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Today's slides: www.qualityassurededucation.co.uk/learning-partnership

Self-evaluating Curriculum and Teaching

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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!

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Self-evaluating Curriculum and Teaching

Session objectives:

- ✓ To understand the main changes within the Renewed Inspection Framework, particularly relating to Curriculum and Teaching
- ✓ To understand how strong foundations underpin the success of our curriculum and teaching
- ✓ To understand how Curriculum and Teaching will be judged as a single evaluation and methods of quality assurance and self-evaluation you might use for this grade area.

These training materials are for the use of delegates only and should not be shared beyond your school setting

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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....

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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Why are ‘strong foundations’ so important?

- ✓ Strong foundations statistically lead to better educational attainment, health and well-being
- ✓ Communication and language skills by the age of 5 are a strong indicator for future success
- ✓ According to the *Education Policy Institute Annual Report (2025*), attainment gaps for disadvantaged pupils at EYFS (4.7 months), KS2 (10 months) and KS4 (19.1 months) show that strong foundations for the most vulnerable pupils are essential to be secured as soon as possible
- ✓ The supposition is that, if we can get early education right for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, we can get it right for everyone else



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What elements of learning do we attribute 'strong foundations' to?

- ✓ Ability to express ideas and understand others
- ✓ Fluency in reading and spoken language
- ✓ Fluency in writing, including spelling, handwriting, composition, vocabulary, grammar and punctuation
- ✓ Basic calculation and number sense
- ✓ General knowledge and Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- ✓ Executive function (i.e. attention, memory, self-regulation etc)



Strong foundations in the first years of School Ofsted, October 2024)

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How can schools effectively develop strong foundations?

- ✓ **Curriculum clarity:** define exactly what foundational knowledge is needed
- ✓ **Structured sequencing:** build fluency with scaffolding before introducing complexity
- ✓ **Adequate rehearsal time:** plan space for repetition and retention
- ✓ **Responsive teaching:** adjust pacing and class interactions based on formative assessment
- ✓ **Explicit behaviour teaching:** embed routines and persistence strategies in everyday classroom life.

Strong foundations in the first years of School
Ofsted, October 2024)

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What are the implications for secondary schools when securing strong foundations?

- ✓ Accurately identifying gaps in foundational knowledge and providing intensive interventions for reading, spelling, handwriting and number fluency
- ✓ Training staff to use impactful adaptive teaching methods and explicit instruction for foundational skills
- ✓ Using formative assessment to monitor progress and adjusting support quickly

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Strategic leadership of curriculum and teaching

- ✓ leaders have a comprehensive understanding of the quality of curriculum and teaching across the school
- ✓ the curriculum (whether adopted, adapted or constructed) covers the statutory requirements set out in the basic curriculum and is at least as ambitious in breadth and depth as the national curriculum; this curriculum is an entitlement for every pupil
- ✓ the curriculum is designed to give pupils, especially 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, the knowledge they need to take advantage of opportunities, responsibilities and experiences in later life
- ✓ leaders assure themselves that the curriculum is taught well; they identify areas for improvement and take effective action to tackle these, including through professional learning that ensures teachers develop the expertise needed to deliver the curriculum effectively
- ✓ leaders can explain how they identify significant barriers to teaching and learning and how they take action to reduce those barriers
- ✓ leaders deploy staff effectively so that all pupils have access to high-quality teaching

Reflective questions

- ✓ Where are your strongest teachers? What makes this so? Where are your weakest teachers? What makes this so?
- ✓ How have you mapped your curriculum areas against the NC? Who did this?
- ✓ ***What are the desired endpoints in specific subject curriculums? How well do pupils achieve these? How do disadvantaged/vulnerable pupils achieve?***
- ✓ What quality assurance do you undertake to test the impact of teaching? What is it telling you and how are you using this information to plan for improvement?
- ✓ What CDP has been offered for teaching staff to help them improve the impact of their teaching? What has the impact of this been? Where can we see this?
- ✓ ***How have you adapted the curriculum to ensure that barriers to learning have been reduced? Can you cite specific projects and highlight the impact of this?***
- ✓ What is your rationale for staff deployment? Who is involved in the decision making? How do you ensure that staff deployment brings the best 'value for money'?

