

Role Description: Link HM Inspector for Independent Schools

Each independent school is assigned an HM Inspector who acts as the main point of contact between the school and Education Scotland. The role of link inspector has been developed over time to maintain, and where necessary improve further, the engagement between HM Inspectors and individual schools. The role is part of an overall strategy for engaging with, gathering intelligence about and building capacity within the sector.

Inspectors aim to form positive working relationships with assigned schools. This is done through telephone/ email contact, written correspondence and an annual engagement visit. The approach taken will be proportionate and tailored to circumstances within each school, including the school's most recent involvement with inspection, QUIPE visit or visits carried out at the request of the Registrar for Independent Schools. The role of the link HMI is not intended to be used to investigate complaints or carry out duties in relation to the registration of independent schools. However, the Registrar may contact the link HMI in such circumstances in order to ascertain the most up to date information on file about a particular school.

As link inspector duties are only one small part of the varied remit of each HM Inspector's deployment, the extent to which they can get involved in the life and work of each school is very limited. It is unlikely that link inspectors will be able to attend events or offer in-service training in response to requests from individual schools (although they are free to do so as part of their own professional learning). It is therefore very important for individual HMIs to manage the expectations of the sector in relation to the link HMI role.

Specific duties

Link HM Inspectors will:

- build up a positive working relationship with the school's leadership team and act as the main link between the school and Education Scotland, including the Registrar of Independent Schools.
- through a process of annual engagement, gather and record any available intelligence about the school. This should include information about the **curriculum; leadership and governance arrangements; standards of attainment; arrangements for safeguarding; and the school's own self-evaluation**. This could be done by requesting and reading key documents such as the school's prospectus, improvement plans, quality reports and key policies.
- maintain knowledge of the school's performance through being aware of reports/evidence from partner agencies such as the Care Inspectorate.
- maintain close contact with the appropriate Lead Officer responsible for independent schools regarding developments in individual schools. The LO should be informed immediately over any concerns in relation to safeguarding or other associated risks to learners progress or wellbeing. The LO should also be notified of any outstanding practice that link inspectors become aware of, in order that this can be considered for any national tasks including the National Improvement Hub.
- complete and submit the Annual Engagement Visit Record as soon as possible after the visit to the LO and to Alice Lafferty, who will ensure the

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record is saved in the school file. This is very important in order that we can ensure that Education Scotland staff have access to the most up to date information on the school while HMI are out of office.

- attend independent schools team meetings and act as an ambassador for the independent sector within Education Scotland.
- maintain knowledge of issues affecting the independent sector.

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Appendix 1

**Independent Schools
Annual Engagement Visit Record 2016/17**

| Name of HMI | Date | Name of HT | Name of Establishment |
|-------------|------|------------|-----------------------|
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| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Professional engagement | <p>Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <p>Other activities carried out during the visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • |
| Main Points/Issues Covered | <p><u>Leadership</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <p><u>Governance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <p><u>Curriculum</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <p><u>Standards of Attainment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <p><u>Safeguarding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <p><u>Priorities for improvement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <p><u>Other</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • |

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|---|---|
| <p>Further Action Required cc: AD cc: LO</p> | |
| <p>Other Comments</p> | |
| <p>If there is a nursery, is it in partnership with the LA. ie do they have funded places?</p> <p>Details of any recent inspection by the Care Inspectorate</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• |