

# Cegnet Inspecting Careers Advice and Guidance in Schools

Ofsted has a number of ways of reporting evidence on how well schools and colleges<sup>i</sup> are providing careers advice and guidance for young people including:

- Surveys, e.g. *Going in the Right Direction?* (2013) asked how well schools are responding to the new duty to provide access to independent and impartial careers guidance for pupils in Y9-11. Read the report [here](#). (The duty has since been extended to include Y8-13)
- Speeches and reports, e.g. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector Sir Michael Wilshaw's speech to launch Ofsted's 2013/14 annual reports criticised the school system for tolerating “too much threadbare careers advice”. Read the speech [here](#).
- School and college inspections. The arrangements for the inspection of careers advice and guidance have been strengthened in the new framework from September 2015.

## The new Common Inspection Framework (September 2015)

For the new inspection documents and an explanation of all the changes, click [here](#).

As expected, the criteria for the inspection of careers in Section 5 school inspections from September 2015 have been strengthened.<sup>ii</sup> However, schools should not rely on inspection to externally validate their provision as many outstanding and good schools will only be inspected infrequently and for a short duration.<sup>iii</sup>

When making their judgement on the effectiveness of leadership and management, inspectors will consider “the design, implementation and evaluation of the curriculum, ensuring breadth and balance and its impact on pupils’ outcomes and their personal, development, behaviour and welfare” (para 138). In order to make their judgement about **personal development, behaviour and welfare** and **outcomes for pupils**, inspectors will examine the effectiveness of careers advice and guidance. The inspection of careers advice and guidance, therefore, will impact significantly on the grades for personal development, behaviour and welfare and outcomes for pupils which in turn will contribute to the grades for the effectiveness of leadership and management and overall effectiveness<sup>iv</sup>.

### Extract from ‘Grade descriptors for personal development, behaviour and welfare’ (p.52-3).

- Schools may be awarded outstanding, good, requires improvement or inadequate.
- The handbook describes careers criteria (emphasised in bold) for the ‘outstanding’ and ‘good’ grades.
- Note that grade descriptors are not a checklist. Inspectors adopt a ‘best fit’ approach that relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

### Outstanding (1)

- Pupils are confident, self-assured learners. Their excellent attitudes to learning have a strong, positive impact on their progress. They are proud of their achievements and of their school.
- Pupils discuss and debate issues in a considered way, showing respect for others' ideas and points of view.
- **In secondary schools, high quality, impartial careers guidance helps pupils to make informed choices about which courses suit their academic needs and aspirations. They are prepared for the next stage of their education, employment, self-employment or training.**
- **Pupils understand how their education equips them with the behaviours and attitudes necessary for success in their next stage of education, training or employment and for their adult life.**
- Pupils value their education and rarely miss a day at school. No groups of pupils are disadvantaged by low attendance. The attendance of pupils who have previously had exceptionally high rates of absence is rising quickly towards the national average.
- Pupils' impeccable conduct reflects the school's effective strategies to promote high standards of behaviour. Pupils are self-disciplined. Incidences of low-level disruption are extremely rare.
- For individuals or groups with particular needs, there is sustained improvement in pupils' behaviour. Where standards of behaviour were already excellent, they have been maintained.
- Pupils work hard with the school to prevent all forms of bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based bullying.
- Staff and pupils deal effectively with the very rare instances of bullying behaviour and/or use of derogatory or aggressive language.
- The school's open culture actively promotes all aspects of pupils' welfare. Pupils are safe and feel safe at all times. They understand how to keep themselves and others safe in different situations and settings. They trust leaders to take rapid and appropriate action to resolve any concerns they have.
- Pupils can explain accurately and confidently how to keep themselves healthy. They make informed choices about healthy eating, fitness and their emotional and mental well-being. They have an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships and are confident in staying safe from abuse and exploitation.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe online and of the dangers of inappropriate use of mobile technology and social networking sites.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development equips them to be thoughtful, caring and active citizens in school and in wider society.

