		✓				✓
Pupil jotters and classwork	Monthly sample	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Working in classrooms	Planned programme of class visits		✓			✓			✓			
Reports to parents	By stages			✓				✓				✓
Pupil progress/profiles	Termly			✓				✓		✓		
Monitoring individualised educational programmes	Termly			✓		✓			✓			✓
Attendance	Monthly	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Behaviour	Monthly	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff views	Termly			✓			✓					✓
Sampling pupils' views	Planned programme		✓			✓			✓			
Sampling parents' views	Annually							✓				
Health & safety checks	Termly			✓				✓				✓
Progress towards targets in school improvement plan	Termly	✓				✓				✓		

Although the focus, order and frequency of your own monitoring will probably differ from this example, the aim remains the same: to know your school well. If you map the results of your monitoring onto a grid of indicators, you can see the extent to which this will provide enough evidence for you to be able to report on standards and quality and whether or not you need to take a more detailed look in certain areas.

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