

Ofsted inspection - Preparation crib sheet for governing boards

Key Ofsted areas for a one-day inspection

(based on Ofsted School Inspection Handbook-Section 8 September 2018)

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Actions taken/Evidence
Whether the school remains good.			
Whether safeguarding is effective or not.			
The capacity of all leaders, managers and governors to drive sustainable improvement.			
How well the school has dealt with any areas for improvement identified at the previous section 5 inspection or the next steps identified from a previous short inspection.			
Information on the school's website (taking into account statutory requirements for maintained schools and academy funding agreements and non-statutory guidance), including its pupil premium strategy (including rationale and evaluation), in primary schools the PE and sport premium, in secondary schools the Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium, the statutory sharing with parents of curriculum information (so the lead inspector can start to assess the breadth and balance of the school's curriculum and whether it is likely to promote preparation for, and an appreciation of, life in modern Britain), the special educational needs information report, information about the promotion of equality of opportunity and other information for parents.			
<p>Issues raised by the investigation of any complaints about the school received by Ofsted (inspectors do not investigate individual complaints, but they must consider any wider issues raised by the complaint)</p> <p>Is the GB/LGB aware of any complaints that have been referred to Ofsted, and the anonymised outcome?</p>			
Attendance, Exclusions, Bullying. Discriminatory behaviour, either directly or indirectly, inc. racist, disability-related & homophobic bullying, and use of derogatory language.			
Establish whether the school provides support to any other schools (or receives it).			

Inspection history

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Actions taken/Evidence
What were the key findings of the last Ofsted report? What were the strengths?			
Which were the areas identified for further development?			
What progress has been made against these?			
How has the school changed since the last inspection – e.g. expansion, demographic changes, staff changes, new projects?			
Have the changes had any impact on pupil attainment, attendance, safety, safeguarding etc., and if so, how has this been addressed?			

Statutory duties

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Actions taken/Evidence
How does the GB/LGB carry out their statutory duties, such as safeguarding, and understand the boundaries of their role as governors?			
How effectively does the governing board fulfil the full range of statutory duties?			
Does the GB/LGB have in place and regularly review statutory policies?			
Does the GB/LGB have the following necessary information: Achievement, attendance and exclusion data organised by pupil groups (e.g. free school meals, ethnicity); Racial incident, behaviour, Special Educational Needs (SEN), FGM, bullying logs etc.			

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Actions taken/Evidence
Is the school website compliant? Is the annual governance report up to date and included on the school website?			
Get Information about schools (GIAS) - Is the GB/LGB membership information up to date and included on (GIAS)?			

Governing board membership, experience, organisation and practice

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
What is the range of experience/skills on the GB/LGB?			
How effective is the GB/LGB?			
What are the strengths and areas for development for the GB/LGB? How are the board addressing the weaknesses?			
How does the GB/LGB recruit to fill any vacancies?			
Can each governor explain their role on the GB/LGB?			
How does the GB/LGB utilise individual skills to best effect?			
What support does the GB/LGB give to the senior leadership team?			
How are governors involved with school?			
How does the GB/LGB hold the school to account?			
How does the GB/LGB use its strengths to best effect?			
What do you perceive the role of the GB/LGB?			

Governor development

A commitment to governor development is an important aspect of being an effective Governing Board. Induction training for new governors gives an overview of the roles and responsibilities of the Governing Board, whilst other courses offer specific skills such as an understanding of school performance data, managing the budget or how to undertake the Headteacher's performance management. An audit of governors' skills and expertise will help to identify the training needs of your Governing Board. In addition, there are statutory requirements, such as the need for at least one member of an interviewing panel to have undertaken safer recruitment training, which may determine the priorities for governor development.

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
How are the training needs of governors identified and addressed?			
What training have governors undertaken recently and what has been the impact of this training?			
Does the GB /LGB have the right skills set? When did the governing board last carry out an audit of skills?			
How do you think the GB/LGB could improve as a board?			

Governor visits

The governing board should have a visits protocol and link visits to priorities in the school improvement plan. If governors are linked to specific areas, e.g. safeguarding, have they visited the school and if so how was this fed back to governors?

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
Under the guidance of the head teacher and Senior Leadership Team... Do governors visit the school to observe teaching? How is this information fed back to the GB/LGB?			
How are governor visits organised?			
How often do governors visit the school?			

