

School self-evaluation guidance (optional)

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or tap to enter a date.

[Insert school name]

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Introduction

Purpose of self-evaluation: internal quality assurance as part of the wider assurance system

1. Inspection forms a part of the wider assurance framework and should not be seen as the only form of quality assurance for schools. Internal school-based quality assurance, captured in a dynamic self-evaluation and review format as part of the school's own ongoing review process, supports schools over time in their pursuit of excellence and provides assurance to governors and relevant external agencies.
2. We have received requests from schools and their associations to produce a template self-evaluation form aligned to the Framework that will support schools with this process. We are pleased to provide schools with this self-evaluation format that is designed to help leaders at all levels articulate the impact of their leadership.
3. We welcome engagement with schools and their associations in developing practice in effective internal quality assurance. We believe it is beneficial when rigorous internal and external assurance systems speak to each other. This in turn supports robust and independent external assurance through inspection which reports to the Department for Education.
4. The primary purpose of self-evaluation is to for leaders and governors to evaluate the totality of provision at a school, to provide assurance and to inform priorities for school improvement. This process can be a rich source of discussion and development within the school and should not require external facilitation or consultancy.
5. While this self-evaluation guidance is available to all schools inspected by ISI, on inspection inspectors will discuss self-evaluation in any form that the school undertakes for their own quality assurance processes. Whatever the method of self-evaluation, it is essential that proprietor(s)/governors and leaders are familiar with the requirements of the Standards and undertake regular and robust internal assurance. This document is intended to support that process.
6. Self-evaluation should be seen as a manageable, ongoing and embedded part of the school's internal assurance process so that proprietor(s)/governors and leaders can assure that their responsibilities under paragraph 34 of the Standards are met. Effective self-evaluation enables leaders at all levels to own and confidently articulate the impact of their decision making.
7. Similarly, on inspection inspectors will want to understand leaders' decision-making process in order to determine the appropriateness of leaders' knowledge and skills, and how effectively leaders fulfil their responsibilities to ensure that the Standards are met consistently. To support this, the proposed methodology in Part 2 of this guidance enables leaders to capture their ongoing decision-making processes in areas relevant to the Standards, thereby articulating the impact of their leadership at any point in time, including during inspection.
8. The summary prompt table in Part 2 is therefore designed to prompt leaders to capture current and planned impact of their decision making. It provides opportunity for leaders to capture milestones in reaching the intended outcome and record evidence of impact. Leaders may choose to use this approach to inform their discussions with inspectors prior to inspectors' evaluation of inspection evidence. Leaders should not expect that inspectors will take the self-evaluation away and read it in isolation. Self-evaluation is not evidence in itself that Standards are met.

9. We understand that this presents a different and more dynamic approach to self-evaluation from our previous framework and emphasise that this format of self-evaluation is optional. We are offering ongoing support via webinars, conference attendances and responding to FAQs to support schools at the start of, and during, the Framework cycle.
10. The Framework already provides leaders with a clear structure to demonstrate and articulate how leaders fulfil their responsibility to ensure that the Standards are met. This self-evaluation guidance follows the same structure.
11. Please refer to paragraph 22 of ISI's response to the [consultation on ISI's proposal to remove the reporting of significant strengths](#) from the Inspection Framework for association independent schools. This change is effective from 1 September 2026.
12. Schools will not be expected or encouraged to upload their self-evaluation on the ISI portal prior to or during inspection.
13. This document is downloadable as a PDF. The regulatory audit and summary prompt table are both available in Word format.

Terminology

14. For the purpose of this document 'leaders' refers to all those with leadership and management responsibility at a school. 'Proprietor(s)/governors' refers to the person or persons who has/have responsibility under paragraph 34 of the Independent School Standards to ensure that those with leadership and management responsibility:
 - (a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - (b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
and
 - (c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.
15. The Independent School Standards and other applicable standards and regulations are collectively referred to as 'the Standards' throughout this document.
16. Throughout this document 'we' refers to the Independent Schools Inspectorate.