### Good (2)

- Pupils are confident and self-assured. They take pride in their work, their school and their appearance.
- Pupils' attitudes to all aspects of their learning are consistently positive. These positive attitudes have a good impact on the progress they make.
- Pupils show respect for others' ideas and views.
- **In secondary schools, pupils use impartial careers guidance to make choices about the next stage of their education, employment, self-employment or training.**

- Pupils are punctual and prepared for lessons. They bring the right equipment and are ready to learn.
- Pupils value their education. Few are absent or persistently absent. No groups of pupils are disadvantaged by low attendance. The attendance of pupils who have previously had exceptionally high rates of absence is showing marked and sustained improvement.
- Pupils conduct themselves well throughout the day, including at lunchtimes.
- The school is an orderly environment. Pupils respond quickly to instructions and requests from staff, allowing lessons to flow smoothly and without interruption. Low-level disruption is rare.
- Pupils' good conduct reflects the school's efforts to promote high standards. There are marked improvements in behaviour for individuals or groups with particular behavioural needs.
- Parents, staff and pupils have no well-founded concerns about personal development, behaviour and welfare.
- Teachers and other adults are quick to tackle the rare use of derogatory or aggressive language and always challenge stereotyping.
- Teachers and other adults promote clear messages about the impact of bullying and prejudiced behaviour on pupils' well-being. Pupils work well with the school to tackle and prevent the rare occurrences of bullying.
- The school's open culture promotes all aspects of pupils' welfare. Pupils are safe and feel safe. They have opportunities to learn how to keep themselves safe. They enjoy learning about how to stay healthy and about emotional and mental health, safe and positive relationships and how to prevent misuse of technology.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensures that they are prepared to be reflective about and responsible for their actions as good citizens.

**Extract from 'Grade descriptors for outcomes for pupils' (p.)**

Inspectors make a judgement on academic and other learning outcomes for pupils by evaluating the extent to which all pupils:

- progress well from their different starting points and achieve or exceed standards expected for their age nationally (at the end of a key stage), or within the school's own curriculum
- attain relevant qualifications so that they can and do progress to the next stage of their education into courses that lead to higher level qualifications or into jobs that meet local and national needs.

**Outstanding (1)**

- Throughout each year group and across the curriculum, including in English and mathematics, current pupils make substantial and sustained progress, developing excellent knowledge, understanding and skills, considering their different starting points.
- The progress across the curriculum of disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs currently on roll matches or is improving towards that of other pupils with the same starting points.
- Pupils are typically able to articulate their knowledge and understanding clearly in an age-appropriate way. They can hold thoughtful conversations about them with each other and adults.
- Pupils read widely and often across subjects to a high standard, with fluency and comprehension appropriate to their age. Pupils in Year 1 achieve highly in the national phonics check.
- For pupils generally, and specifically for disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who

have special educational needs, progress is above average across nearly all subject areas.

- From each different starting point, the proportions of pupils making and exceeding expected progress in English and in mathematics are high compared with national figures. The progress of disadvantaged pupils matches or is improving towards that of other pupils nationally.
- The attainment of almost all groups of pupils is broadly in line with national averages or, if below these, it is improving rapidly.
- **Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment and have attained relevant qualifications. Compared with the national average for all pupils, higher proportions of pupils and of disadvantaged pupils, progress on to a range of higher and further education establishments, apprenticeships, employment or training. These destinations strongly support their career plans.**

#### **Good (2)**

- Across almost all year groups and in a wide range of subjects, including in English and mathematics, current pupils make consistently strong progress, developing secure knowledge, understanding and skills, considering their different starting points.
- In a wide range of subjects, the progress of disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs currently on roll is close to or is improving towards that of other pupils with the same starting points.
- Pupils read widely and often, with fluency and comprehension appropriate to their age. A very large majority of pupils in Year 1 achieve the expected standard in the national phonics check.
- Pupils' progress is above average or improving across most subject areas. Overall progress of disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average or improving.
- From different starting points, the proportions of pupils making and exceeding expected progress in English and in mathematics are close to or above national figures. The progress of the very large majority of disadvantaged pupils is similar to or improving in relation to other pupils nationally.
- Where attainment overall is low, it shows consistent improvement.
- **Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment and have attained relevant qualifications. The proportion of pupils progressing to higher and further education establishments, apprenticeships, employment or training is close to or above average. These pupils do so at a level suitable to meet appropriate career plans.**

#### **Requires improvement (3)**

- Outcomes are not yet good.

#### **Inadequate (4)**

Outcomes are likely to be inadequate if one or more of the following applies.

