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SCAN ME

Self-evaluating Leadership and Governance

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Participate in discussion - you can use either the chat function or via your microphone. Raise your hand and we can answer your questions



Turn on your camera - our delivery partners and yourself will get more from the session when you can see each other



Mute your microphone - background noise can affect the quality of your experience and that of the group



If the call freezes; hang fire and we will be back shortly!

Learning Partnership.

Self-evaluating Leadership and Governance

Session objectives:

- ✓ To understand the main changes within the Renewed Inspection Framework, particularly relating to Leadership and Governance
- ✓ To understand how Leadership and Governance will be judged as a single evaluation and methods of quality assurance and self-evaluation you might use for this grade area.

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What's new and what's not....

NEW

- ✓ Toolkit replaces the handbook
- ✓ Report Cards with 5-point grading (no overall grade)
- ✓ Greater focus on inclusion
- ✓ ***Greater levels of collaboration, dialogue and transparency***
- ✓ ***The role of the nominee***
- ✓ ***More explicit consideration of provider context***
- ✓ ***Case sampling***
- ✓ ***No 'best fit' judgements***

NOT NEW

- ✓ The curriculum and the substance of education remains a core part of the focus of inspections
- ✓ Many familiar inspection activities remain
- ✓ ***Safeguarding remains a single outcome of 'met' or 'not met'***

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What's new and what's not....

GRADING

Exceptional

Strong Standard

Expected Standard

Needs Attention

Urgent Improvement

MAPPING GRADING

Exceptional does not directly 'map' to the former 'Outstanding'

Needs attention does not 'map' to the former 'Requires Improvement'

Urgent Improvement is the closest 'map' to the former judgement of Inadequate

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What's new and what's not....

Lens	Focus area
Leadership	Leaders' priorities, actions and the impact of these.
Curriculum, teaching and achievement	Strong foundations and subject clusters
Inclusion	Case sampling and learning walks with leaders (Eg SENCO, Inclusion, Pastoral, Attendance etc)

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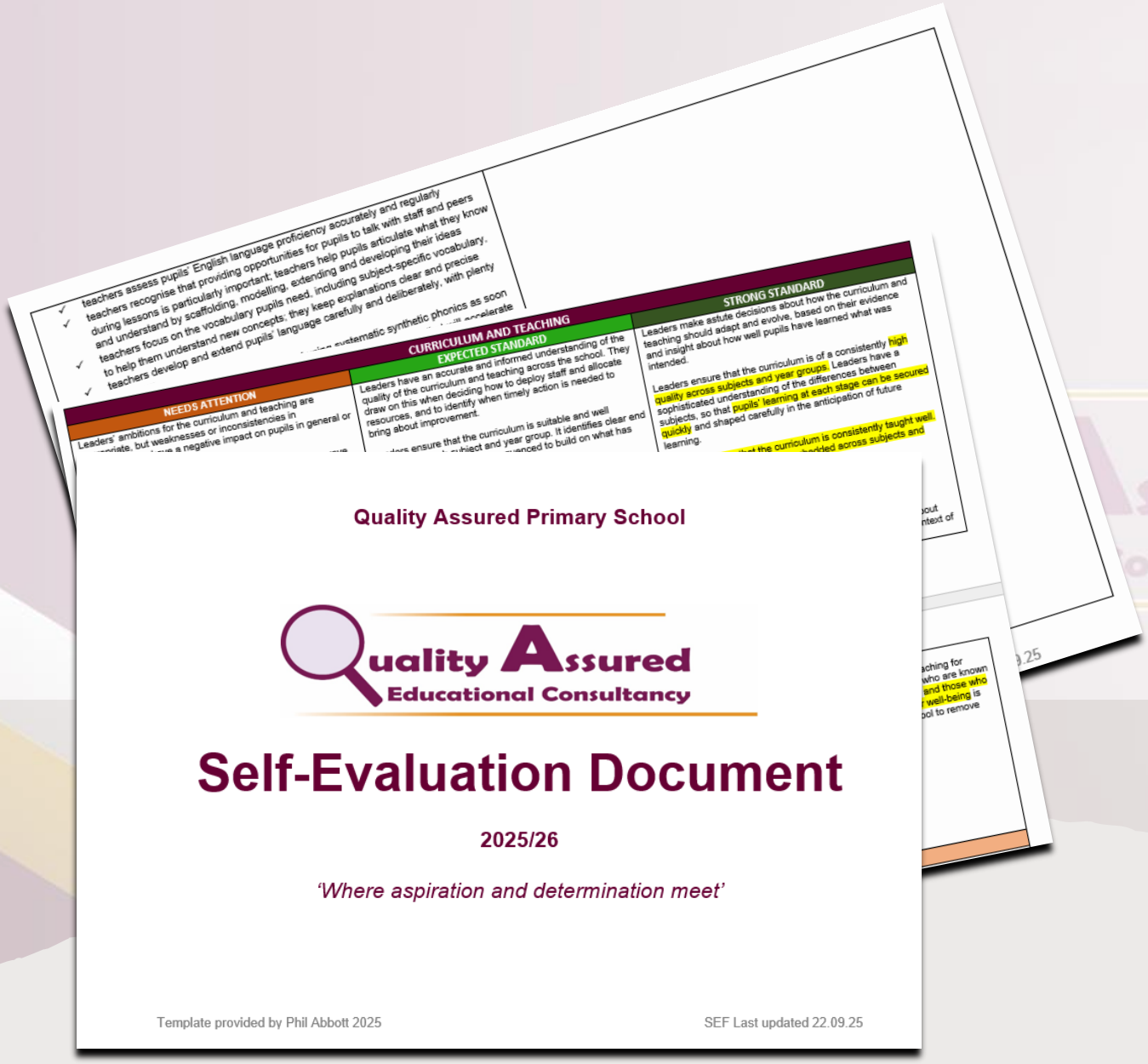
Sample SEF template for the Renewed Framework