How to use this guidance

17. This guidance has three parts:

Part 1: Regulatory audit

This part enables schools to keep and update records of training, health and safety checks, and provision of information that inspectors will request at the start of an inspection.

Part 2: Decision making and impact evaluation

This part forms the main section of the self-evaluation process. It provides proprietor(s)/governors and leaders with a structured approach to prompt questions and focus areas for self-evaluation. This approach informs ongoing evaluation by school leaders and governors of the effective implementation of decision making at the school, as required by relevant standards and regulations.

Part 3: Frequently Asked Questions

This part will have a link to the FAQ page on the ISI website and will contain self-evaluation specific questions and answers. It will be updated regularly.

18. **Parts 1 and 2** are the main focus on the self-evaluation process, with the self-evaluation methodology outlined in Part 2 demonstrating the core principles of our approach to inspection which are contained in the Framework:
- **Manageability:** ISI understands that inspection is a significant event for a school and will promote practices on inspection that, as far as possible, align with the day-to-day life of the school and do not cause unnecessary workload for the school or for the inspection team. This is why we are promoting an ongoing and reflective approach to self-evaluation. Self-evaluation should not be an exercise that is only undertaken to prepare for inspection.
 - **Collaboration:** Inspectors will seek to work alongside school leaders and staff where appropriate to do so, sharing emerging findings.
 - **Triangulation and typicality:** Inspectors will consider a range of evidence when forming evaluations on inspection. Inspectors will look for evidence of what would be typical provision for pupils at the school over time. Inspectors will consider a range of connected evidence, including school records and by confirming the context of what inspectors are seeing, hearing and reading on inspection.
 - **Proportionality:** When judging the extent to which a school meets the Standards, inspectors will exercise their professional judgement. Where there are some relative weaknesses or minor errors that can be easily rectified, inspectors will take a proportionate approach. Inspectors will consider if those weaknesses amount to a failure to meet one or more of the Standards. Weaknesses or errors which are indicative of systemic failings in the school's processes and/or provision will lead to a judgement that the relevant Standards are unmet.

Feedback

19. We reflected on questions that may and do arise from the self-evaluation process and include them in the FAQ section at the end of this document. We welcome further feedback from its use in practice via FAQS@isi.net

Part 1: Regulatory audit – records of training, health and safety checks, provision of information

Training

List here details of most recent role specific training

Roles of staff present (for example, teaching / support / pastoral)	Additional information if applicable	Date	Summary content	Provider
<i>Please see examples below for guidance</i>				
<i>Staff in the early years</i>		<i>01/01/2020</i>	<i>Food hygiene</i>	<i>Education training provider Ltd</i>
<i>Lead for operations</i>		<i>01/01/2020</i>	<i>IOSHH training</i>	<i>Provider x. Ltd</i>
<i>All fire wardens</i>	<i>2 in each building</i>	<i>01/01/2020</i>	<i>Evacuation and extinguisher drills</i>	<i>School's lead for operations</i>

Health and safety checks (safety of boarders)

Please include information for last check undertaken

Delete any rows not applicable to your school and insert rows that have not been included

Type of check	Person/company responsible	Dates
Legionella		
Other water (e.g swimming pool)		
Electrical safety (buildings)		
Electrical safety (appliances)		
Gas safety		
Trees		
Catering/environmental health		
Asbestos		
Science laboratories		
Design and technology		
Food technology		
Minibus		

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations

List here details of any reportable RIDDOR since previous inspection

Type of incident	Pupils/other involved	Date

Fire (fire precautions and drills including for any boarders)

List here details of most recent checks and drills

Type of check	Person/company responsible	Dates
Fire risk assessment		
Fire drills (for each building/boarding house)	Please include date and time for each building/house	
Alarms		
Emergency lighting		
Escape routes		
Fire-fighting equipment		
Fire protection measures		

First aid (Boarders' health and well-being)

