

School Inspection Handbook June 2015

RE, Collective Worship, SMSC and British Values

The new school inspection framework was released in mid-June. This document will come into force in September 2015. There is a separate annexe to be found on pages 67 - 69 which details information about the inspection of RE and collective worship in all types of schools. RE remains a statutory subject until at least the age of 16 unless parents have withdrawn their children from this provision.

Paragraph 98 of the document reminds us that:

‘A school is judged to have serious weaknesses because one or more of the key judgements is inadequate (grade 4) and/or there are important weaknesses in the provision for pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, normally, inspectors will have judged leadership and management to be at least grade 3 because leaders, manager and governors will have demonstrated the capacity to secure improvement.’

SMSC still has an extremely important role to play in schools and therefore in how a school is to be judged.

Inspectors must evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the provision for pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development before making a judgement on the **overall effectiveness of the school**. The definitions for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development are given in paragraphs 132 - 135 of the handbook.

For a school to be outstanding they should be able to demonstrate that ‘the school’s thoughtful and wide-ranging promotion of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their physical well-being enables pupils to thrive.’ Whereas in a good school, ‘deliberate and effective action is taken to promote pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their physical well-being’. In a school that requires improvement ‘there are weaknesses in the overall promotion of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development’.

In a school that is judged to be inadequate ‘the judgement on the overall effectiveness is likely to be inadequate where any one of the key judgements is inadequate and/or safeguarding is ineffective and/or there are serious weaknesses in the overall promotion of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development’.

Fundamental British values, SMSC and a broad and balanced curriculum are also to be judged in the leadership and management aspect of the inspection. Other government publications have made it clear that a broad and balanced curriculum needs to include RE provision. Paragraph 137 of the handbook reminds that in the leadership and management judgements inspectors will take into account: ‘how the school prepares pupils positively for life in modern Britain and promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith’.

In the grade descriptors for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment we are reminded that in an outstanding school, ‘Resources and teaching strategies reflect and value the diversity of pupils’

experiences and provide pupils with a comprehensive understanding of people and communities beyond their immediate experience.'

SMSC receives further mention in the grade descriptors for personal development, behaviour and welfare.

In inspecting the effectiveness of the early years provision, the quality and standards in paragraph 186 Inspectors must consider;

'How well children behave, cooperate and share with each other, make friends, respect each other's differences and build their understanding and respect for different families, people and communities beyond their immediate experience'.