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Sample SEF template for the Renewed Framework

Quality Assured Primary School

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Self-Evaluation Document

2025/26

'Where aspiration and determination meet'

Template provided by Phil Abbott 2025

SEF Last updated 22.09.25

CURRICULUM AND TEACHING		
NEEDS ATTENTION	EXPECTED STANDARD	STRONG STANDARD
Leaders' ambitions for the curriculum and teaching are appropriate, but weaknesses or inconsistencies in implementation have a negative impact on pupils in general or on a particular group. Leaders have only recently started to take action to improve the curriculum and teaching. While their actions are appropriate, they are at an early stage. This means it is too soon to determine the impact of this work. Leaders have considered appropriate adaptations to teaching for disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being, but these adaptations are not well matched to pupils' needs	Leaders have an accurate and informed understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching across the school. They draw on this when deciding how to deploy staff and allocate resources, and to identify when timely action is needed to bring about improvement. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is suitable and well planned for each subject and year group. It identifies clear end points and is appropriately sequenced to build on what has already been taught and learned. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is generally taught well. Teachers draw on their knowledge of pupils' needs and starting points and an evidence-informed understanding of effective teaching and how pupils learn. Leaders make sure that teachers have, or gain, the expertise they need for the subjects and phases they teach. Leaders ensure that all pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read are taught to do so through systematic synthetic phonics.	Leaders make astute decisions about how the curriculum and teaching should adapt and evolve, based on their evidence and insight about how well pupils have learned what was intended. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is of a consistently high quality across subjects and year groups. Leaders have a sophisticated understanding of the differences between subjects, so that pupils' learning at each stage can be secured quickly and shaped carefully in the anticipation of future learning. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is consistently taught well. Highly effective teaching is embedded across subjects and year groups. Teaching ensures that pupils consistently develop their language and vocabulary, both spoken and written, and increase their reading competency, across subjects. Teachers consistently make highly effective choices about what to teach, and when and how to teach it, in the context of the subject, phase and pupils' needs