List here details of most recent first-aid training and checks

Roles of staff present (e.g teaching/support/pastoral)	Additional information if applicable	Date	Summary of content	Provider
<i>Please see examples below for guidance</i>				
<i>All Staff</i>		<i>01/01/2020</i>	<i>First aid awareness</i>	<i>Company x Ltd.</i>
<i>e.g selected staff x 20</i>		<i>01/01/2020</i>	<i>Emergency First Aid at Work course</i>	<i>Company x Ltd.</i>
<i>15 x staff in EYFS</i>	<i>All teachers and teaching assistants</i>	<i>01/01/2020</i>	<i>Paediatric first aid (two day)</i>	<i>Company x Ltd.</i>
<i>5 x pool staff</i>			<i>Lifesaving (two day)</i>	<i>Company x Ltd.</i>
<i>25 x sports coaches</i>			<i>Concussion update</i>	<i>School nurse</i>

List here details of most recent first-aid checks

EpiPen or other related training in emergency first aid				
Check of content of first aid boxes				
Check of contents of first aid bags				
Check of accident and other records by proprietor or delegated person				
Check of storage of medicines by proprietor or delegated person				

Provision of information (+NMS 1: Statement of boarding principles and practice)

List where the information in first column is provided to parents

Information	How provided
particulars of the arrangements for meeting the standard contained in paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	<i>On website</i>
Previous ISI inspection reports (all since January 2015)	<i>On website</i>
Arrangements for RSE	<i>On website</i>
annual written report of each registered pupil's progress and attainment	
the school's address and telephone number, and the name of the headteacher ;	
either : where the proprietor is an individual , the proprietor's full name, address for correspondence during both term-time and holidays and a telephone number or numbers on which the proprietor may be contacted at all times,	
or : where the proprietor is a body of persons , the address and telephone number of its registered or principal office;	
where there is a governing body, the name and address for correspondence of its Chair ;	
a statement of the school's ethos (including any religious ethos) and aims.	

List where the information in first column is made available to parents

Information	How made available
particulars of the school's policy on and arrangements for admissions, misbehaviour and exclusions ;	
particulars of educational and welfare provision for pupils with EHC plans and pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL)	
particulars of the policy referred to in paragraph 2 (curriculum policy)	
particulars of arrangements for meeting the standards contained in paragraphs 9 (behaviour), 10 (bullying), 11 (health and safety) and 13 (first aid);	
particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations ;	
All inspection reports since January 2015	
A suitable statement of the school's boarding principles and practice	

Leadership and management

List here details of any additional training undertaken by proprietors, leaders and managers that are relevant to the ISSRs, NMS and EYFS (e.g AGBIS, BSA courses)

Roles of person	Additional information if applicable	Date	Summary content	Provider

Part 2: Decision making and impact evaluation

ISI framework sections at a glance

20. This is for reference only. The ISI Framework must be referred to in full throughout the inspection process:

ISI framework sections at a glance

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

- Active promotion of pupils' wellbeing
- Appropriate knowledge and skills
- Responsibilities fulfilled effectively
- Delivery of schools' aims and ethos
- Policies effectively implemented
- Provision of information
- Links with other agencies
- Understanding and management of risk
- Complaints handling
- Governance assures that standards are met
- Equality Act requirements

= standards are met consistently

Section 2: Education, training and recreation

- Curriculum areas/focus
 - Linguistic
 - Mathematical
 - Scientific
 - Technological
 - Aesthetic and creative
 - Speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy
- Ages, aptitudes, SEND
- Teaching enables good progress, does not discriminate
- Does not undermine FBV
- Assessment framework
- Well planned lessons
 - Effective methodology
 - Pupils acquire knowledge and skills, apply effort, act responsibly, are self-motivated
- Pupils with SEND are identified and needs met
- Recreation:
 - Programme of activities develops range of skills

Section 3: Physical and mental health, and emotional wellbeing

- Curriculum areas/focus
 - Encourages mutual respect – protected characteristics
 - Spiritual and moral understanding
 - Develops self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence
 - Physical education
 - Personal and health education
- RSE
- Behaviour
- Anti-bullying strategy
- Premises and accommodation
- Supervision
- Admission and attendance
- Health and safety
- First aid
- Boarding requirements

Section 4: Social & economic wellbeing & contribution to society

- Curriculum areas/focus
 - Human, social and economic
 - Encourages mutual respect – protected characteristics
 - Actively promotes FBV
 - Social and cultural
- Careers guidance
- Preparation for life in British society
- Active promotion of principles
 - Right from wrong
- Accept responsibility
- School's locality
- Respect for
 - Law and institutions
 - Other cultures
 - Democracy

This is for reference only. The ISI Framework must be referred to in full throughout the inspection process.