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Ofsted Inspection Toolkit 2025, p.19

Securing strong foundations for all pupils

- ✓ for primary-age pupils (and for older pupils where necessary), the curriculum prioritises accurate and fluent word reading, spelling, handwriting and mathematics
- ✓ leaders prioritise 'keeping up' rather than 'catching up', quickly dealing with any identified gaps in pupils' knowledge
- ✓ the curriculum is designed to extend pupils' language and vocabulary, both spoken and written, and increase their reading competency across all subjects
- ✓ all pupils are explicitly taught how to communicate effectively through spoken language (oracy), articulate ideas, develop understanding and engage with others through speaking, listening and communication
- ✓ teaching of reading is rigorous and sequenced, and develops pupils' fluency, confidence and enjoyment; at all key stages, reading attainment is assessed accurately and gaps are tackled quickly and effectively, so that all pupils can access the whole curriculum

Reflective questions

- ✓ ***How confidently can you articulate how your curriculum prioritises the development of strong foundations? What does this really mean and look like in your school?***
- ✓ How are you deploying resources/adapting teaching so that pupils are supported to keep up in class, rather than catch up later?
- ✓ What systems are in place to assess the impact of the curriculum? How is the information collected used to spot and fill gaps in learning?
- ✓ ***Do you have a specific oracy curriculum, or skills continuum? How do you ensure pupils develop oracy skills across all curriculum areas?***
- ✓ Have you undertaken audits against the writing framework? If so, what is this telling you and what are your future plans?
- ✓ How does your reading curriculum support the acquisition and development of reading skills? What does this look like across different key stages? How do you ensure learning is sequenced?
- ✓ How do you identify gaps in reading? When? What provision do you put in place to ensure that such gaps are addressed? What is the impact of this?

Ofsted Inspection Toolkit 2025, p.19

Securing strong foundations for all pupils (Reception and KS1)

- ✓ the curriculum clearly identifies and prioritises the foundational knowledge and skills pupils need for later learning
- ✓ staff engage pupils in high-quality interactions to develop their knowledge and vocabulary across all areas of learning
- ✓ staff help pupils to articulate what they know and understand by scaffolding, modelling, extending and developing their ideas
- ✓ staff build pupils' emotional connection to language and help them gain awareness and control of their voices through songs, rhymes and poems
- ✓ teachers prioritise daily story time; they read aloud and re-read high-quality stories, and talk about them to build pupils' familiarity and understanding
- ✓ staff provide enough teaching and practice for all pupils to become fluent in word reading, spelling, handwriting and number facts
- ✓ staff provide enough teaching and practice for pupils to be able to count and calculate, and describe time, size and shape using correct mathematical terminology
- ✓ staff ensure that pupils have sufficient foundational knowledge to complete tasks; they provide additional teaching and practice for those who need it

Reflective questions

- ✓ ***What considerations have you given to the construction of the EYFS and KS1 curriculum specifically with regard to foundational knowledge?***
- ✓ ***How do you ensure that staff appreciate the importance of high-quality interactions?***
- ✓ ***How well do staff develop language and vocab in their interactions with pupils? Where are the best examples of this?***
- ✓ How have you decided on the rhymes, songs and poems that form your curriculum? Which have you chosen?
- ✓ What is your policy/expectation for story time? When does it happen? How well does it happen? Do pupils enjoy it? How do you know?
- ✓ How do you ensure that sufficient times is given to teaching and practice of new ideas? How have you made time for this?
- ✓ How effectively is/has handwriting been taught? What does it actually mean to 'teach' handwriting? What is the impact of your work?
- ✓ How do you ensure that pupils have sufficient time to practice counting and calculation?

Ofsted Inspection Toolkit 2025, p.13

Securing strong foundations for all pupils (KS2 and beyond)

- ✓ assessment accurately identifies any gaps in pupils' foundational knowledge in communication and language, reading, writing and mathematics
- ✓ ongoing, targeted teaching and practice are prioritised so that pupils quickly catch up
- ✓ relevant leaders and other staff are supported to develop the expertise and experience to provide effective additional support and regularly check whether this is having the intended impact

Reflective questions

- ✓ What are the systems you have in place for identifying gaps in pupil knowledge? How well are they known/articulated across staff?
- ✓ How effective are these systems at identifying gaps? How do you know?
- ✓ What is the process that is involved in planning teaching and learning to help plug these gaps?
- ✓ ***How do you use Pupil Premium to help close gaps? How do you measure the impact of each approach?***
- ✓ ***Can teachers and leaders articulate the tangible impact of targeted teaching? Do all pupils catch up sufficiently? If not, why?***
- ✓ What CPD has been provided around assessment and precision teaching? What about feedback?
- ✓ What is the impact of the above training?

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Ofsted Inspection Toolkit 2025, p.20

Securing strong foundations for all pupils (Early stages of learning English or EAL)

- ✓ leaders and teachers recognise that these pupils already speak at least one language, and do not lower their expectations of them
- ✓ 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

Reflective questions

- ✓ What is the range of languages spoken in your school?
- ✓ How do you ensure that pupils have chance to develop their first language, as well as English?
- ✓ What systems do you use to measure language acquisition for EAL pupils? How is this different from pupils with English as a first language?
- ✓ From where do you receive advice relating to language acquisition and curriculum content? What training have staff received around provision for EAL pupils?
- ✓ ***How do you ensure that EAL pupils receive the bespoke package of universal and personal support that they need to learn? What is the impact of this work, and how do you know?***
- ✓ How well do EAL pupils succeed on the programme of study, compared to other groups of pupils?
- ✓ ***How do you help EAL pupils extend their vocabulary?***

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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