- Progress in any key subject or key stage indicates that pupils are underachieving considerably.
- From their different starting points, the proportions of pupils in different year groups making or exceeding expected progress in English or in mathematics are consistently low and show little or no improvement.
- For disadvantaged pupils, the proportions making or exceeding expected progress from their different starting points in English or in mathematics are consistently well below those of other pupils nationally and show little or no improvement.
- There are wide gaps in the progress and/or attainment of different groups and these are not improving.
- The school's performance regularly falls below the floor standards. Any improvement is insufficient, fragile or inconsistent.
- **Pupils' proficiency in reading, writing or mathematics is not sufficiently strong for them to succeed in the next year or stage of education, or in training or employment.**
- **Pupils have not attained the qualifications appropriate for them to progress on to their next stage of education, training or employment.**

### Extract from grade descriptors for inspecting the effectiveness of the 16 to 19 study programmes

Inspectors are required to write a section in the inspection report that summarises the effectiveness of the 16 to 19 study programmes and to provide a grade for it.

Inspectors will consider how well:

- leaders promote high expectations and use rigorous systems to drive improvement, including through monitoring and developing the quality of 16 to 19 provision and improving the progress and achievement of learners and groups of learners
- study programmes for each learner are planned and managed so that they meet fully the principles of the DfE's 16 to 19 study programmes by providing progression, stretch, mathematics and English for all learners without GCSE grades A\* to C, as well as work experience and non-qualification activities
- teaching and assessment support and challenge learners
- study programmes build on each learner's prior attainment and enable them to make progress and move on to a higher level of qualification when they are ready to do so
- **learners receive high quality impartial careers guidance that prepares them for their chosen next steps and enables them to make well-informed decisions about their future plans**
- **learners develop personal, social, employability and independent learning skills and achieve high levels of punctuality, attendance and conduct, including through the contribution of non-qualification or enrichment activities and/or work experience**
- learners understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy, both physically and emotionally
- learners, and groups of learners, make progress from their different starting points, remain on their study programme, achieve their core aim and make progress towards a GCSE grade C in English and/or mathematics if they do not already have one
- **learners, and groups of learners, progress to the planned next stage in their careers, such as a higher level of education or training, or to employment or an apprenticeship**
- the 16 to 19 interim minimum standards are met where applicable.

### Outstanding (1)

- Leaders pursue excellence. They improve provision and outcomes rapidly and reduce achievement gaps between groups by monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment as well as learners' retention, progress and skill development.
- **Leaders plan, manage and evaluate study programmes so that learners undertake highly individualised and challenging learning that builds on their prior attainment, meets all the requirements of 16 to 19 provision and prepares them very well for future employment.**
- Learners without GCSE grades A\* to C in either English or mathematics follow appropriately tailored courses in English and/or mathematics. The considerable majority make substantial and sustained progress towards grade C or above.
- **High quality impartial careers guidance ensures that learners follow study programmes that build on their prior attainment and enable them to develop clear, ambitious and realistic plans for their future. Learners understand the options available and are informed about local and national skills needs.**
- Teaching, learning and assessment support and challenge learners to make sustained and substantial progress in all aspects of their study programme. Teaching enables learners who fall behind to catch up swiftly and the most able to excel.
- **Learners are confident and conduct themselves well. They are punctual. They have excellent personal, social and employability skills and undertake high quality non-qualification activities and work experience that matches their needs. Attendance rates are high.**
- Learners are safe and feel safe. They are thoughtful, caring and respectful citizens. They take responsibility for keeping themselves safe and healthy and contribute to wider society and life in Britain.

- Throughout the time spent on their study programmes, learners and groups of learners make substantial and sustained progress from their starting points. Rates of retention are high for almost all groups of learners. Any gaps in the progress or retention of groups with similar starting points are closing.
- **Almost all learners progress swiftly to higher levels during their study programme. Almost all learners complete their study programmes, achieve qualifications relevant to their career aims and move on to sustained education, employment, training or an apprenticeship.**
- Progress on level 3 qualifications in terms of value added is above average across nearly all subjects.

