



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

Understanding inspections in local authorities and the youth sector:

A guide for learners



INVESTORS | BUDDSODDWYR
IN PEOPLE | MEWN POBL

Estyn is the office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales. It is independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales under Section 104 of the Government of Wales Act 1998. The purpose of Estyn is to inspect quality and standards in education and training in Wales. Estyn is responsible for inspecting:

- ▲ nursery schools and settings that are maintained by, or receive funding from, local authorities;
- ▲ primary schools;
- ▲ secondary schools;
- ▲ special schools;
- ▲ pupil referral units;
- ▲ independent schools;
- ▲ further education;
- ▲ adult community learning;
- ▲ youth support services;
- ▲ local authority education services for children and young people;
- ▲ teacher education and training;
- ▲ work-based learning;
- ▲ careers companies; and
- ▲ offender learning.

Estyn also:

- ▲ provides advice on quality and standards in education and training in Wales to the National Assembly for Wales and others; and
- ▲ makes public good practice based on inspection evidence.

Our inspection work and advice play a key part in raising standards and quality and informing policy in education and training across Wales.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

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This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.uk

How will an inspection benefit me?

Inspection tells you about the standards and quality at your education and training provider. It tells you what the provider does well and not so well. It gives the provider an expert view on its work and helps it to improve the quality of what it does and raise standards.

Who inspects the provider?

Inspectors are people who have substantial experience of teaching or training and of management in education. The inspection team is led by a reporting inspector who is one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI).

Each inspection team will include peer inspectors. Peer inspectors are experienced officers currently working in another local authority in Wales.

Each local authority is given the option of having one of their own staff on the inspection team. This person is called the 'nominee' and he or she keeps the inspectors well informed about the authority and its work. Authorities do not have to take up this option, but they usually do.

Inspectors will have gained enhanced clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service. In conducting the inspection, inspectors will adhere to Estyn's code of conduct.

You can find out more about inspections by visiting the Estyn website at www.estyn.gov.uk.

How will the provider be inspected?

All local authorities in Wales are inspected in broadly the same way. Inspectors use a **common inspection framework** that tells them how to carry out inspections and how to make judgements.

The reporting inspector reports on the following:

- the standards achieved by learners and their wellbeing;
- the quality of provision, the quality of care, support and guidance; and
- the quality of leadership and management.

Each local authority is required to monitor and evaluate their own work to assess what they are doing well and to identify how they can improve. The local authority uses this information to write a self-evaluation report.

Inspections start with the local authority's evaluation of its own work. Inspectors use this report to plan the inspection.

We normally give local authorities about ten to twelve working weeks' notice of their inspection.

Inspectors will also use many opportunities to talk to local authorities about how they listen to learners. They will expect the local authority to ask questions about how learners feel about their courses and about their school or learner setting, or youth provider as a whole. Inspectors may also arrange some specific meetings with learners.

How will I know the inspectors' views?

The inspection report will cover the areas listed earlier.

In most cases, we hope to have the inspection report on our website normally within about eight weeks and at the very latest within sixteen weeks.

We encourage you to read the report. You can find it on Estyn's website www.estyn.gov.uk.

What happens next?

Following the inspection all local authorities must produce a plan for improvement in the future.

Local authorities that are doing well will have recognition of their good or excellent performance in their inspection report. Any sector-leading practice will be written up as a case study and may be shared with other local authorities via Estyn's website.

During all inspections, the inspection team will consider whether the local authority is underperforming and needs follow-up activity.

In most cases where a local authority needs follow-up activity, this will consist of a brief inspection visit by an Estyn inspector. This visit will focus on the recommendations in the original report.

While most local authorities perform well, there are a few authorities where services or learners are not doing as well as they should be. Where inspectors consider that the current performance of the local authority is not good enough, or where they consider the prospects for improvement are weak, then a small team of inspectors will visit the local authority again to see whether they are improving along the right lines. Estyn inspectors will continue to visit these local authorities until they are satisfied that they are providing a better service to schools and other settings.

What do I do if I have concerns about the inspection?

Complaints about an inspection are rare. We treat all complaints very seriously. If you have a concern about the inspection of your local authority, you should telephone 02920 446446 or email feedback@estyn.gov.uk or write to:

Feedback and Complaints Manager
Estyn
Anchor Court
Keen Road
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