21. The table above gives an overview of Sections 1 – 4 of the ISI framework and focus areas. The inspection of safeguarding follows the requirements of the most recent statutory guidance (see [here](#)).

Guidance notes for headteachers, proprietors, governors and senior leaders

22. **Prompt questions** which the school leaders and governors may find helpful are indicated with yellow highlighter and summarised in a **summary prompt table** which can be used to capture self-evaluations at all levels of leadership in the school.
23. **Focus areas** related to sections of the Framework and associated Standards are indicated in green highlighter. It is suggested that school leaders and governors could apply the prompt questions to focus areas and capture the answers succinctly in the relevant section. Focus areas in this document are headings only and do not reference the detailed requirements of the Standards, which can be found in the Framework document.
24. Leaders must be familiar with the detailed requirements contained in the Standards and apply this knowledge to inform their evaluation process.

Use of self-evaluation on inspection

25. This self-evaluation is intended to inform **ongoing evaluation** by school leaders and governors of the effective implementation of decision making at the school, as required by relevant standards and regulations. For

example, it may be used to aid school leaders' and governors' articulation of the impact of their leadership in meetings and discussions. **Inspectors will not expect to be given the school's self-evaluation to read separately from its use as a reference point in meetings or discussions.**

Prompt questions

26. The following suggested prompt questions may be used to map and evaluate the decision making and impact relating to any area of provision referred to in the Framework. They can also be applied to specific Standards and/or other priorities that school leaders consider appropriate for close evaluation. The prompt questions are summarised as summary prompts in the right hand column for ease of reference.

Prompt questions (leaders/governors can add their own)	Summary prompts
What are we trying to achieve (be specific in terms of requirements e.g. apply to related area in ISI Framework/Standards) and current/intended impact for pupils. Leaders may find it helpful to complete this section with the sentence ' so that pupils... can / know / are able to / understand / respect / appreciate / demonstrate... ' (<i>verbs given for illustration</i>)	Aim and impact: 'so that pupils...' impact for pupils linked to framework/standards/school development aim
Where are we now? What decisions have already been made?	Where are we now? (decisions/actions already taken)
What is the current impact for our pupils? How do we know?	Current impact for pupils with evidence
Are there any unintended consequences or risks in the current situation? If so, what have we done to avoid/manage them?	Any unintended consequences? / Current risk management
What do we want to achieve? What further decisions/change are/is needed?	What do we want to achieve?
Who needs to be involved / needs to know?	Who needs to be involved?
How will we know that implementation is on track to have the intended impact ? What is our timeframe?	Timeframe/milestones
Any wider considerations needed, for example any barriers to consider ?	Unintended consequences? Potential risks or barriers?
What action do we need to take to prevent and/or manage unintended consequences, risks or barriers ?	Mitigation
Who is responsible for this aspect of the school's provision?	Who is responsible?
How and who will quality assure this? What is the reporting line?	Assurance and reporting
What is the current impact at the time of self-evaluation? What is the evidence of this?	Latest update with evidence: [date]
Ongoing reflection and self-evaluation: To reflect dynamic nature of school development – regular review and reporting within an assurance cycle. What is the latest update on progress and priorities?	Insert bullet point summary here – overview of latest self-evaluation review.