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
Do governors undertake focused visits?			
Do governors visit the classroom and are individual governors linked to classes or year groups?			
Do governors participate in learning walks?			
Do governors jointly look at other evidence such as work in pupils' books to note progression, and how marking is used to further develop pupils' understanding of their learning? How is this information reported to the GB/LGB?			
Do governors talk to pupils about their learning?			
How is the GB/LGB aware of the ways in which the quality of teaching is monitored across the school?			
Do you know how good practice is shared within the school?			
Do any governors have a link to Foundation stage? How are they involved? How is any information reported to the GB/LGB?			
Are governors linked specifically to areas of the curriculum or phases or school development plan? How does this help your GB/LGB know more about the school? What is the impact of your involvement?			

Quality of leadership and management, including governance

These questions are testing the extent to which governors have reflected on their own effectiveness. Governors may comment on how they support the school, hold the school to account, and are involved in strategic planning. Governors should show an understanding of what effective school leadership is. This might include:

- *Improving the outcomes for pupils*
- *Building capacity for improvement via Continuous Professional Development (CPD)*
- *Delegating leadership duties to staff*
- *Developing a positive ethos*
- *How governors and the senior leadership team (SLT) work together to drive improvement*
- *In larger schools, an awareness of the relevant strengths and weaknesses of middle leadership might also be expected.*

Governors need to be clear about how their skills are used to support and challenge the school. Challenge is provided by governors driving agendas for the governing board/local governing board and committee meetings, by asking challenging questions and by requesting further information when required.

Question /Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
Can the GB/LGB give examples of how they have supported and challenged the school?			
What is the GB/LGB view of the quality of leadership in the school?			
What does the GB/LGB see as key areas for development within the school?			
Does the GB/LGB act to support and challenge the school and specifically, the head teacher?			
Does the GB/LGB work with senior leaders in school?			
Give an example of a time when the GB/LGB had to challenge the Headteacher?			
How do you support the Head in their leadership role?			
How are leaders developed and supported in the school?			
How are new staff, including Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs), inducted and supported?			
How are support staff led and managed? How do they contribute to improving outcomes for pupils?			

Question /Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
Are you familiar with the values and vision of the school? Does the GB/LGB contribute to and review the vision and values?			
Are all members of the GB/LGB familiar with the School Improvement Plan and the school's priorities? Does the GB/LGB contribute to this?			
To what extent is the GB/LGB involved in the school's processes for self-evaluation and improvement planning?			
Does the GB/LGB monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the School Improvement Plan?			
Is the GB/LGB aware of how the school manages its finances?			

Self-evaluation

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
What were the GB/LGB objectives for the past year? Were the objectives achieved?			
How does the GB/LGB contribute to the school's self-evaluation and understand its strengths and weaknesses, including the quality of teaching, and reviewing the impact of their own work?			
How does the GB/LGB assure themselves of the rigour of the assessment process?			
How is the GB/LGB aware of the impact of teaching on learning and progress in different subjects and year groups?			
How does the GB/LGB provide challenge and hold the head teacher and other senior leaders to account for improving the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and pupils' behaviour and safety, including by using the data dashboard, other progress data, examination outcomes and test results; or whether they hinder school improvement by failing to tackle key concerns?			

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
How does the GB/LGB ensure solvency and probity and that the financial resources made available to the school are managed effectively?			
How does the GB/LGB ensure it is providing support for an effective Headteacher?			
How does the GB/LGB monitor performance management systems and understand how the school makes decisions about teachers' salary progression, including the performance management of the Headteacher, to improve teaching, leadership and management?			
How is the GB/LGB transparent and accountable, including in terms of recruitment of staff, governance structures, attendance at meetings, and contact with parents and carers?			

Attainment and progress

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
Is the GB/LGB familiar with the school's tracking and monitoring systems for improving attainment and progress?			
How does the GB/LGB know about the strengths and areas for development and how they are being addressed?			
How is the school 'narrowing the gap' for any underperforming groups? Who are the vulnerable pupils (Free school meals, children looked after, SEN, EAL etc.) and how have they performed relative to their peers? How does this compare with national data?			
How is pupil achievement recorded and assessed?			

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
Does the GB/LGB get anonymised performance details of pupils, not just for KS2/4? How does the GB/LGB know how year groups are performing?			
Apart from individual subjects how else do children learn in school?			
What did GB/LGB think when they saw last year's Key Stage 2/4 results?			
How does the GB/LGB check that the attainment figures you receive from the school?			
Does the GB/LGB drill down into the figures on Analyse School Performance (ASP)/Fischer Family Trust (FFT)?			

Improving outcomes

Ofsted will ask questions about our school results and where we are now and how we challenged the results that were presented to us to ensure they were a true reflection of what was being achieved. Are we just accepting what is being presented to us? Are we seeking the evidence behind the results?

