

A Guide to Subject Inspection at Second Level

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SECTION 1

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR SUBJECT INSPECTION

Introduction

The evaluative function of the Inspectorate is defined by the provisions of Section 13 of the Education Act, 1998.

The aims of evaluation are:

- ⊙ To identify, acknowledge and affirm good practice in schools.
- ⊙ To promote continuing improvement in the quality of education offered by schools.
- ⊙ To promote self-evaluation and continuous development by schools and staff.
- ⊙ To provide an assurance of quality in the educational system as a whole, based on the collection of objective, dependable, high quality data.

A structured evaluation system, guided by the need for fairness, validity and consistency, both in the manner in which inspection is carried out and in the style of reporting which it generates, is essential to the realisation of these aims.

This guide sets out the procedures which apply to subject inspections in second-level schools. It recognises that evaluations should not be prescriptive as to methodologies and acknowledges the need for diverse teaching approaches in accordance with the needs of students. It is intended to be a source of information to management and staff. These procedures may vary, depending on the school and subject context. The ***Professional Code of Practice on Evaluation and Reporting for the Inspectorate*** governs the conduct of all forms of inspection and evaluation.

Summary of underlying principles

In its dealings with the school the Inspectorate will:

- ⊙ Foster mutual respect and trust in the development of a positive professional relationship with the school community.
- ⊙ Foster partnership and collaboration.
- ⊙ Demonstrate sensitivity towards the school in general.
- ⊙ Recognise the ethos of the school.
- ⊙ Engage in dialogue with school staff.
- ⊙ Ensure confidentiality having regard to existing statutory provisions.

In their professional relationships with teachers inspectors will:

- ⊙ Demonstrate courtesy, respect and fairness.
- ⊙ Make every effort to preserve the positive relationships between teachers and students.
- ⊙ Be sensitive towards individual teachers and the school in general.
- ⊙ Ensure evaluative statements are carefully weighed against the evidence.

In its evaluative functions the Inspectorate will:

- ⊙ Be consistent in the application of evaluation criteria to ensure objectivity and reliability leading to valid judgements and clear communication of outcomes.
- ⊙ Ensure accuracy and reliance on first-hand evidence based on observation.
- ⊙ Be consistent and fair having regard to school context factors.
- ⊙ Observe teaching and learning.
- ⊙ Require the teacher to be present during visits to classrooms.
- ⊙ Examine students' school work, homework and journals, where appropriate.
- ⊙ Include interaction between inspector and students as part of the evaluative process, where appropriate.
- ⊙ Place the students at the centre of learning and teaching.
- ⊙ Take cognisance of school self-review and other school-based quality assurance procedures, where appropriate.
- ⊙ Invite a teacher always to be present when students are interviewed.
- ⊙ Exercise due sensitivity when communicating with teachers in the presence of students.
- ⊙ Use different sources of information/evidence to corroborate findings. This cumulative view of the different aspects of a subject drawn from a variety of perspectives and contexts will facilitate the triangulation of data and improve the reliability of the evaluation.

The Procedure for Review of Inspections on Schools and Teachers under Section 13(9) of the Education Act 1998 outlines the appeals procedure for inspections.

SECTION 2

ADVANCE PLANNING AND PREPARATION

Pre-inspection data collection and review

In preparing for a subject inspection, the inspectors will obtain, from Department of Education and Science and other sources, relevant school and subject data to include:

- ⊙ Name of principal.
- ⊙ Student population.
- ⊙ Names, qualifications, teaching hours etc. of teachers in subject area.
- ⊙ Timetables – daily timetables for subject teachers, general school timetable indicating dates of holiday breaks.
- ⊙ The time and class group allocation in the subject per teacher.
- ⊙ Number of classes and students taking the subject.
- ⊙ Programmes provided.
- ⊙ Examination results.

Some verification/updating of this data may be required of the school in the context of the particular inspection.

Additional subject-specific information, not provided by the Department data, may be requested from the school during the initial phone call to the principal and/or by using a relevant Information Request Form (see sample on page 7).