Template provided by Phil Abbott 2025

SEF Last updated 22.09.25

	Leaders and staff are particularly aware of pupils who have not yet secured the necessary foundations in communication and language, reading, spelling, handwriting and mathematics. They take appropriate action to secure this foundational knowledge. Leaders and staff generally use assessment well to check understanding and make changes to teaching and/or the curriculum, as necessary. Leaders and staff are clear about the importance of high-quality teaching, supplemented with targeted academic support. Any reasonable adjustments or adaptations to the curriculum or teaching for particular pupils are generally considered and implemented carefully. EHC plans are properly considered when designing and delivering the curriculum.	The school's approach to the curriculum and teaching for disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being is implemented consistently well across the school to remove barriers to achievement for these pupils
EVALUATION OF EVIDENCE		

✓ teachers assess pupils' English language proficiency accurately and regularly ✓ teachers recognise that providing opportunities for pupils to talk with staff and peers during lessons is particularly important; teachers help pupils articulate what they know and understand by scaffolding, modelling, extending and developing their ideas ✓ teachers focus on the vocabulary pupils need, including subject-specific vocabulary, to help them understand new concepts; they keep explanations clear and precise ✓ teachers develop and extend pupils' language carefully and deliberately, with plenty of repetition teachers ensure that pupils learn to read using systematic synthetic phonics as soon as possible, so that they have access to a wide range of literature that will accelerate their understanding of English	
SCHOOL AND SUBJECT CURRICULUM	
✓ the curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced so that pupils build knowledge and skills sequentially and cumulatively ✓ time is available within the curriculum for revisiting content and dealing with gaps in knowledge and skills ✓ the curriculum has subject-specific rigour, so that pupils gain disciplinary knowledge and can answer subject-specific questions ✓ leaders and teachers have a sophisticated understanding of the differences between subjects; this informs teachers' choices and helps leaders precisely evaluate quality and take targeted actions for improvement decisions about the curriculum are refined over time, based on evidence and insight from within and beyond the school	
TEACHING	
✓ the school's approach to teaching is based on an evidence-informed understanding of effective teaching and how pupils learn ✓ teachers have expert knowledge of the subjects that they teach and, if they have gaps in their knowledge, they are supported so that ineffective teaching does not disadvantage pupils ✓ teachers have a strong, shared understanding of the school's curriculum and its approach to teaching and assessment ✓ teachers present information clearly, promote appropriate discussion, check pupils' understanding systematically, identify misunderstandings and adapt teaching as necessary to correct these ✓ teaching resources and materials given to pupils enable them to achieve the aims of the curriculum ✓ teachers teach the subject curriculum in a way that allows pupils to transfer key knowledge to long-term memory	

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SEF Last updated 22.09.25

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Self-evaluating Leadership and Governance

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THINK: What was the issue? What did we do? What is different now?

Approaches to quality assuring Leadership and Governance

Quantifying subject/ department Leader QA outcomes

Checking progress against SIP or previous inspection priorities

Analysis and evaluation of data

Evaluating the impact of CPD/ improving teaching

Inviting and responding to external validation and moderation

Examining Governor monitoring visits and reports

Examining Governor meeting minutes

Using and evaluating stakeholder Questionnaires

Quality Assuring the culture of safeguarding

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THINK: What was the issue? What did we do? What is different now?

Gaining stakeholder views for Quality Assurance

Pupil voice, including vulnerable groups

How well supported your staff feel professionally

Staff well-being and workload

Inviting and responding to external validation

How well understood your vision and expectations are?