Governors should be aware that, in inspection terms, provision includes: teaching, the curriculum, care, guidance and support.

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
What contribution does the GB/LGB think it has made to improving provision, especially teaching, and outcomes for pupils?			
Are governors aware of the priorities for the school?			
What do you see as the three main priorities for improvement in this school? What reasons are there for the choice of the priorities in the school improvement plan?			
Who are the most vulnerable pupils in this school and what is being done for them?			

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
Does the GB/LGB have up to date knowledge regarding SEND policy and practice and can hold the school to account in line with their statutory obligations?			
Are proportionate risk management policies and procedures in place to support the school SEND priorities?			
How does the GB/LGB decision-making impact on pupils with SEND?			
Does at least one member of the GB/LGB have enhanced knowledge, skills and understanding of SEND?			
Does GB/LGB compare internal data with external sources of information to challenge the improvement of the school SEND provision?			
Does the GB/LGB analysis of school data highlight the outcomes of pupils with SEND as a cohort, across key phases and other defined characteristics, i.e. gender, socio-economic disadvantage, looked after?			

Attitudes to learning

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
Do pupils enjoy learning? How do you know?			
Can governors talk knowledgeably about what they need to do next to improve?			
Are they articulate and confident about their learning?			
Do pupils have high aspirations?			

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
How does the school celebrate pupils' in a variety of different ways beyond academic achievement?			

Pupil Premium, Sport Premium and Forces Children Funding

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
Are you aware as a GB/LGB of how much funding the school receives as part of the pupil premium grant?			
How is Pupil Premium being used?			
How does the progress of 'pupil premium' children in the school compare to progress nationally for children in similar schools? Is the gap being narrowed?			
How do you measure the impact of the money for pupil premium?			
Does your school website have details of how much Pupil Premium (PPG) funding the school receives and the evaluation of its use? The impact of the use of the PPG?			
Are you aware of how much funding the school receives as part of the sports premium grant?			
How has the Sports Premium Grant been used? What is the impact?			
Does your school website have details of how much Sports Premium funding the school receives? The impact of the use of the Sports Premium?			
Swimming, year 4 children. How many can swim 25 metres? Is this information on the school website?			
Forces children How is the forces premium used to support these children? How many are in school?			

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
Which year groups? How are these children achieving compared to their peers? Is this information on the school website?			

Finance

Question/area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
How is finance in the school managed?			
Does the GB/LGB and senior staff, have adequate financial skills among its members to fulfil its role of challenge and support in the field of budget management and value for money?			
Does the GB/LGB have a finance committee (or equivalent) with clear terms of reference and a knowledgeable and experienced chair?			
Does the GB/LGB receive clear and concise monitoring reports of the school's budget position at least three times a year?			
Are business interests of GB/LGB members and staff properly registered and taken into account to avoid conflicts of interest?			
Does the school have access to an adequate level of financial expertise, including when specialist finance staff are absent, e.g. on sick leave?			
Does the school review its staffing structure regularly?			
Have pay decisions been reached in accordance with a pay policy reflecting clear performance criteria for all staff?			

Question/area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
<p>Has the use of professional independent advice informed part of the pay decision process in relation to the headteacher?</p> <p>Does the GB/LGB regularly review and change the provider of professional independent advice?</p>			
<p>Is there a clear and demonstrable link between the school's budgeting and its school improvement/development plan for raising standards and attainment?</p>			
<p>Does the school make a forward projection of budget, including both revenue and capital funds, for at least three years?</p>			
<p>Does the school set a well-informed and balanced budget each year (with an agreed and timed plan for eliminating any deficit)?</p>			
<p>Is end year outturn in line with budget projections, or if not, is the GB/LGB alerted to significant variations in a timely manner, and do they result from explicitly planned changes or from genuinely unforeseeable circumstances?</p>			
<p>Does the school benchmark its income and expenditure annually against that of similar schools and investigate further where any category appears to be out of line?</p>			
<p>Does the school have procedures for purchasing goods and services that both meet legal requirements and secure value for money?</p> <p>Are there arrangements in place to guard against fraud and theft by staff, contractors and suppliers?</p>			
<p>Does the school have procedures for purchasing goods and services that both meet legal requirements and secure value for money?</p>			
<p>Does the school maintain its premises and other assets to an adequate standard to avoid future urgent need for replacement?</p>			

Question/area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
Can the GB/LGB give examples of where it has improved the use of resources during the past year?			
Is the GB/LGB aware of outstanding matters from audit reports and the resolution?			
Are all staff aware of the school's whistleblowing arrangements and to whom they should report concerns?			
Does the school have adequate arrangements for audit of voluntary funds?			
Does the school have a business continuity or disaster recovery plan, including an up-to-date asset register and adequate insurance?			