Reflective questions

- ✓ How precisely planned is each subject area? Are any more embedded than others? Which?
- ✓ How have you ensured that learning builds in a logical sequence? Have you tested this out? What did you find?
- ✓ Does your curriculum offer opportunities to revisit prior learning? What does this look like? How does this help learners?
- ✓ ***Have you separated substantive and disciplinary knowledge in your curriculum? Is there a continuum for both?***
- ✓ Are staff clear as to precisely what to teach and when?
- ✓ ***In what ways do you refine curriculum content? Can you cite examples where this has had a tangible impact to pupil outcomes?***

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Ofsted Inspection Toolkit 2025, p.21

Teaching (1)

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

- ✓ 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

Reflective questions

- ✓ Which teaching approaches that you use in school are research-backed? What was the process for researching, training and using these approaches?
- ✓ ***Have you developed agreed pedagogies across some, or all subjects? Why have you chosen this way? What is the impact? Is it consistent or under development?***
- ✓ How do you support teachers to develop sufficient subject knowledge to deliver the curriculum expertly? Which areas are the strongest? Weakest? Why is this?
- ✓ How well do teachers use assessment to inform teaching? What opportunities do they use in class? How do they make formative and summative judgements?
- ✓ ***How do you check the quality of teaching? What is this telling you about the impact of the pedagogical choices teachers make in lessons?***
- ✓ Are there any weaker teachers? What are you doing to support them so that they are improving quickly?
- ✓ How well are resources used in classrooms? Are they fit for purpose? Do they precisely match the needs of all learners? How do you know? What do you do if they don't'?

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Ofsted Inspection Toolkit 2025, p.21

Teaching (2)

In gathering evidence teaching, inspectors consider the extent to which:

- ✓ teachers teach the subject curriculum in a way that allows pupils to transfer key knowledge to long-term memory
- ✓ teaching is sequenced so that new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before and pupils can work towards clearly defined end points
- ✓ leaders and teachers consider the most important knowledge and concepts that pupils need to know and focus on these; they prioritise feedback, retrieval practice and assessment
- ✓ evidence informs the school's approach to assessment; for example, assessment is used to help pupils embed and use knowledge fluently, to check understanding and inform teaching, or to understand different starting points and gaps
- ✓ any gaps in pupils' knowledge or skills are identified and tackled quickly

Reflective questions

- ✓ ***How well do pupils know, remember and do, as a result of teaching? Where is it at its strongest? Weakest?***
- ✓ How do you support less effective teachers to deliver higher-quality lessons? How successful are you at this? How do you know?
- ✓ ***Are pupils able to talk about the methods of teaching that help them to learn the best?***
- ✓ To what extent do pupils reach the intended end points of your curriculum? How do you know? Can you evaluate any differences in attainment over the past few years?
- ✓ How precisely is key vocabulary, substantive and disciplinary knowledge defined in curriculum plans?
- ✓ How precisely do curriculum plans identify opportunities to retrieve prior learning? How effectively and consistently is this done?
- ✓ How consistently embedded and impactful are the assessment systems you use? Where are your strengths and weaknesses?
- ✓ How do teachers provide opportunities for pupils to close knowledge gaps in foundation subjects? Is this done consistently too?

Ofsted Inspection Toolkit 2025, p.21

Inclusive practices in Curriculum and Teaching

In gathering evidence about curriculum and teaching, inspectors consider the extent to which:

- ✓ staff know how to identify and remove barriers to achievement for their pupils through effective curriculum design, formative assessment and adapting their practice to meet pupils' needs
- ✓ the school's approach to the curriculum and teaching draws explicitly on the best available evidence, including high-quality research relating to supporting 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 any additional adults in the classroom are deployed to enable all pupils to access high-quality teaching from their class teacher and to develop pupils' independence over time
- ✓ reasonable adjustments or adaptations to the curriculum or teaching for specific pupils' needs are well targeted and effective in reducing barriers; adaptations focus on pupils' long-term success rather than short-term fixes; leaders consider the possible downsides of any adaptations and mitigate these

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Reflective questions

- ✓ In a nutshell, how do you expect vulnerable pupils to be supported in the classroom?
- ✓ What does high-quality adaptive provision mean for you? How consistently applied is this? How do you know?
- ✓ ***Case sampling:*** What does this tell you about the quality of individual provision? Where are the strengths? Where are the areas for further development?

Ofsted Inspection Toolkit 2025, p.22

Grading curriculum and teaching

Needs attention	Expected standard	Strong standard
Curriculum and teaching 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' 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.	**Curriculum and teaching meet the 'expected standard' when all the following apply:** 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 and staff are particularly aware of pupils who have not yet secured the necessary	**Curriculum and teaching meet the 'strong standard' when the 'expected standard' has been met and all the following apply:** 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.

Ofsted Inspection Toolkit 2025, p.8

Needs attention	Expected standard	Strong standard
	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.

Ofsted Inspection Toolkit 2025, p.9

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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