The views of, and relationships with the local-wider-community

Parental perceptions

Examining Governor monitoring visits and reports

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Strategic Leadership (1)

In gathering evidence about the strategic leadership of Leadership and Governance, inspectors consider the extent to which:

- ✓ demonstrate consistently high standards of principled and professional conduct, and always act in the best interests of pupils
- ✓ establish and sustain the school's ethos and strategic direction, in partnership with those responsible for governance and through consultation with the school community
- ✓ have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality education to all pupils, and uphold high educational standards that prepare pupils from all backgrounds for their next phase of education and life
- ✓ ensure that the school week meets the DfE's minimum expectation of 32.5 hours per week, where applicable

Reflective questions

- ✓ What expectations of conduct do you have for yourself, other leaders and staff? How are these communicated?
- ✓ ***How do you 'act in the best interests of pupils'? What does this really mean? Can you cite specific examples?***
- ✓ In a nutshell, what is your vision for the school?
- ✓ Who was involved in conceiving this vision? How is it communicated? How well is it known and understood?
- ✓ How, in practical terms, do governors ensure that they hold leaders to account for maintaining the vision and ethos of the school? What does this look like in their regular work as governors?
- ✓ What does it mean to you to have (and hold) high educational standards? How do you bring this to life in the daily operation of the school?
- ✓ Do you meet the 32.5hours a week minimum expectation? Can you provide documentation to substantiate this?

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Strategic Leadership (2)

- ✓ establish and sustain a culture in which pupils experience a positive and enriching school life
- ✓ promote positive and respectful relationships across the school community
- ✓ take a strategic approach to improvement, in which they carefully identify the right priorities to ensure the best possible outcomes and experiences for pupils
- ✓ promote effective use of resources, including digital technologies, to support positive outcomes for pupils
- ✓ know, understand, and act within the professional standards expected of them, and meet their statutory and non-statutory duties
- ✓ make a positive contribution to the wider education system

Reflective questions

- ✓ How do you develop and support staff to ensure that daily life in school is positive and enriching for pupils?
- ✓ What do staff typically do that ensures this is the case?
- ✓ How does the curriculum, school policies and procedures promote positive and respectful relationships across school?
- ✓ What forms of QA do you use to determine strategic needs? What is this information currently telling you? (priorities and progress)
- ✓ How do you know you have chosen the correct priorities for improvement?
- ✓ How are your improvement plans brining about positive change?
- ✓ How do you ensure that digital technologies play a useful and positive role in pupil outcomes? What technologies do you use? Why have you specifically chosen these?
- ✓ How do you ensure that all leaders and staff act in a professional manner, befitting of their status and role. What formal processes do you undertake to help you do this?
- ✓ How and when do you contribute to education beyond your own school? Why do you do this?

Ofsted Inspection Toolkit 2025, p.74

Governance (1)

- ✓ are knowledgeable about their statutory duties and carry them out effectively
- ✓ support and challenge the school's leaders effectively, using the best methods to assure themselves of the quality and impact of different aspects of the school's work
- ✓ understand their role as the responsible body, where applicable, in considering and addressing leaders' workload and well-being
- ✓ assure themselves that leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's context and are prioritising the actions for improvement that will have the greatest impact on pupils

Reflective questions

- ✓ How do you ensure that Governors are aware of their statutory duties? How well do they implement these? How do you know?
- ✓ How do Governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet statutory expectations?
- ✓ ***How do Governors challenge school leaders? What opportunities do they take to question, probe and challenge?***
- ✓ ***Where is the evidence of challenge and support? How clearly and consistently is this evident?***
- ✓ What quality assurance activities do governors undertake? How do they know what to ask, or what to look for?
- ✓ What do governors understand to be the pressures of workload and well-being on leaders and other staff? What practical efforts do they make to ensure they give it due consideration?
- ✓ How well do governors articulate the current position of the school? How do you know?
- ✓ ***How well can governors describe the actions they have taken to hold leaders to account, and the positive change that has come as a result?***

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Ofsted Inspection Toolkit 2025, p.74

Governance (2)

- ✓ ensure that systems for monitoring and quality assurance are fair, valid and constructive, and provide leaders and staff with high-quality feedback to inform continuous improvement
- ✓ hold leaders to account appropriately and effectively for the impact of the school's professional learning programme for staff
- ✓ hold leaders to account appropriately and effectively for the school's support and provision for disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing

