

Briefing note for chair of Parent Council of primary schools, including those with a nursery class and/or a special unit using the short inspection model

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1. What are the key features of the inspection?

As chair of the Parent Council, this document will support you in carrying out your role in relation to the forthcoming short inspection of your child's school by Education Scotland. A team of inspectors will visit your school for a total of two days. This will normally be carried out from Monday lunchtime to Wednesday lunchtime.

In all inspections, gathering the views of parents and carers is important to us. We consider these views carefully as a key part of the evidence during the inspection. We will want to know what you, as chair of the Parent Council, think about the school and how it is doing. A member of the inspection team (usually the lay member (LM), if there is one on the team) will meet with you usually on the second day of the inspection, to allow for a full discussion of your views. The headteacher will be asked to liaise with you to organise the time of this meeting. If you are unable to meet with a member of the inspection team, we can arrange a telephone discussion with you at a mutually convenient time during the visit.

2. What happens before the inspection?

After the headteacher has received notification of the inspection, the inspection administrator (IA) who supports the inspection will contact the headteacher to discuss the administrative arrangements. The Managing Inspector (MI) will subsequently contact the headteacher and together they will work on the activities schedule for the visit.

The headteacher is asked to inform learners, staff, parents and partners about the inspection. The headteacher should direct them to a link to an online survey to gather their views of the school.

The information we receive is confidential to the inspection team; unless there are health and wellbeing, safeguarding or child protection concerns.

The IA will invite parents and carers (from those who indicate an interest in doing so in their survey return) to attend a meeting with a member of the inspection team during the course of the inspection. There will normally be two meetings organised and will usually be arranged on the second day to coincide with parents bringing and collecting their children to and from school.

For more information about the inspection and the online survey, please visit our [About inspection and reviews](#) pages on our website or speak to the IA.

3. What happens during the inspection?

The headteacher provides a briefing for the inspection team on the first afternoon of the inspection. The headteacher summarises the school's strengths and areas for improvement, any developments that have taken place, and the differences these have made for children. The inspection team will focus on key aspects of the work of the school, taking account of its context. Members of the team will have discussions with children and staff. They will observe learning, and may also work with groups of children to explore their learning and progress. We also discuss a statistical summary of the responses to the online survey with the headteacher.

One of the inspection team (usually the LM, if there is one on the team) will arrange to meet you (most likely on the Tuesday of the inspection). The discussion will last for around 30 minutes and focus on:

- how well the school works in partnership with parents and carers;
- how well the school seeks out and acts on the views of parents and carers;
- the involvement of parents and carers in school improvement; and
- examples of impact of parental/carer voice on school improvement.

This meeting forms part of the evidence we gather about the school, and will contribute to the overall inspection evidence.

One of the inspection team (usually the LM) as stated above will also meet with a group of parents and carers. These discussions form another important part of the evidence we gather about the school, to complement the survey of parents and carers.

4. What happens after the inspection?

We prepare a draft letter, providing a brief summary of what inspectors found to be the main strengths and areas for improvement for the school. We send you a confidential draft for your comment usually within ten working days following the inspection. We also send the draft to the headteacher and the local authority. This draft letter is sent to you in strict confidence and you should not share it with anyone else, other than discussing it with the headteacher or local authority. You are invited to comment on the draft letter from a parental point of view. You will be given one working week to respond with your comment(s). It may be helpful to have a discussion with the headteacher, who may provide further information to support the inspection team's judgements, before submitting comments to the IA. We ask that even if you have no comment to make, could you please let the IA know that this is the case. Your comments will be considered, in confidence, along with those invited from the headteacher and local authority.

We aim to publish the letter on our website, within ten working weeks of the end of inspection. The IA will email the publication letter to you. We will publish a fuller document called the Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) on our website. We will have sent the SIF to the school and local authority for an accuracy check before publication. We also publish a statistical summary of the responses to the online survey where applicable on our website, except in the case of very small schools where individual members of staff, parents and carers and/or children might be identified.

If there is a Care Inspector as part of the inspection team the Care Inspectorate will also publish a report which can be accessed on the [Care Inspectorate website](#).

The Parent Council will wish to consider the outcomes of the inspection, for example by discussing these at a future meeting of the Parent Council, to establish how it can support the headteacher and wider school community in further improvement.

We hope this note provides you with all the information you need about the inspection. However, you can find further information about inspections at www.education.gov.scot.

We would also welcome feedback on your views of the inspection, to take into account as we develop our approaches to inspection and review.