

Grade descriptors – overall effectiveness: the quality of education provided in the school

Note: These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach, which relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team. The exception is that teaching must be outstanding for overall effectiveness to be outstanding.

Outstanding (1)

- Teaching is outstanding and, together with a rich and relevant curriculum, contributes to outstanding learning and achievement, significant growth in students' knowledge, and excellent attitudes to learning. Exceptionally, achievement may be good and rapidly improving.
- Pupils, and particular groups of pupils, have excellent educational experiences at school and these ensure that they are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
- There is excellent practice which ensures that all pupils have high levels of literacy appropriate to their age.³¹
- The school's practice consistently reflects the highest expectations of staff and the highest aspirations for pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Best practice is spread effectively in a drive for continuous improvement.
- Other principal aspects of the school's work are good or outstanding.
- The school's thoughtful and wide-ranging promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their physical wellbeing enables them to thrive in a supportive, highly cohesive learning community.

Good (2)

- Pupils benefit from teaching that is at least good and some that is outstanding. This leads to growth in students' knowledge, promotes very positive attitudes to learning and ensures that pupils' achievement is at least good.
- Pupils and particular groups of pupils have highly positive educational experiences at school that ensure that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment.
- Pupils' progress is not held back by an inability to read accurately and fluently. Those pupils who have fallen behind are being helped to make rapid progress in their reading.
- The school takes effective action to enable most pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, to reach their potential.
- Other principal aspects of the school's work are likely to be at least good.
- Deliberate and effective action is taken to create a cohesive learning community through the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and their physical wellbeing. There is a positive climate for learning.

Requires improvement (3)

- The school requires improvement because one or more of the four key judgements requires improvement (grade 3) and/or there are weaknesses in the overall provision for pupils' spiritual,

³¹ Pupils whose cognitive ability is such that their literacy skills are likely to be limited make excellent progress appropriate to their age and capabilities.

Grade descriptors – Achievement of pupils at the school

Note: These descriptors should not to be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach which relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Outstanding (1)

- From each different starting point³⁷, the proportions of pupils making expected progress³⁸ and the proportions exceeding expected progress in English and in mathematics are high compared with national figures. For pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support, the proportions are similar to, or above, those for other pupils in the school or are rapidly approaching them.
- Pupils make rapid and sustained progress throughout year groups across many subjects, including English and mathematics, and learn exceptionally well.
- The achievement of pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support at least matches that of other pupils in the school or has risen rapidly, including in English and mathematics.
- Pupils read widely, and often across all subjects to a high standard.
- Pupils develop and apply a wide range of skills to great effect in reading, writing, communication and mathematics. They are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment.
- Pupils, including those in the sixth form and those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, acquire knowledge quickly and develop their understanding rapidly in a wide range of different subjects across the curriculum.
- The learning of groups of pupils, particularly those who are disabled, those who have special educational needs, those for whom the pupil premium provides support, and the most able is consistently good or better.
- The standards of attainment of almost all groups of pupils are likely to be at least in line with national averages with many pupils attaining above this. In exceptional circumstances, an outstanding grade can be awarded where standards of attainment of any group of pupils are below those of all pupils nationally, but the gap is closing rapidly, as shown by trends in a range of attainment indicators. This may include attainment in reading.

Good (2)

- From each different starting point, the proportions of pupils making expected progress, and the proportions exceeding expected progress, in English and in mathematics are close to or above national figures. For pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support, the proportions are similar to, or above, those for other pupils in the school or are improving.
- Progress across year groups in a wide range of subjects, including English and mathematics, is consistently strong and evidence in pupils' work indicates that they achieve well.
- The achievement of pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support at least matches that

³⁷ Starting points at Key Stage 1 include Levels W (and P levels), 1, 2c, 2b, 2a and 3; starting points at Key Stage 2 include Levels W (and P levels), 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

³⁸ Expected progress is defined by the government as two National Curriculum levels of progress between Key Stages 1 and 2 and three National Curriculum levels of progress between Key Stages 2 and 4. From 2013, expected progress data between Key Stages 1 and 2 in English will be provided separately for reading and writing, but no longer aggregated for English. Expected progress for pupils attaining below Level 1 of the National Curriculum at the end of Key Stages 1 or 2 is explained in *Subsidiary guidance*.

of other pupils in the school or is rising, including in English and mathematics.