Reflective questions

- ✓ How do governors ensure that they remain strategic and not operational?
- ✓ How do they ensure that actions are formed and followed up as a result of Governor QA and questioning? Where is the evidence of this, and how effective is it?
- ✓ How do governors ensure that CPD is used effectively? To what extent do they understand the link between improvement priorities and personalised CPD? How do you know?
- ✓ Can governors articulate the training that staff have undertaken relating directly to the strategic plans of the school?
- ✓ What understanding do leaders have of the performance of pupils from vulnerable groups?
- ✓ What data and QA do they use to hold leaders to account? How do they ensure that vulnerable pupils' achievement is as good as other pupils'?
- ✓ ***What understanding do governors have of the contextual barrienrs to learning for some pupils in your school? Who are those groups of pupils who 'may face other barriers to learning'?***
- ✓ ***How frequently do governors focus their QA on the experiences of vulnerable pupils? How do they do this in real-terms?***
- ✓ Are governors able to articulate where they have held leaders to account for the performance of vulnerable groups and can they show the tangible impact of this work?

Ofsted Inspection Toolkit 2025, p.74

Staff well-being and workload

In gathering evidence about staff well-being and workload, inspectors consider the extent to which:

- ✓ leaders take account of staff's well-being and make sure their workload is manageable; they do not create unnecessary burdens
- ✓ leaders have effective systems in place to protect staff from bullying, unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- ✓ leaders make sure that all staff feel valued and are supported to do their jobs to a high standard; they ensure that staff's time is used as effectively as possible to secure the best outcomes for learners and apprentices

Reflective questions

- ✓ How do leaders account for the workload of staff? How do they ensure that they do not unnecessarily burden staff with work?
- ✓ Do staff agree that you do this well?
- ✓ Can you cite specific approaches/initiatives that show this in practice?
- ✓ What systems do you have in place to protect staff from bullying, harassment and victimization? How often are they used? Do they work? How do you know?
- ✓ ***Do staff in your school feel valued? Has this always been the case?***
- ✓ ***How do you use feedback to ensure that staff voice is heard?***
- ✓ ***Can you cite tangible approaches and initiatives you have taken on the back of staff feedback?***
- ✓ What initiatives are in place to ensure that staff use their time effectively?
- ✓ How and when do you ask staff about their well-being and workload? What do they tell you, typically?
- ✓ Can you evaluate any trends or quick improvements in well-being and workload as a result of asking staff for their opinions?

Ofsted Inspection Toolkit 2025, p.75

Professional learning and expertise (1)

In gathering evidence about professional learning and expertise, inspectors consider the extent to which:

- ✓ leaders establish a strong culture of staff professionalism, which includes a commitment from all staff to continuous improvement in their expertise and effectiveness
- ✓ leaders prioritise and participate in professional learning; they act as role models for all staff
- ✓ leaders ensure that staff have access to high-quality, evidence-informed, sustained and coherent professional learning programmes that build expertise and are aligned to balance the priorities of whole-school improvement, subjects/teams/phases and individual needs
- ✓ leaders allocate appropriate time and other resources to a coherent programme of evidence-informed professional learning for all staff

Reflective questions

- ✓ How do you determine the CPD opportunities for staff? Holistic and personalised?
- ✓ How do you structure CPD strategically? How do such opportunities link to whole school priorities?
- ✓ How do you help staff to identify, request and undertake personalised CPD?
- ✓ ***To what extent has CPD helped to improve the impact of teaching and learning? How do you know this?***
- ✓ What professional learning have you undertaken yourself? How do you decide what to undertake? Where do you source it from? Why there?
- ✓ How do you ensure that CPD can be undertaken without it being to the detriment of other staff? (cover, finance etc)
- ✓ Do you benchmark your expenditure on CPD? If so, what have you found?