Inspectors will review school and student/teacher data in relation to the subject, with a view to informing the subject inspection:

- ⊙ Timetables will be reviewed with reference to the relevant sections of **Rules and Programme for Secondary Schools**/Subject Syllabus /Teacher Guidelines.
- ⊙ The curriculum organisation of the school will be reviewed, if possible, to ascertain the context of the subject – core/compulsory /optional subjects, etc.
- ⊙ Where a school's examination results in a particular subject are reviewed, it will be with reference to the annual Department Statistical Report in order to establish trends in uptake, levels at which examinations are taken and attainment in relation to national norms.
- ⊙ Inspectors will take school context factors into account in evaluating examination results.
- ⊙ Areas that may require further investigation and/or clarification during the inspection will be highlighted.

Planning the inspection day (or days)

The inspection day should include the following elements:

- ⊙ An initial meeting with principal to confirm/discuss arrangements and requirements.
- ⊙ An interview with principal or nominee regarding subject provision and whole school support for subject. This element may follow immediately upon the initial meeting. Observation of a representative selection of lessons.
- ⊙ A short preliminary meeting with relevant subject teachers, wherever possible. Substitute cover will be provided, if necessary.
- ⊙ Observation of a representative selection of lessons. Generally not more than 2 lessons per teacher will be observed. However, where there is only one teacher, a third lesson should be observed in order to provide a more accurate report on the learning and teaching of the subject. In the case of practical subjects these lessons may be of double period duration.
- ⊙ Feedback to individual teachers following each lesson observed. Each lesson observed should be followed, immediately if possible, by brief feedback to the teacher. When circumstances do not facilitate immediate feedback, the inspector will give feedback later at a time convenient to both teacher and inspector.
- ⊙ A review of students' work and school/teacher documents and records.
- ⊙ Feedback and discussion with the subject teachers as a group, if at all possible.
- ⊙ Feedback to principal. Feedback may be given both to the subject teacher group and to the principal collectively, if deemed appropriate by the inspector. This approach ensures transparency and encourages a collaborative approach to improvement at subject level.

Deciding the inspection date

In general, a subject inspection will be carried out in one day. However, in certain cases, an additional day (or days) may be required, depending on the size of school, the number of teachers of a subject and the scope of the inspection.

Inspectors will decide on inspection dates with reference to:

- ⊙ Subject timetables so as to allow the essential aspects of the subject at the required levels to be inspected. This will also determine the teachers/classes to be visited.
- ⊙ The focus of the inspection.

Please note that subject inspections will not take place during the first two weeks of the school year, the week preceding and the week following the Christmas holidays and the final week of the school year.

Selecting classes to be inspected

Factors which may be considered when selecting classes to be inspected include:

- ⊙ Focus of the inspection (e.g. Junior Cycle, Senior Cycle).
- ⊙ Range of levels, years.
- ⊙ Essential components of subject.
- ⊙ Range of teachers (e.g. qualifications, experience, status of teachers).
- ⊙ Number of classes per subject teacher.

However, in the interest of maintaining flexibility in planning the inspection, specific information regarding classes/teachers to be visited will not be communicated until the (first) day of the inspection.

Notifying school of inspection visit

Schools will be given prior notice of a subject inspection. Normally two weeks notice will be given. The inspector will contact the school principal by telephone in advance of the inspection visit.

The purpose of the contact is to:

- Inform principal of date and purpose of visit (including focus/scope of inspection).
- Outline programme of visit and agree general timetable for the inspection day.
- Inform principal of any special requirements for the inspection day e.g. the need to see a particular aspect of the subject, such as practical work.
- Request that subject-specific timetables and other relevant information be forwarded, if required.
- Discuss arrangements for viewing students' recent/current work.
- Arrange to have any relevant planning documents and student assessment records available on the day of the inspection.
- Ascertain availability of a room for reviewing documents and meeting teachers.

The inspector will confirm in writing the arrangements as discussed with the principal using the standard letter of notification (see page 8). The letter will also include the contact details of the inspector and may also include the following:

- The relevant Information Request Form (see page 7).
- A copy of the ***Professional Code of Practice on Evaluation and Reporting for the Inspectorate.***
- A copy of the ***Procedure for Review of Inspections on Schools and Teachers under Section 13(9) of the Education Act 1998.***
- An Inspection Framework, including subject-specific areas of enquiry.

As a courtesy, a copy of the letter will be sent to the Chairperson of the Board of Management (school address) and to the relevant CEO in the case of a VEC school.