#### Good (2)

- Leaders have high expectations. They improve provision and reduce achievement gaps between groups by monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and learners' retention, progress and skill development.
- **Leaders plan and manage individualised study programmes that build on learners' prior attainment, meet all the requirements of 16 to 19 provision and prepare them well for future employment.**
- Learners without GCSE grades A\* to C in either English or mathematics follow relevant courses in English and/or mathematics. Many make progress towards grade C.
- **Impartial careers guidance ensures that learners undertake study programmes that build on their prior attainment and enables them to develop clear and realistic plans for their future.**
- Teaching, learning and assessment support and challenge learners so that they make strong progress across all aspects of their study programmes. Learners who fall behind are helped to catch up and the most able are stretched.
- **Learners develop personal, social and employability skills, including through high quality non-qualification activities and work experience relevant to their needs. They are punctual and attendance is high.**
- Learners are safe and feel safe. They behave well, respect others and understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy and to contribute to wider society and life in Britain.
- The great majority of learners and groups of learners make strong progress from their starting points. Gaps in the progress or retention of groups with similar starting points are closing.
- **The great majority of learners progress to higher levels during and after their study programme. They complete their study programmes, achieve qualifications relevant to their career aims and move on to sustained education, employment, training or an apprenticeship.**
- Progress on level 3 qualifications in terms of value added is above average or improving across most subjects.

#### Requires improvement (3)

- Effectiveness of the 16 to 19 study programmes is not yet good.
- Safeguarding is effective.

#### Inadequate (4)

Effectiveness of the 16 to 19 study programmes is likely to be inadequate if one or more of the following applies.

- Leadership of 16 to 19 study programmes is weak.
- The requirements of the 16 to 19 study programmes are not met.
- **Study programmes are insufficiently challenging or relevant to learners' prior attainment or planned next steps.**
- Weak assessment practice or poor planning mean that teaching fails to meet learners' needs.
- Learners or groups of learners make inadequate progress from their starting points.
- Too few learners are retained on their courses or achieve their core aim.
- **Learners or groups of learners are ill prepared for their next steps in terms of attainment, personal skills or behaviours.**

- **Too many learners or groups of learners are unsuccessful in securing relevant sustained education, employment or training.**
- The 16 to 19 minimum standards are not met for either vocational or academic qualifications.
- Safeguarding is ineffective.

## Endnotes

<sup>i</sup> The guidance for the inspection of Further Education and Skills can be viewed [here](#). Careers also figures prominently in the criteria inspectors will use to judge an FE and Skills provider in the following areas: Effectiveness of leadership and management; Quality of teaching, learning and assessment; Personal development, behaviour and welfare of learners; Outcomes for learners; The effectiveness of the 16 to 19 study programmes; Adult learning programmes; Apprenticeships; Traineeships; High-needs learners; Full-time provision for 14- to 16-year-olds.

<sup>ii</sup> Schools and academies that were judged to be outstanding in their overall effectiveness at their most recent section 5 inspection are exempt from inspection under section 5. Normally, they can only be inspected under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 (short inspections). All schools judged to be good at their previous section 5 inspection will receive a one-day short inspection, carried out under section 8, approximately every three years, as long as the quality of education remains good. Short inspections will focus on evidence of how effectively the school's leaders and managers, including governors, are sustaining a good quality of education for pupils. They do not make individual graded judgements as they do in section 5 inspections. Inspectors will carry out inspection activities that will vary depending on the circumstances of the school and the lines of enquiry that they have determined for the short inspection.

<sup>iii</sup> The DfE commends the three-pronged approach to quality advocated by the Career Development Institute, Careers England and other organisations in the sector.

Extract from *Careers Guidance and Inspiration in Schools* (March 2015)

### Quality assurance and feedback

67. In developing careers provision for pupils, there are currently three aspects of quality assurance that schools should take into consideration:

- The quality of the school careers programme. The Government recommends that all schools should work towards a quality award for careers education, information, advice and guidance as an effective means of carrying out a self-review and evaluation of the school's programme. The national validation, the [Quality in Careers Standard](#), will assist schools to determine an appropriate quality award to pursue.
- The quality of independent careers providers. The recognised national quality standard for information, advice and guidance (IAG) services is the [matrix Standard](#). To achieve the Standard, organisations will need to demonstrate that they provide a high quality and impartial service. Schools can access an online register of organisations accredited to the matrix Standard.
- The quality of careers professionals working with the school. The Career Development Institute has developed a set of professional standards for careers advisers, a register of advisers holding postgraduate qualifications and guidelines on how advisers can develop their own skills and gain higher qualifications. The main qualifications for careers professionals are the Qualification in Career Guidance (QCG) (which replaced the earlier Diploma in Careers Guidance) and the Level 6 Diploma in Career Guidance and Development. Schools can view a [register of careers professionals](#) or search for a career development professional who can deliver a particular service or activity.

<sup>iv</sup> The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is another key judgement that inspectors have to make.