Ofsted Inspection Toolkit 2025, p.75

Professional learning and expertise (2)

- ✓ professional learning includes purposeful collaboration between teachers on:

– the curriculum, teaching and assessment
– the school's vision, values and ethos
– the school's approaches to delivering the intended curriculum
– the school's approaches to attendance, behaviour and pastoral care
– the school's mathematics and English curriculums (including systematic synthetic phonics and writing)
– the demands of each subject curriculum, including for staff who are non-specialists and teach outside their subject specialism
– the necessary adaptations for disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being

Reflective questions

- ✓ How do you ensure that teachers can collaborate on developing and maintaining an ambitious and impactful curriculum?
- ✓ ***Specifically, what is better about teaching now, as a result of CPD that has been undertaken this year? In previous years?***
- ✓ What training has been given to help teachers to make accurate assessments? How have you ensured that assessments are moderated, where possible?
- ✓ How clearly do staff know their roles and expectations around behaviour and attendance? What specific training have they been given?
- ✓ How have you ensured that staff have received high-quality training in delivering maths and English? Where has this training been sourced?
- ✓ How do you support staff who are not specialists and teach outside their curriculum areas? What CPD has been made available to them?
- ✓ How have staff been trained to understand the vulnerabilities of different groups of pupils, and to find ways of reducing barriers to learning?
- ✓ As a result, where can we see the best examples of adaptive teaching?

Ofsted Inspection Toolkit 2025, p.75

Professional learning and expertise (3)

- ✓ leaders ensure that professional learning opportunities draw on the best available evidence, including high-quality research and expert provision from beyond and within the school, including nationally recognised career and professional frameworks and programmes, to build capacity and support succession planning
- ✓ leaders ensure that any early career teachers (ECTs) and any trainee teachers on placement receive the support they need to develop their teaching expertise
- ✓ leaders ensure that staff continually seek to improve their expertise, drawing on the best available evidence, including high-quality research, and the effective practice of others

Reflective questions

- ✓ Specifically, what action research do you undertake/have you undertaken recently? What has this told you and how has this been shared?
- ✓ How do you determine the best CPD providers?
- ✓ What formal qualifications have staff in school achieved in recent years? How has this impacted on their skills?
- ✓ What arrangements are in place to support ECTs? Who are your partners? How do you quality assure your offer? Do you and the provider meet their statutory duties?
- ✓ How well do ECTs feel supported? How well do they feel you meet your obligations for their training? How do you know?
- ✓ What opportunities do staff have to learn through coaching, team-teaching, sharing good practice and visiting other schools/institutions?
- ✓ How do you ensure that CPD outcomes are shared across the school where appropriate?

Ofsted Inspection Toolkit 2025, p.75

Parental, professional and community engagement

In gathering evidence about parental engagement, inspectors consider the extent to which:

- ✓ leaders, including governors, forge constructive relationships beyond the school, so that they can successfully engage and work in partnership with parents and the local community
- ✓ leaders commit the school to engaging and working successfully with other schools and organisations in a culture of mutual challenge, reflection and support
- ✓ leaders establish and maintain working relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues across other public services to improve educational outcomes for all pupils and to meet their statutory duties

Reflective questions

- ✓ ***How would you describe relationships with parents? What makes it this way?***
- ✓ ***How do you engage with parents to seek and listen to views?***
- ✓ How would you describe the relationship between leaders and the wider-community beyond the school?
- ✓ Where do you have meaningful and lasting partnerships in place within the community? What are the benefits of these?
- ✓ How do you work in partnership with other schools and organisations to challenge, reflect and support each other?
- ✓ Can you cite specific initiatives that have been implemented through this sort of collaboration, and the impact that this has had on school?
- ✓ How do you ensure that you work in close partnership with other local agencies? Which agencies do you predominantly work with?
- ✓ How does your work with local agencies improve educational outcomes?
- ✓ Which agencies do you work with to enable you to meet your statutory duties?