Information Request Form (A)

Subject Provision – Core Subjects

For: School Principal

Please complete the form below and return to the undersigned before _____

Subject: _____

Information Request Form (B)

Subject Provision – Optional Subjects

For: School Principal

Please complete the form below and return to the undersigned before _____

Subject: _____

JUNIOR CYCLE

1st Year

2nd Year

3rd Year

SENIOR CYCLE

Transition Year

1st Year Leaving Cert

2nd Year Leaving Cert

	Total number of students	Number of students taking	Number of class groups
JUNIOR CYCLE			
1 st Year			
2 nd Year			
3 rd Year			
SENIOR CYCLE			
Transition Year			
1 st Year Leaving Cert			
2 nd Year Leaving Cert			

SAMPLE PAGE ONLY

SAMPLE PAGE ONLY

Thank you,

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Thank you,

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Letter to school confirming notice of subject inspection

Dear _____,

Subsequent to our telephone conversation, I am writing to confirm that the date agreed for my visit to your school for the inspection of _____ **(subject)** is _____.

I look forward to meeting and to working with you and with your _____ **(subject)** team during my visit.

This inspection will be carried out in accordance with the ***Professional Code of Practice on Evaluation and Reporting for the Inspectorate***.

I would like to thank you again for your co-operation in the arrangements for the inspection visit.

Yours sincerely,

(insert inspector name and contact details)

cc Chairperson of Board of Management

cc CEO of VEC (where relevant)

SECTION 3

PROCEDURES FOR THE INSPECTION VISIT

Before the classroom visits

The inspector will meet with the principal to:

- ⊙ Reiterate the purpose of the visit and programme for the day.
- ⊙ Discuss the practical arrangements for the inspection.
- ⊙ Outline the timetable for inspection.
- ⊙ Explain that an additional lesson (or lessons) may be visited as the inspection proceeds.

The inspector will interview the principal or nominee (e.g. subject co-ordinator/subject teachers).

If the interview is with the principal, it may take place as a continuation of the initial meeting or it may take place later.

The inspector will interview the principal (or nominee) with reference to the subject provision and whole school support for the subject. The **exemplar questions** (see pages 13 and 14), adapted to a particular subject, may be used as a basis for a structured interview with the principal/nominee. Questions and subsequent comments regarding planning will take cognisance of the school's level of engagement in school development planning.

The inspector, in a short preliminary group meeting with relevant teachers, will:

- ⊙ Explain the purpose and process of the inspection.
- ⊙ Outline the aspects of work to be evaluated with reference to the Inspection Framework.
- ⊙ Collect any individual teacher planning documents/subject department planning documents/records of assessment.
- ⊙ Discuss general matters regarding subject planning and provision.
- ⊙ Teachers will have an opportunity to apprise inspectors of circumstances that impact on the effectiveness of their work with particular classes.

Where a preliminary group meeting is not possible/not applicable (i.e. one teacher subject)

- ⊙ The inspector will explain the process with teachers individually before visiting the classroom. An inspector conducting a subject inspection will not meet with the entire teaching staff of the school. Any meetings will be confined to the relevant subject teachers.

During the classroom visits

Before the lesson begins, the inspector will have a brief discussion with the teacher to establish:

- ⊙ The topic, aim and context of the lesson.
- ⊙ Background information on the class i.e. prior experience and/or achievement in the topic, ability range, etc. This will assist the inspector in forming a view regarding students' learning during the lesson.

The inspector will observe learning and teaching

- ⊙ The components to be observed during the lesson include:
 - *Methodology*
 - *Classroom management*
 - *Classroom atmosphere*
 - *Student learning*
 - *Student engagement with the subject*
- ⊙ Lessons vary in duration, nature and style and consequently inspection methods will also vary in order to obtain evidence upon which to base judgements about teaching and learning.

These inspection methods will include:

- **Observing** teaching methodology, teacher/student and student/student interaction, teacher skills, student skills, classroom management.
- **Listening** to teacher and student contributions, explanations, questions/responses, comments and discussions.
- **Interacting with students as a group**, in order to clarify students' knowledge, understanding and engagement in the subject. Interaction may be in the form of questioning/discussion.
- **Interacting with individual students.** Group work/practical work provides an ideal opportunity for the inspector to walk around and interact with students individually without interfering with the lesson.
- **Examining student work**, such as schoolwork, homework and journals where appropriate and/or where time permits.
- ⊙ The time spent observing a class will be long enough to allow reliable judgements to be made regarding the quality of teaching and learning. Interaction with students and sampling of work will be such as to allow judgements to be made regarding student progress and standards of achievement.

