

Preparing a school self-evaluation summary

Briefing for section 5 inspection

This guidance is intended to assist schools in developing a concise self-evaluation summary. Ofsted does not prescribe any particular approach; schools are free to summarise the outcomes of their self-evaluation processes in a way that best suits their own circumstances.

It is recommended that this document is read in conjunction with part two of the *School inspection handbook*. This sets out the grade descriptors and guidance used by inspectors when making their judgements, which will be helpful to schools when evaluating their own performance. *Subsidiary guidance* provides further information.

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Introduction

1. Ofsted recognises the importance of self-evaluation as a crucial part of schools' ongoing cycle of review and improvement planning. A self-evaluation summary is an important tool in this process, which enables schools to draw together an evaluation of different aspects of their work leading to an evaluation of the quality of education provided by the school overall. There is no fixed time in the year when a self-evaluation might be completed. This will depend on the individual circumstances of each school.
2. Ofsted no longer provides a service for schools to upload and store their self-evaluation summary. Inspectors will ask schools to make a self-evaluation summary available if one exists. However, there is no requirement to do so.

Key features of an effective self-evaluation summary

3. This guidance sets out the main elements that a school might set out in its self-evaluation summary.

A self-evaluation summary is likely to be most effective when it is:

- concise and succinct, captures the key points and, where relevant, identifies sources of evidence or more detailed evaluative material
 - evaluative rather than descriptive or repetitive, and captures succinctly the impact of the school's actions on the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement, behaviour and safety
 - a working document which is regularly used to inform governors of the school's improvement activity and is updated as part of the school's self-evaluation processes
 - developed by, and used to inform, leaders, including governors and middle leaders as well as senior staff
 - linked to part two of the *School inspection handbook*, and to the *Subsidiary guidance* so that strengths and weaknesses are set out in relation to pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching, behaviour and safety, the school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and, where relevant the effectiveness of the sixth form, which together can then provide a picture of the school's assessment of its overall effectiveness
 - linked to school improvement planning, and identifies areas for improvement
 - an indicator of the success of the school's actions in tackling issues identified at the previous inspection.
4. The self-evaluation summary is likely to be accurate and robust if it draws together, and where possible, corroborates the outcomes of different sources of evaluative information, including for example:

- any outcomes of the analysis of lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work
- analyses of the progress and attainment of pupils currently on roll, including the performance of different groups of pupils such as those who attend alternative provision and those eligible for the Pupil Premium
- analysis of the pupils' past progress and attainment
- analysis of data and information related to pupils' behaviour and safety, including exclusions, rewards and sanctions, incident logs and attendance
- analysis of the effectiveness of specific interventions to improve, for example, the achievement and/or behaviour of particular groups of pupils
- the views of parents and carers as shown by Parent View
- any external evaluations such as those carried out by the local authority
- the outcomes of any surveys carried out by Ofsted.

An approach to writing a self-evaluation summary

5. Schools may structure self-evaluation summaries in any way they see fit. Annex 1 at the end of this guidance provides a simple template for a self-evaluation summary which can be adopted or amended by schools.
6. It is helpful to first describe the circumstances of the school and then to summarise the evaluation outcomes under the following broad headings:
 - pupils' achievement
 - the quality of teaching
 - pupils' behaviour and safety
 - the leadership of, and management in, the school
 - where relevant, the effectiveness of the sixth form
 - where relevant, registered early years provision and/or boarding provision,
 - the overall effectiveness of the school including the promotion of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
7. For each key aspect schools may wish to:
 - summarise the evidence gathered by the school drawing on the 'outline guidance' sections of the inspection handbook
 - consider whether there are any gaps in the evidence or whether the evidence lacks breadth or depth - if there are gaps, this may suggest that some further evidence gathering and evaluation is needed
 - consider how well their evidence reads across to the grade descriptors in the inspection handbook.

8. Schools might then consider which judgement or grade evidence best fits. The grade descriptors in the inspection handbook do not operate as a check list.
9. The descriptors can only be applied as a 'best fit' because:
 - very strong evidence of success in relation to one bullet point may outweigh some areas where evidence is not as strong
 - different bullet points may carry more weight in different schools, depending on their circumstances
 - there is no fixed number of bullets 'required' to gain a particular grade, although if the evidence only supports, for example, two of the six bullets in a 'good' descriptor then that aspect is unlikely to be judged 'good'
 - weak, inaccurate or limited evidence, even in support of all the bullets in a particular aspect may not necessarily lead to a judgement of good.
10. Having reached judgements about each key area of the school's work, it is helpful to test the accuracy and robustness of the evaluation. Senior managers may wish to share their evaluations with governors. This ensures that governors are an integral part of the self-evaluation process as well as ensuring that they hold the school to account:
 - challenging the judgements and probing the evidence to ensure that self-evaluation is robust
 - focusing on areas where there are 'gaps' in the evaluation and, most importantly, where evaluation indicates that performance is not strong enough
 - considering governors' own role and contribution to the school's self-evaluation.

Annex 1

Self-evaluation summary: template

It is suggested that each section is kept to a maximum of 300-500 words.

The context of the school

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Pupils' achievement

Suggested grade:[delete as appropriate] Outstanding (1); Good (2); Requires improvement (3); Inadequate (4)
Evidence that supports this judgement
Why achievement is not the grade (above/below)

The quality of teaching

Suggested grade:[delete as appropriate] Outstanding (1); Good (2); Requires improvement (3); Inadequate (4)
Evidence that supports this judgement
Why teaching is not the grade (above/below)

Behaviour and safety

Suggested grade:[delete as appropriate] Outstanding (1); Good (2); Requires improvement (3); Inadequate (4)
Evidence that supports this judgement
Why behaviour and safety are not the grade (above/below)

Leadership and management

Suggested grade:[delete as appropriate] Outstanding (1); Good (2); Requires improvement (3); Inadequate (4)
Evidence that supports this judgement
Why leadership and management are not the grade (above/below)

Where relevant, the effectiveness of the sixth form or any additional provision

Suggested grade:[delete as appropriate] Outstanding (1); Good (2); Requires improvement (3); Inadequate (4)
Evidence that supports this judgement
Why the sixth form or any additional provision are not the grade (above/below)

Overall effectiveness, including the promotion of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Suggested grade:[delete as appropriate] Outstanding (1); Good (2); Requires improvement (3); Inadequate (4)
Evidence that supports this judgement
Why the school's overall effectiveness is not the grade (above/below)