The summary prompt table: a suggested method for distributed self-evaluation

27. There is no preferred method for self-evaluation. Inspectors will be interested to see self-evaluation in whatever form the school chooses. The following **summary prompt table** is provided as a suggested method.
28. If leaders and governors choose to use the **summary prompt table** below, it can be used for each area of focus. It can form the basis for self-evaluation of a focus area and contribute to the whole school self-evaluation process.
29. Individual **summary prompt tables** may be combined into a whole-school self-evaluation document where any/all areas of focus are being evaluated by school leaders and/or assured by governors (see final row).

Summary prompts	Evaluation of focus area: [insert area of focus here]	Start date: [insert date here]
Aim and impact: 'so that pupils...' impact for pupils linked to framework/standards/school development aims		
Where are we now? (decisions/actions already taken)		
Current impact for pupils with evidence		
Any unintended consequences? / Current risk management		
What do we want to achieve?		
Who needs to be involved?		
Timeframe/milestones		
Unintended consequences? Potential risks or barriers?		
Mitigation		
Who is responsible?		
Assurance and reporting		
Latest update with evidence: [date] (copy this row for each update)		
Latest update with evidence: [date] (copy this row for each update)		
Overview of self-evaluation at: [date]		
Insert bullet point summary here – overview of latest self-evaluation review	•	
	•	

(RAG rating optional)

•

Section 1: Leadership and management, and governance

30. Read Section 1 of the Framework (pages 10 and 11) and identify focus areas for evaluation. For example, but not limited to:

Focus areas: Leadership and management, and governance	
Leaders' knowledge and skills	Links with other agencies
Leaders fulfil their responsibilities effectively	Understanding and management of risk
Active promotion of pupils' wellbeing	Complaints handling
Delivery of school's aims and ethos	Governance assures that standards are met
Policies effectively implemented	Equality Act requirements
Provision of information	

31. Copy and complete **summary prompt tables** from above as required for evaluation of the above focus areas. These tables can be distributed to leaders with responsibility for focus areas and form the basis for reflection and contribution to the whole school self-evaluation process.

Section 2: Pupils' education, training and recreation

32. Read Section 2 of the Framework (pages 11 to 14) and identify focus areas for evaluation. For example, but not limited to:

Focus areas: Pupils' education, training and recreation	
Effectiveness of curriculum in: • Linguistic • Mathematical • Scientific • Technological • Aesthetic and creative • Speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy	Assessment framework
	Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities – needs are met
	The quality of teaching and its impact on the quality of pupils' learning
	Lesson planning has required positive impact on pupils' learning
All pupils make progress	The quality of recreational activities
Provision for children in the early years (if applicable)	

33. Copy and complete **summary prompt tables** from above as required for evaluation of the above focus areas. These tables can be distributed to leaders with responsibility for focus areas and form the basis for reflection and contribution to the whole school self-evaluation process.

Section 3: Pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

34. Read Section 3 of the Framework (pages 14 & 15) and identify focus areas for evaluation. For example, but not limited to:

Focus areas: pupils' physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing	
Effectiveness of curriculum in physical education, and personal and health education	Anti-bullying strategy
Reflects school's aim and ethos	Premises and accommodation
Mutual trust and respect for others*	Supervision of pupils

Spiritual knowledge and understanding	Admission and attendance registers
Respect for protected characteristics*	Health and safety
Relationships or relationships and sex education	Administration of first aid
Pupils' behaviour	Boarding
Prefect system or equivalent	

* For the purposes of self-evaluation, leaders may choose to focus on these areas **within the school context and setting** under Section 3.

35. Copy and complete **summary prompt tables** from above as required for evaluation of the above focus areas. These tables can be distributed to leaders with responsibility for focus areas and form the basis for reflection and contribution to the whole school self-evaluation process.