The inspector will record evidence

- ⊙ Notes will be recorded using the relevant Record of Evidence forms (see page 23) either during or as soon as possible after lesson observation.
- ⊙ Observations will be guided by reference to the Inspection Framework (see pages 19 to 22), including subject-specific areas of enquiry, as appropriate. The emphasis will be on **looking at** the lesson and not **looking for** specific items.

After the classroom visits

Review of planning documents, student records, student work

It is expected that teachers will be able to indicate to inspectors a broad written plan of their work on a termly and yearly basis. However, it is not necessary that teachers prepare individual written lesson plans for the purpose of subject inspection.

In reviewing such materials, the inspector will:

- ⊙ Examine individual teacher planning documents and student records.
- ⊙ Make notes in the relevant sections of the Record of Evidence forms.
- ⊙ Examine a representative sample of students' work. Students' earlier, recent and current work provides a valuable source of evidence for evaluating pace of learning, progression and student achievement in the subject.

Oral feedback to teachers

In providing feedback to individual teachers:

- ⊙ Inspectors will endeavour to meet with each teacher immediately or as soon as possible after each lesson to give a brief feedback and to invite the teacher to respond. These meetings will take place during school time, wherever possible.
- ⊙ If circumstances do not facilitate immediate feedback, the inspector will arrange to meet the teacher at a later time convenient to both.
- ⊙ If it is not possible to meet the teacher on the day of the inspection, the inspector may return to the school on another occasion.

In providing feedback to a subject teacher group:

- ⊙ Every effort will be made to meet with the subject department or the teachers involved in the inspection as a group to give general feedback regarding the overall learning and teaching in the subject.

Such a meeting should promote and support a collaborative approach to planning and improvement at subject level.

- ⊙ Feedback may be given to both the teacher group and the principal collectively, if deemed appropriate by the inspector.

In providing oral feedback, inspectors will:

- ⊙ Conduct oral reporting with care and sensitivity at all times and especially where shortcomings in teaching and learning have been observed.
- ⊙ Give feedback and advice in a supportive and constructive manner.
- ⊙ Highlight the main issues, whether findings are being presented to an individual or a group.
- ⊙ Identify strengths as well as areas for improvement.
- ⊙ Ensure that messages are clear and unambiguous.
- ⊙ Bear in mind the importance of maintaining consistency between oral and written reporting in relation to the main messages being communicated.
- ⊙ Use the meeting with the teacher group to clarify, inform and confirm findings of the inspection in an open and transparent manner.
- ⊙ Avail of the opportunity to encourage the school development planning process i.e. collaborative planning and the use of action planning, if and when specific issues are to be addressed.
- ⊙ Explain that a written report, the Subject Inspection Report, will be issued to the principal within six weeks of the date of the inspection. The report will not make reference to the work of individual teachers.
- ⊙ Encourage use of the Subject Inspection Report (see page 25) to inform development planning at subject level.

At the end of the inspection, the inspector will:

- ⊙ Meet the principal and brief him/her regarding the main findings and recommendations of the inspection.
- ⊙ Inform the principal that a written report, the Subject Inspection Report, will be issued within six weeks of the date of the inspection.
- ⊙ Encourage use of the Subject Inspection Report to inform school development planning.

Exemplar questions for principal

This set of exemplar questions may be sent to the principal in advance of the inspection visit or alternatively it may be used as the basis of a structured interview with the principal and/or other relevant school personnel during the visit.

Curriculum organisation

- ⊙ How are classes organised: mixed ability, banding, setting?
- ⊙ If banding/setting, how is student access to level determined?
- ⊙ Is the subject mandatory or optional?
- ⊙ If optional, how is the subject organised in terms of subject options?
 - Number of options available.
 - Popularity of subject in relation to other options.
 - Arrangements for student access to subject - selection process, consultation regarding access to subject, etc.
- ⊙ For each year group:
 - What is the time allocation for the subject per week?
 - How is the time organised during the week? e.g. every day.
 - Duration of lessons –single /double /triple class periods.

Deployment of staff

- ⊙ How many teachers are teaching the subject in the school?
- ⊙ What rationale is used in allocating teachers to classes?
- ⊙ How many of the teachers are graduates in the subject? (including any substitute teachers)
- ⊙ What is the general level of experience of each teacher in teaching the subject?
- ⊙ How many Higher Diploma in Education students are teaching the subject in the current year?
- ⊙ What are the arrangements for managing/supporting Higher Diploma in Education students?