Overall effectiveness and capacity to improve

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
How has the school improved over the last 3 years?			
What has been the GB/LGB contribution to school improvement?			
What are the GB/LGB priorities for the coming year?			

Behaviour, safety and attendance

The governing board is not responsible for the day-to-day operation of safeguarding procedures but must have a close involvement in the formulation of the child protection policy and monitor and evaluate its impact annually.

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
What do you know about safeguarding?			
What are the procedures for safeguarding pupils and how have training needs been met?			
Do the policies work and what information will be needed to make that judgment?			
Does the safeguarding governor and the senior member of staff that have responsibility for safeguarding hold regular meetings?			
Does the GB/LGB 'spot check' the single central record (SCR)? Is this reported to the GB/LGB meetings and minuted? Have you carried out section 128, barred list check on all members of the GB/LGB? Is this now included on the Single Central Register (SCR)?			
Do Governors stay up to date with training guidance and minimum training standards, including refresher training?			
Do you know the designated governor and staff member for safeguarding? How do they report back to the governing board?			
Are the GB/LGB aware of any safeguarding concerns?			
Are pupils well behaved and polite?			
Are pupils taught in a healthy and safe environment?			
Do you know about the measures the school has in place to improve attendance and punctuality?			

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
What strategies does the school have against low level disruptive behaviour?			

Communications and relationships with parents and community

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
How does the school communicate with parents?			
How does the GB/LGB get feedback from parents and the children? Does the GB/LGB have a regular newsletter for parents?			
How are parental complaints dealt with?			
What do parents think about the school?			
In what ways does the school promote community relations?			
In what ways does it support the community and the community support it?			
What are the ways in which the school works collaboratively with other schools and institutions?			

Data

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
How are GB/LGB informed about the progress of pupils?			

What do GB/LGB know about Analyse School Performance and Fischer Family Trust (FFT) data?			
What has changed since the last Ofsted inspection?			
Where in school are standards being impacted by interventions?			
How do you challenge the results to ensure they are a true reflection of what is being achieved?			
Do you just accept what is presented to you or do you look for evidence behind the results?			
Do you look at the progress of pupils as evidenced through Analyse School Performance and or FFT?			

Performance management

Ofsted expect that the governing board has a clear picture of the standard of teaching in school and how performance management is used to reward teachers who teach well and that the school is doing something about those who consistently underperform. An important document for governors is the Headteacher's report on performance management.

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
How is the GB/LGB involved in the Headteacher's performance management?			
How do you hold the Headteacher to account through performance management?			
Are you aware of the Headteacher's Performance Management targets and how they relate to whole school priorities and the Performance Management targets of staff?			

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
How does the GB/LGB review the Headteacher's performance management throughout the year?			
Is there a connection between teachers' targets and Head's targets?			
What is the performance management structure in school? How is performance managed?			
How are teaching and learning responsibility points allocated to staff and how many senior teachers are there?			
How much outstanding/good/ satisfactory/ inadequate teaching is there in school and what actions had been taken to bring about improvements?			
Are you aware of the proportion of teachers who have progressed along the main pay scale, those progressing to, and through, the upper pay scale, those on the leadership scale, and teachers who have achieved additional responsibility points?			
Has the GB/LGB ever turned down a request for a staff pay rise?			
How do you keep track of the pay increments for staff?			
How do you consider the Headteacher's pay recommendations for staff?			
What impact has performance management had?			

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
How is the GB/LGB involved in the recruitment of staff?			
How have Continuous Professional Development (CPD) resources been used? What impact has this made?			
Have the GB/LGB been consulted on major curriculum changes e.g. literacy and numeracy provision?			

British values

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
How does the GB/LGB ensure that they and the school promote tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith), races, genders, ages, disability and sexual orientations (and other groups with protected characteristics) and support and help, through their words, actions and influence within the school and more widely in the community, to prepare children and young people positively for life in modern Britain?			
What does the promotion of British Values look like in this school?			
How does the school deal with any extremist concerns? Are there any risks? How is this reported?			
In terms of pupil intake, do we know what community we are serving?			

Question/Area	GB/LGB/Committee with delegated responsibility	How does the GB/LGB know?	Action taken/Evidence
Does our GB/LGB have a broad representation of faiths/gender/races/ages etc.?			

GB - Full Governing Board

LGB - Local Governing Board