Section 4: Pupils' social and economic wellbeing, and contribution to society

36. **Read Section 4 of the Framework (pages 16 and 17) and identify focus areas for evaluation.** For example, but not limited to:

Focus areas: Pupils' social and economic wellbeing, and contribution to society	
Effectiveness of curriculum in human, social and economic education	Respect for civil and criminal law, public institutions and services
Encouragement of pupils' mutual trust and respect for others*	Responsibility and right from wrong
Pupils' understanding of and respect for protected characteristics*	Contribution to the lives of those living in locality and society
Social and cultural knowledge and understanding	Respect for and tolerance of own and others' cultures and traditions
Careers advice and guidance	Respect for democratic process, balanced views and fundamental British values
Preparation for opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society	

* For the purposes of self-evaluation, leaders may choose to focus on these areas within the **wider societal context** under Section 4

37. Copy and complete **summary prompt tables** from above as required for evaluation of the above focus areas. These tables can be distributed to leaders with responsibility for focus areas and form the basis for reflection and contribution to the whole school self-evaluation process.

Safeguarding

38. **Read the latest statutory guidance contained in [Keeping children safe in education](#) and [Working together to safeguard children](#) which apply to the proprietors of independent schools, amongst others. Therefore, all areas of statutory guidance are focus areas for the self-evaluation of safeguarding. Reading and understanding the latest statutory guidance is therefore essential to the role of proprietors/governing bodies and everyone who works with children at the school.**
39. The purpose of self-evaluation of safeguarding is **to ascertain whether safeguarding practice and culture at the school are effective in meeting the requirements of the latest statutory guidance and other applicable regulations.**

40. The latest statutory guidance contained in [Keeping children safe in education](#) and [Working together to safeguard children](#) and other safeguarding regulations emphasise that **safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility** and that **everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play**.
41. Proprietors'/governors' resulting knowledge and understanding should inform the self-evaluation of safeguarding at the school.

Focus areas: Safeguarding

The requirements of the latest statutory guidance and any other safeguarding regulations applicable to the school.

42. Copy and complete **summary prompt tables** from above as required for evaluation of the culture and practice of safeguarding.

Early years (if applicable)

43. Read the section of the Framework (page 17 and 18) on early years and identify focus areas for evaluation. For example, but not limited to:

Focus areas: Early years	
Promotion of wellbeing of children in early years provision	Provision of children under the age of two in accordance with Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework
Provision of children from birth to five	

44. Copy and complete **summary prompt tables** from above as required for evaluation of the above focus areas. These tables can be distributed to leaders with responsibility for focus areas and form the basis for reflection and contribution to the whole school self-evaluation process.

Boarding (if applicable)

45. Read the section of the Framework (page 18) on boarding and identify focus areas for evaluation. For example, but not limited to:

Focus areas: Boarding	
Governance, leadership and management	Boarders' rights, advocacy and complaints
Boarding provision	Promoting positive behaviour and relationships
Health and wellbeing	Boarders' development
Safeguarding	Staffing, guardians and prefects
Health and safety	Children accommodated off-site

46. Copy and complete **summary prompt tables** from above as required for evaluation of the above focus areas. These tables can be distributed to leaders with responsibility for focus areas and form the basis for reflection and contribution to the whole school self-evaluation process.

Part 3: Frequently asked questions on self-evaluation

47. What is the relationship between the school's development plan and this self-evaluation format? There could be duplication.

Answer: Schools may adapt this approach to fit in with its existing development planning cycle, which will include some element of self-review in order to identify priorities. Development planning is by its nature future orientated, and the self-evaluation process is reflective of the previous and current situation. This process is captured in the structure of the summary prompt table included in this guidance. In using this approach with focus areas aligned to the Standards, proprietors and leaders will be supported to review the extent to which they are meeting their responsibilities to the regulator. This approach does not prevent other priorities for the school being included in development planning.

48. Can we upload it on to the ISI portal in advance of the inspection so the inspectors can read it before we meet?

Answer: No. The only part that can be uploaded at the start of an inspection (and is available separately) is the regulatory audit (Part 1). On inspection, inspectors are not going to take the school's self-evaluation away and read it in isolation. As part of the principle of collaboration, if available, it will form the basis for consideration of evidence on inspection. It will not be taken as evidence in its own right that Standards are met. It may be helpful for leaders to signpost to inspectors where the evidence is so it can be considered first hand by inspectors on inspection.