Whole school support

- ⊙ What is the school policy re subject co-ordination? (e.g. post holder, rotating co-ordinator)
- ⊙ What are the arrangements for collaborative subject planning? (e.g. frequency and duration of meetings, agenda)
- ⊙ What is the school's level of engagement in the school development planning process?
- ⊙ Is there development planning in the subject area?
- ⊙ How are in-career development needs of teachers determined and provided for?

Provision of resources

- ⊙ Is there a designated subject classroom or classrooms?
- ⊙ What resources are available to support the teaching of the subject? Is there an annual budget for the purchase of materials/teaching aids?
- ⊙ What is the level of access to ICT facilities?
- ⊙ What provision is made for special needs students? (facilities, classroom assistant, etc.)

Student outcomes

- ⊙ Is there a school homework policy? Please specify.
- ⊙ Is there a school assessment policy? Please specify.
- ⊙ What is the school policy re reporting to parents?
- ⊙ What is the school policy/practice regarding the analysis of student outcomes including examination results?
- ⊙ Taking context factors into account, how do student examination results in the subject compare to the national norms?

SECTION 4

CLASSROOM VISITS

This section provides a practical insight into the range of interactions likely to be involved before, during and after the classroom visits. Ideally, a meeting with the relevant subject teachers as a group will be arranged before the class visits. If this is not feasible or not applicable, as in the case of subjects with only one teacher, the inspector will arrange a brief meeting with each individual teacher prior to the classroom visit.

Before the classroom visit:

The inspector will explain:

- ⊙ **The purpose of the inspection:**
 - To evaluate teaching and learning of a particular subject.
 - To identify good practice within the school.
 - To provide affirmation to teachers and students.
 - To bring an “outside” perspective.
 - To provide an opportunity for the school to access new ideas.
 - To promote improvement in the teaching and learning in the subject.
- ⊙ **The inspection process in the classroom:**
 - Observation of learning and teaching.
 - Recording of evidence.
 - Interaction with students.
- ⊙ **The process of giving feedback:**
 - To the individual teacher.
 - To the subject teachers as a group, if applicable.
 - To the principal.

If time permits, the inspector may also facilitate a discussion of general matters regarding subject provision, planning, assessment, state examinations, in-career development.

Immediately prior to each classroom visit:

In advance of each classroom visit, the inspector will meet with the individual teacher to seek relevant context information on the class group, on the work the class is doing/has been doing, on the plan for the lesson about to be observed, on the preparation/homework students had for the lesson and on any other pertinent issues.

In the classroom:

⊙ Introduction:

At the beginning of the lesson, the inspector will introduce himself /herself. Typically he/she may explain the purpose of the visit, ask the students to work ahead as normal and explain that he/she may work with them later.

⊙ Lesson observation:

During lesson observation, the inspector will concentrate on teaching and learning, observing teaching methodologies, what the students are doing, how they are responding and the use of questions both by teachers and students. The inspector will also note evidence of the level of student involvement, as well as material covered.

⊙ Interaction with students:

- The inspector may engage with students to establish the extent of their knowledge and skills in a subject area. He/she will base the interaction on the lesson content, in support of the teacher's work just observed, or on subject matter previously covered, but will not introduce new material. He/she will involve as many students as possible.
- When students are involved in a classroom activity, the inspector may mingle among them, in order to look at work in hand, affirm or question, as appropriate.

⊙ Examination of students' work:

If the inspector intends to look at examples of students' work (copies, project work, tests, etc.), he/she will collect a manageable number and arrange how and when the material will be returned to the class in question. The task of examining this material will be carried out in the school during/after the classroom visit.

After the classroom visit:

⊙ Feedback to individual teacher:

In giving individual feedback to the teacher, the inspector will base his/her comments on the lesson(s) observed, acknowledging the particular learning and teaching context, affirming good practice and making suggestions for improvement.

SECTION 5

THE RECORD OF EVIDENCE FOR SUBJECT INSPECTION

The Inspection Framework and the Record of Evidence for Subject Inspection

The Inspection Framework

- ⊙ The Inspection Framework covers the following four aspects of subject inspection:
 - **Subject Provision and Whole School Support**
 - **Planning and Preparation**
 - **Teaching and Learning Processes**
 - **Assessment and Achievement**

Each **Aspect** is sub-divided into a number of **Components**. Within each Component, inspectors are guided to possible **Areas of Enquiry** and **Sources of Evidence**.