- Pupils read widely and often.
- Pupils acquire knowledge and develop understanding quickly and securely in a wide range of subjects. They develop and apply a wide range of skills, in reading, writing, communication and mathematics. This ensures that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment.
- The learning of groups of pupils, particularly those who are disabled, those who have special educational needs, those for whom the pupil premium provides support and the most able, is generally good.
- Where attainment, including attainment in reading in primary schools, is low overall, it is improving at a faster rate than nationally, over a sustained period.

Requires improvement (3)

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement as it is not good.

Inadequate (4)

Achievement is likely to be inadequate if any of the following apply.

- From their different starting points, the proportions of pupils making expected progress, and the proportions exceeding expected progress, in English or in mathematics are consistently below national figures and show little or no improvement.
- For pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support, the proportions making and exceeding expected progress from the different starting points in English or in mathematics are consistently well below those of other pupils and show little or no improvement.
- Pupils' learning and progress in any key subject³⁹ or key stage, including the sixth form or the Early Years Foundation Stage, indicate they are underachieving.
- Groups of pupils, particularly disabled pupils and/or those who have special educational needs and/or those for whom the pupil premium provides support, and/or the most able, are underachieving.
- Pupils' communication skills (including reading and/or writing) or proficiency in mathematics are not sufficiently strong for them to succeed in the next stage of education, training or employment.
- Attainment is consistently below floor standards⁴⁰ or is in decline and shows little, fragile or inconsistent improvement.
- There are wide gaps in the attainment and/or the learning and progress of different groups.

³⁹ 'Key' subjects in primary schools are English and mathematics. In secondary schools they are English, mathematics, science and any specialist school subjects and/or GCSE subjects with very high levels of entry.

⁴⁰ Floor standards refer to the expected levels of performance set by the government in relation to standards of attainment at Key Stages 2 and 4 and the proportion of pupils exceeding the threshold for the number of National Curriculum levels of progress made in English and mathematics between Key Stages 1 and 2 or between Key Stages 2 and 4. Current figures are given in *Subsidiary guidance*.

Grade descriptors⁴² – Quality of teaching in the school

Note: These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach which relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Outstanding (1)

- Much of the teaching in all key stages and most subjects is outstanding and never less than consistently good. As a result, almost all pupils currently on roll in the school, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, those for whom the pupil premium provides support and the most able, are making rapid and sustained progress.
- All teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils. They plan and teach lessons that enable pupils to learn exceptionally well across the curriculum.
- Teachers systematically and effectively check pupils' understanding throughout lessons, anticipating where they may need to intervene and doing so with notable impact on the quality of learning.
- The teaching of reading, writing, communication and mathematics is highly effective and cohesively planned and implemented across the curriculum.
- Teachers and other adults authoritatively impart knowledge to ensure students are engaged in learning, and generate high levels of commitment to learning across the school.
- Consistently high quality marking and constructive feedback from teachers ensure that pupils make rapid gains.
- Teachers use well-judged and often imaginative teaching strategies, including setting appropriate homework that, together with clearly directed and timely support and intervention, match individual needs accurately. Consequently, pupils learn exceptionally well across the curriculum.

Good (2)

- Teaching in most subjects, including English and mathematics, is usually good, with examples of some outstanding teaching. As a result, most pupils and groups of pupils on roll in the school, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, those for whom the pupil premium provides support and the most able, make good progress and achieve well over time.
- Teachers have high expectations. They plan and teach lessons that deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding and enable them to develop a range of skills across the curriculum.
- Teachers listen to, carefully observe and skilfully question pupils during lessons in order to reshape tasks and explanations to improve learning.
- Reading, writing, communication and mathematics are taught effectively.
- Teachers and other adults create a positive climate for learning in their lessons and pupils are interested and engaged.
- Teachers assess pupils' learning and progress regularly and accurately at all key stages, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They ensure that pupils know how well they have done and what they need to do to improve.
- Effective teaching strategies, including setting appropriate homework, and appropriately targeted support and intervention are matched well to most pupils' individual needs, including

⁴² These grade descriptors describe the quality of teaching in the school as a whole, taking account of evidence over time. While they include some characteristics of individual lessons, they are not designed to be used to judge individual lessons.

those most and least able, so that pupils learn well in lessons.

Requires improvement (3)

- Teaching requires improvement as it is not good.

Inadequate (4)

Teaching is likely to be inadequate where **any** of the following apply:

- As a result of weak teaching over time, pupils or particular groups of pupils, including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, those for whom the pupil premium provides support and the most able, are making inadequate progress.
- Pupils cannot communicate, read, write, or apply mathematics as well as they should.
- Teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations and teaching over time fails to engage or interest particular groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Learning activities are not sufficiently well matched to the needs of pupils.