Ofsted Inspection Toolkit 2025, p.76

Grading leadership and governance

Needs attention	Expected standard	Strong standard
Leadership and governance are likely to be graded 'needs attention' when the 'expected' standard has not been met. **This may include when one or more of the following applies:** ■ Leaders have a broad awareness of the school's strengths and areas for development, but their actions lack precision and/or do not identify the underlying causes of any weakness and/or have unintended consequences for pupils or particular groups of pupils. ■ Leaders' actions to bring about improvement are largely focused on the right areas, but do not lead to improvement quickly enough. ■ Governors/trustees understand their broad roles and responsibilities but do not typically support and/or challenge leaders well. Their approaches to assuring themselves of the impact of leaders' work do not give them a precise picture of it. ■ Leaders are conscious of the implications any changes to practice may have on staff's workload, but they do not do enough to manage that	**Leadership and governance meet the 'expected standard' when all the following apply:** Leaders understand the school's context, strengths and areas for development. They have a clear rationale for their improvement priorities and largely take appropriate action to drive improvement across all key stages and areas of the school's work. If an aspect of the school's provision falls short of the expected standard, this is dealt with quickly and effectively. Governors/trustees ensure that the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined, take account of context, and make sure that resources, including digital technologies, are used effectively. They typically support and challenge leaders appropriately, giving due regard to leaders' and staff well-being and workload. Leaders are role models of high expectations and professionalism. Staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Leaders take action to ensure that staff and governors feel valued and involved in the strategic direction of the school.	**Leadership and governance meet the 'strong standard' when the 'expected standard' has been met and all the following apply:** Leaders provide meaningful opportunities for staff and governors to share perspectives and insights and collaborate throughout any change process. Leaders use their detailed and insightful analysis of school performance to evaluate the effectiveness of their provision. They accurately identify, monitor and act on priorities for improvement, leading to consistently strong standards across all areas of the school's work or rapid improvement in any areas where this is not the case. Leaders at all levels make a consistently positive contribution to the school's priorities and develop staff expertise as the key driver of improvement. They allocate enough time for staff to work together to achieve this. Staff understand their role in improving and sustaining standards and make a consistently positive contribution to this. Governors/trustees use their knowledge and expertise to provide consistent support and

Ofsted Inspection Toolkit 2025, p.77

Needs attention	Expected standard	Strong standard
workload or to avoid unnecessary burdens. ■ Leaders have a broad programme of professional learning and expertise, but it is overly generic or insufficiently targeted to build expertise (in terms of knowledge, skill and judgement). This limits its impact on the quality of the provision pupils receive. It provides few opportunities for purposeful collaboration or for staff to receive effective feedback on their practice. ■ Leaders have engaged with parents and the local community but this has been limited and/or not targeted appropriately.	The professional learning and expertise programme is evidence-informed, of high quality and designed to build expertise. It draws on evidence and includes planned opportunities to apply and embed practice to build an effective team of teachers and staff, including ECTs and trainees, where relevant. Leaders protect time for professional learning. Leaders support staff's well-being and ensure that their workload is manageable. Leaders have systems to protect staff from bullying, unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation. Leaders and governors develop constructive relationships with all parents and with the wider community, to build trust. They draw on these relationships to support pupils to achieve and feel that they belong. Leaders work with other schools, organisations and professionals in a culture of mutual support and challenge. Leaders act in the best interest of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being.	robust challenge to leaders across all aspects of the school's work. Leaders have achieved a culture of high expectations and professionalism, which ensures a positive experience for all pupils. Leaders have developed a highly effective culture of professional learning and expertise in which staff take responsibility for their own learning and are keen to continually improve their expertise. Leaders ensure that there is a professional learning and expertise curriculum that is informed by the best available evidence, including research, and is precisely matched to priorities for whole-school improvement, subjects/teams/phases and individual needs.

Ofsted Inspection Toolkit 2025, p.78

Takeaways

When you reflect on the past few slides, what are the main implications for you moving forward? Where do you feel you need to secure further evidence to have the assurances you need? Do you have any questions at this point?

Write your answers in the chat.

And finally…

Please follow this QR code link to the session feedback survey. If you would like to follow up anything discussed today, please feel most welcome to email me at **phil@qualityassurededucation.co.uk**

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