- ⊙ The Inspection Framework is presented in a format designed for use in the inspection of any subject at any level. Individual subjects may require subject-specific areas of enquiry which are not identified specifically within this common Inspection Framework.

The Record of Evidence

- ⊙ The Record of Evidence for subject inspection is designed to support the evaluation process. The Record of Evidence for subject inspection will:
 - ◆ Help ensure the accuracy of observations and facilitate the recording of reliable evidence.
 - ◆ Assist in the formulation of conclusions and recommendations on the basis of evidence gathered.
 - ◆ Facilitate consistency, reliability and objectivity in judgements reached.
- ⊙ The Record of Evidence for subject inspection is not an observation record alone, as inspection visits will involve the use of several evaluation strategies. These include structured discussion, classroom observation, review and examination of students' work, observation of student activities/interactions, interaction with students and review of documents/records. The Record of Evidence provides for the inclusion of this information under the heading **Sources of Evidence**.

The Record of Evidence consists of two forms:

Form SI-01 and Form SI-02

- ⦿ The function of form SI-01 is to record the inspector's findings in relation to the overall provision for the subject within the whole-school context.
- ⦿ The function of form SI-02 is to record the inspector's findings in relation to the overall quality of teaching and learning in an individual class.
- ⦿ The Record of Evidence forms (SI-01, SI-02), once completed, are retained as part of the inspection record.

The Inspection Framework and the Record of Evidence forms are shown on the following pages.

Subject Provision and Whole-School Support Inspection Framework

<i>Aspect</i>	Subject Provision and Whole-School Support
Component	<i>Possible areas of enquiry</i>
Whole school support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Facilitation of collaborative planning ⊙ Subject co-ordination ⊙ Monitoring, self-review and evaluation of subject development planning ⊙ Analysis of student outcomes ⊙ Subject documentation ⊙ Teacher in-career development
Deployment of staff and time-tabling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Time allocation to subject ⊙ Suitability of units of time ⊙ Student mobility and choice ⊙ Facilitation of collaborative teaching ⊙ Deployment of skills, knowledge and interests of teachers
Provision of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Appropriate resources ⊙ Maintenance of resources ⊙ Health and Safety ⊙ Accessibility ⊙ ICT facilities ⊙ Acquisition of further resources
Arrangements for student access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Needs and interests of students ⊙ Consultation regarding access to subject/level ⊙ Arrangements for student choice ⊙ Assistance to students in making choices
Possible sources of evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Discussion with principal ⊙ Discussion with subject teachers ⊙ Examination of school documents/records ⊙ Observation of practice

Quality of Learning and Teaching of the Subject Inspection Framework

<i>Aspect</i>	Planning and Preparation
Component	<i>Possible areas of enquiry</i>
Planning of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Department/collaborative planning ⊙ Long-term planning/development of subject ⊙ Short-term planning/programmes of work ⊙ Planning in line with curricular requirements ⊙ Student access to subject/level ⊙ Planning for students with special needs ⊙ Cross-curricular planning
Planning for resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Selection and use of resources to support teaching and learning ⊙ Range/variety of resources ⊙ Use of ICT facilities ⊙ Procedures for acquiring and accessing further resources ⊙ Accessibility of shared resources ⊙ Dissemination of official documentation ⊙ Provision for Health and Safety requirements
Possible sources of evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Discussion with principal ⊙ Discussion with subject teachers ⊙ Examination of school documents/records ⊙ Observation of practice

<i>Aspect</i>	Teaching and Learning
Component	<i>Possible areas of enquiry</i>
Methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Appropriateness of methodology to students' abilities, needs, interests ⊙ Clarity of lesson purpose ⊙ Lesson structure ⊙ Lesson pace ⊙ Range of teaching strategies ⊙ Continuity with previous lessons (e.g. homework) ⊙ Use of textbooks/other resources
Classroom management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Maintenance of discipline ⊙ Implementation of code of behaviour ⊙ Management of learning activities ⊙ Challenge and motivation
Classroom atmosphere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Student sense of security ⊙ Mutual respect ⊙ Nature of interactions ⊙ Attractiveness/level of stimulation of environment ⊙ Classroom organisation (seating, grouping,...) ⊙ Affirmation of student effort ⊙ Atmosphere conducive to learning
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Purposefulness ⊙ Student engagement with classroom activities ⊙ Student understanding of concepts and facts ⊙ Student knowledge and competence ⊙ Degree of student initiative/creativity in applying knowledge ⊙ Collaborative/independent learning ⊙ Effectiveness of student communication in subject
Possible sources of evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Observation of practice ⊙ Discussion with class teacher ⊙ Examination of students' work ⊙ Interaction with students