Grade descriptors – Quality of leadership in, and management of, the school

Note: These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach which relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

Outstanding (1)

- The pursuit of excellence in all of the school's activities is demonstrated by an uncompromising and highly successful drive to strongly improve, or maintain, the highest levels of achievement and personal development for all pupils over a sustained period of time.
- All leaders and managers, including those responsible for governance, are highly ambitious for the pupils and lead by example. They base their actions on a deep and accurate understanding of the school's performance, and of staff and pupils' skills and attributes.
- Governors, or those with a similar responsibility, stringently hold senior leaders to account for all aspects of the school's performance.
- There are excellent policies underpinning practice that ensures that pupils have high levels of literacy, or pupils are making excellent progress in literacy.
- Leaders focus relentlessly on improving teaching and learning and provide focused professional development for all staff, especially those that are newly qualified and at an early stage of their careers. This is underpinned by searching performance management that encourages, challenges and supports teachers' improvement. As a result, teaching is outstanding, or at least consistently good and improving.
- The school's curriculum promotes and sustains a thirst for knowledge and a love of learning. It covers a wide range of subjects and provides opportunities for academic, technical and sporting excellence. It has a very positive impact on all pupils' behaviour and safety, and contributes very well to pupils' academic achievement, their physical wellbeing, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school's actions have secured improvement in achievement for those supported by the pupil premium, which is rising rapidly, including in English and mathematics.
- The school has highly successful strategies for engaging with parents to the benefit of pupils, including those who find working with the school difficult.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.
- Staff model professional standards in all of their work and demonstrate high levels of respect and courtesy for pupils and others.
- Through highly effective, rigorous planning and controls, governors ensure financial stability, including the effective and efficient management of financial resources such as the pupil premium funding. This leads to the excellent deployment of staff and resources to the benefit of all groups of pupils.

Good (2)

- Key leaders and managers, including those responsible for governance, consistently communicate high expectations and ambition.
- Teaching is good and/or improving strongly as a result of accurate monitoring, effective performance management and professional development, which are closely matched to the needs of the school and staff.
- Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate, and the school's actions are carefully planned, concerted and effective.
- The well-thought-out policies ensure that pupils make at least good progress in literacy.
- Governors, or those in a similar position, systematically challenge senior leaders. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have improved, or previous good performance in these areas has been consolidated.

- The school's curriculum encourages a thirst for knowledge and a love of learning. It covers a range of subjects and provides opportunities for academic, technical and sporting excellence and contributes well to pupils' academic achievement, their physical wellbeing and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It promotes positive behaviour and a good understanding of safety matters.
- The school's actions have secured improvement in achievement for those supported by the pupil premium, which is rising, including in English and mathematics.
- The school works well with parents, including those who might find working with the school difficult, to achieve positive benefits for pupils.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.
- Governors ensure the efficient management of financial resources. This leads to the effective deployment of staff and resources.

Requires improvement (3)

- Leadership and management require improvement because they are not good but are demonstrating the capacity to secure improvement in the school.

Inadequate (4)

Leadership and management are likely to be inadequate if **any** of the following apply.

- Capacity for securing further improvement is limited because current leaders and managers have been ineffective in securing essential improvements.
- Improvements which have been made are unlikely to be sustainable, too slow or are dependent on external support.
- Self-evaluation lacks rigour and is inaccurate in its conclusions so that leadership and management do not have a realistic view of outcomes or provision.
- Leadership is not doing enough to ensure good teaching for all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Leaders and managers are not taking sufficiently effective steps towards securing good behaviour from all pupils and a consistent approach to the management of challenging behaviour.
- The curriculum fails to meet the needs of pupils or particular groups of pupils, or pupils are entered for public examinations inappropriately early, and pupils' achievement, physical wellbeing and enjoyment of learning are significantly impaired.
- The progress in English or in mathematics of pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support is falling further behind the progress of the other pupils with similar prior attainment in the school.
- Poor literacy is not being tackled urgently and this is impeding pupils' progress.
- Governors are not sufficiently diligent in holding the school to account for pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching and the effective and efficient deployment of resources.
- The school's strategies for engaging with parents are weak and parents express little confidence in the school.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not meet statutory requirements and give serious cause for concern, or insufficient action has been taken to remedy weaknesses following a serious incident.