



National Education Inspectorate (NEI)

Promoting Excellence through Quality Inspections

Information for the Principal

This briefing note explains what information is required from the school and what will happen during the inspection. It can be used to structure discussions during the Preliminary Visit to the school.

1. Introduction

NEI is responsible for making an assessment of the standards attained by the students in our primary and secondary schools at key points during their education and to report on how well they perform or improve, as they progress through their school and learning life. The NEI is also charged with the responsibility to make recommendations to support improvement in the quality of the provision and outcomes for all learners.

NEI will inspect all schools. The inspections will seek to identify what each school needs to do to bring about further improvement.

Inspectors will evaluate the following key aspects of the school's work:

1. How well the students perform in national and/or regional tests and assessments (For infants: in relation to age-related expectations)
2. How much progress the students make in relation to their starting points
3. How well the students develop personally and socially
4. How effectively the school uses the human and material resources at its disposal to help the students achieve as well as they can
5. How well the curriculum and any enhancement programmes meet the needs of the students
6. How well the school ensures everyone's safety, security, health and wellbeing
7. How effectively the teaching supports the students' learning

8. How effectively the school is led and managed by the Board, the Principal and SMT and middle leadership

Inspectors will use a set of Inspection Indicators to help them form their judgements. The Inspection Indicators appear in full in the Handbook for Inspections.

The Inspection team will make every attempt to minimise disruption to the school and will ensure that each inspection activity is necessary for forming well-focused, relevant, well-founded judgements. All their activities will focus clearly on the evidence and evaluation required for the inspection report.

2. Key Documents

We have asked you to gather together a few key documents, if they have been developed, for collection during the preliminary visit, in either electronic or hard copy format. These are:

- The prospectus or similar publication
- The current development or improvement plan
- Any recent reports (internal or external) on the quality of any aspect of the school's work
- Information about the school's management structure, in the form of a diagram if possible
- A list of the teaching staff, showing which subjects and/or age groups they teach and any management responsibilities they have
- The school's timetable for the period of the inspection, showing clearly for each class:
 - the teacher
 - the location of the lesson
- A map showing the location of the school
- A floor plan of the school building(s) showing location of classrooms.

3. Parents' and Students' Questionnaires

We ask you to distribute a Parents' Questionnaire to a sample of the families whose children attend the school and to distribute a Students' Questionnaire to a sample of students. The questionnaire asks for parents' and students' views of the school.

Please only distribute a single copy of the questionnaire to each sample family, along with an envelope for parents to use to return it. Please make a note of the number of questionnaires you distribute and the date on which you distribute them. Please arrange for them to be returned to the school in sealed envelopes within 7 days. The envelopes must not be opened before they are delivered to NEI.

4. A base for the inspection team

The inspection team will need to use a room as a base for the entire duration of their visit. Please arrange for a room to be made available; hopefully this can be done without causing too much disruption.

Apart from having access to the usual drinks and a light snack at break time, the inspection team will not require any food or drink to be provided for them while they are at the school.

5. Samples of students' work

During the inspection we would like to look at a sample of the students' work. To help with this, please arrange for the following to be delivered to the inspectors' room on the first day of the inspection:

All the current written work in all subjects of **three students in each grade**; one student at each grade should be a high attainer; one an average attainer; and the third a low attainer.

Inspectors may ask to see other additional samples of work from other students during visits to classes. The inspectors will return all materials sampled in this way.

6. Presentation to Inspectors

On the first morning of the inspection, after having introduced the team members, the Lead Inspector would like to discuss with you your view of how well the school is performing, its key strengths and its main challenges. You may wish to prepare a brief presentation on these issues (no longer than 20 minutes) as a basis for the subsequent conversation. The presentation might cover:

- What the school does well, with supporting evidence
- The school's main priorities for the coming year or so, and why they are important

- Any particular features of the school, and the context in which it works, that the inspectors should understand and take account of.

7. Visits to lessons

Teachers can expect inspectors to visit lessons at any time during the inspection period. Inspectors will use the visits to evaluate the students' progress and the overall quality of learning and teaching across the school. They will not make formal judgements about the performance of individual teachers.

The number of teachers visited during an inspection will vary according to the size of the school. Not all teachers will necessarily be visited, while some who teach key subjects inspected are likely to be visited more than once.

Inspectors may not always join a class at the start of a lesson or stay until the end. This is particularly likely in the case of longer lessons, where visits to two classes may take place within a single timetabled period.

Inspectors will take brief notes during lessons in order to have a written record of their observations. In observing lessons, inspectors take particular account of the impact of the teaching on the students' learning and the progress they make.

Because of the pressure of time on inspection teams, inspectors will only offer teachers brief individual feedback on their lessons if requested by the teachers.

NEI has prepared a separate information sheet for teachers. We suggest that you distribute it widely among the staff.

8. Interviews

The team will wish to interview key members of staff. Please complete the 'Meetings with Key School Personnel' form and give it to the Lead Inspector on the first morning of the inspection.

Meetings on the first or last days of the inspection should be avoided if possible.

In addition, inspectors may engage staff in discussion of professional issues, as opportunities arise in the inspection. Following class visits, they may engage in a brief discussion with teachers about the content of the lesson and the students' responses.

Information from interviews and discussions will be used in making evaluations and in preparing the published report. However, inspectors will not quote individual comments in the report and will not disclose comments from or about identifiable individuals unless that is necessary to prevent or investigate serious concerns about the security or safety of students.

9. Feedback at the end of the inspection

On the final day of the inspection the Lead Inspector will give oral feedback on the inspection outcomes to the school's leadership team and members of the governing board, if desired. The Lead Inspector will confirm the arrangements and timing for the feedback early in the inspection visit.

The oral feedback session is likely to take 45 minutes to an hour. It will include a summary of the main inspection findings and will indicate the inspectors' key recommendations for further improvement. Inspectors will provide any clarification requested.

10. The inspection report

After the inspection, the Lead Inspector will write a report containing the considered views of the inspection team. NEI will send a draft copy of the report to the Principal to check its factual accuracy before a final version is produced.

11. NEI contact details

Address for e-mail taneesha.jackson@nei.org.jm

Telephone number **922-8018**

Ask for **Miss Taneesha Jackson**

Address for delivery of documents and other items:

National Education Inspectorate

56 Duke Street, Kingston

Mark for the attention of **Miss Taneesha Jackson**