Aspect	Assessment and Achievement
<i>Possible areas of enquiry</i>	
Component	
Assessment modes and outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Range of assessment modes ⊙ Relationship to curriculum objectives ⊙ Quality of record keeping ⊙ Impact on teaching strategies ⊙ Use of assessment outcomes to address individual learners' needs
Record-keeping and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Systematic recording of results ⊙ Communication of results ⊙ Profiling of student achievement ⊙ Contact with parents
Student engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Enthusiasm and curiosity for subject ⊙ Appropriateness of students' skills and knowledge relative to age, ability, class level
Overall student achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Level of performance with due regard for context factors ⊙ Evaluation of student outcomes in context of national norms
<i>Possible sources of evidence</i>	
Possible sources of evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Discussion with principal ⊙ Discussion with subject teachers ⊙ Examination of school documents/records ⊙ Observation of practice ⊙ Examination results

Record of Evidence for the Quality of Learning and Teaching of the Subject

Form: SI-02

School Name	Date of Inspection	Subject	Year Group	Class	Level	Time of lesson	Total Roll	Number Present	Teacher Identifier

Record of Evidence for Subject Provision and Whole School Support

Form: SI-01

School	School No.	Date of Inspection	Subject Inspected

Evidence	Area of enquiry

SAMPLE PAGE ONLY

- Sources of Evidence: (tick as appropriate)
- Discussion with Principal:
 - Discussion with Deputy-principal:
 - Discussion with Teachers:
 - Examination of School Records:
 - Observation Of Practice:
 - Other:

Points made in feedback:

Response to feedback:

Date:

Signature:

ONLY

- (tick as appropriate)
- -
 -
 -
 -

SECTION 6

THE SUBJECT INSPECTION REPORT (SIR)

In writing the Subject Inspection Report (SIR), inspectors will apply the following principles:

- ⊙ The written report should be consistent with the verbal feedback given to the subject teachers and to the principal (and to the subject co-ordinator if applicable). Where a point of significance, not dealt with substantially in the verbal feedback, is included in the written report, such a recommendation or finding will be brought to the attention of the school principal prior to inclusion in the report.
- ⊙ All statements in the report should be based on the evidence gathered. The commentary will be objective and sustainable.
- ⊙ The commentary in the report should reflect the evaluations made by the inspector in the subject inspection Record of Evidence forms.
- ⊙ The report should affirm good practice, include specific illustrations of good practice, where appropriate, and shortcomings should be identified as areas for further development.
- ⊙ Recommendations should be clear, realistic, achievable and constructively stated.
- ⊙ Recommendations should be consistent with the evidence, the analysis and the evaluation.
- ⊙ The report should not make reference to individual teachers. The emphasis is on reporting on the learning and teaching of a specific subject in a school.

Structure of the Subject Inspection Report

Cover Page

School data

Information on the inspection

Report on the Quality of Learning and Teaching

- Subject Provision and Whole School Support
- Planning and Preparation
- Teaching and Learning
- Assessment and Achievement
- Summary of main findings and recommendations

Inspector's signature and signing off date of report

Report on the Quality of Learning and Teaching in (Subject)

Subject Provision and Whole School

Planning and Preparation

School Data

Name of School	
Address of School	
School Number	
Name of VEC/CEO	
Chairperson of BOM	
Principal	
School contact details	Phone: Fax: e-mail:
Enrolment	
Curriculum Provision <i>(tick as appropriate)</i>	Junior Certificate Schools Programme <input type="checkbox"/> LCVP <input type="checkbox"/> Transition Year <input type="checkbox"/> Leaving Certificate Applied <input type="checkbox"/> Established Leaving Certificate <input type="checkbox"/>
Special Initiatives <i>(if applicable)</i>	

Reporting Template for

For Office Use Only

An Roinn Oideachais agus
Department of Education

Subject Inspection

Information on the Inspection

Date of Subject Inspection:

Focus of inspection:

Inspection activities undertaken:

Signature:

Signature:

Date:

(Date of inspection)



NOTES
