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Dr Liz Fawcett
(By email)

Ref: DE/2013-0230

7 January 2014

Dear Dr Fawcett

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Further to your email of 6 December 2013, please see the following response from the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) in relation to your request for various information and documentation under the auspices of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000.

A response for each of your queries will be given in numerical order according to the order in which each query was asked in your email.

- 1) What information, if any, are schools currently required to provide to parents about school inspections (i) when their child enrolls at a particular school (ii) prior to a school inspection?**

ETI response

- (i) Schools are not required to provide parents with any information about school inspections when a child enrolls at a particular school.
 - (ii) Prior to a school inspection, ETI provides the school with an information pack, which contains a letter for parents providing information on the inspection process and explaining how to access the online parental questionnaire. An example of the letter can be viewed on the ETI website at: <http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/support-material/support-material-primary/sample-parents-letter.pdf>

- 2) Are schools required to publish inspection reports relating to their school on their school website in a timely manner?**

ETI response

Schools are not required to publish inspection reports relating to their school on their school's website. All published inspection reports can be accessed on the ETI website at: www.etini.gov.uk

3) Are schools required to let parents know how they can access the most recent inspection report relating to the school?

ETI response

Schools are required to let parents know how they can access the most recent inspection report relating to the school. In the letter parents receive prior to the school's inspection, they are made aware of how to access the inspection report of the inspection once it has been published on the ETI website. The principal of the school is required, within ten working days of receiving the report of the inspection, to:

- a. Acknowledge receipt of the report; and
- b. Confirm that s/he has informed staff and parents of its availability on the ETI website.

4) What criteria are used by ETI as the basis for their inspections of primary and post-primary schools?

ETI response

The criteria that ETI uses as the basis for its inspections of primary and post-primary schools can be found in the document "Together Towards Improvement", which can be accessed on the ETI website at: <http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/together-towards-improvement.htm>.

5) Is the criteria published on the ETI website?

ETI response

Please see ETI's response to question 4.

6) Does ETI carry out any full, standard inspections (as opposed to focused inspections) of primary schools?

ETI response

Using a proportionate risk based approach ensures that inspection resources are targeted to where they are most needed and will have the greatest impact rather than a one size fits all approach. All inspections, irrespective of duration, report on the overall effectiveness of the school, achievements and standards, quality of provision for learning and leadership and management. Follow-up inspections (of schools that are satisfactory or below) are equally robust and re-evaluate overall effectiveness of provision. The follow-up inspection assures parents that the necessary improvements identified at the original inspection have been implemented. There is ongoing monitoring of all schools by the District Inspector which is unique to schools in Northern Ireland.

The focused inspection (typically five days) of primary schools and a short inspection (typically two days) conducted in small primary schools or in those deemed to be low risk have been replaced since September 2013. There is just one approach to primary school inspection with the differentiation being between low risk/small schools (2 days) and

higher risk/larger schools (5 days). All of these inspection types included/includes an evaluation of overall effectiveness, achievements and standards, quality of provision for learning and leadership and management.

- 7) Do all focused inspections of primary schools (other than follow-up inspections and specialist inspections examining only e.g. library provision) examine the following:**
- a. The quality of play-based learning at Foundation Stage.**
 - b. The quality of provision relating to the following subjects and areas of learning:**
 - i. physical education, including the quantity of that provision;**
 - ii. ICT;**
 - iii. science and technology;**
 - iv. history;**
 - v. geography;**
 - vi. art;**
 - vii. music;**
 - viii. the development of groupwork skills; and**
 - ix. the development of research and investigation skills.**
 - c. The quality of a school's communication with parents, including the existence of a parent council through which parents can make their views known to the school.**
 - d. The quality of a school's communication with pupils, including the existence of a school council through which pupils can make their views known and have an input into the running of the school**

ETI response

All primary school inspections evaluate achievements and standards, quality of provision for learning and leadership and management. The provision for numeracy and literacy is evaluated on all primary school inspections. Other areas of the curriculum are evaluated as a matter of course through observation of lessons.

ETI evaluates quality of provision against the quality indicators which can be accessed at; <http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/together-towards-improvement/together-towards-improvement-primary.htm>

There is no requirement for schools to have a pupil council or a parent council. However, parents are represented on the Boards of Governors of schools; ETI accesses parental views via questionnaires, face-to-face meetings with governors and face-to-face meetings with individual parents or representatives of the PTA, on request.

All inspections, include an evaluation of the extent to which children are consulted about the ongoing development of the school, Inspectors meet with groups of pupils in the pastoral care interviews and also discuss their learning with them in class.

- 8) Do all inspections of post-primary schools examine the following:**
- a. the quality and quantity of physical education and sports provision.**
 - b. The quality of the school's communication with parents, including the existence of a parent council through which parents can make their views known to the school.**
 - c. The quality of the school's communication with pupils, including the existence of a school council through which pupils can make their views known and have an input into the running of the school.**

ETI response

All post-primary school inspections evaluate achievements and standards quality of provision for learning and leadership and management. A separate evaluation of the physical education and sports provision is not included in all inspections however it may be examined when a physical education specialist inspector is assigned to the inspection team. Individual physical education or sports lessons are visited by inspectors and evaluated as part of a class pursuit. In addition, Specialist Inspectors of Physical Education make specialist visits to individual schools.

ETI evaluates quality of provision against the quality indicators which can be accessed at; <http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/together-towards-improvement/together-towards-improvement-post-primary.htm>

There is no requirement for schools to have a pupil council or a parent council. However, parents are represented on the Boards of Governors of schools; ETI accesses parental views via questionnaires, face-to-face meetings with governors and face-to-face meetings with individual parents or representatives of the PTA, on request.

All inspections, include an evaluation of the extent to which children are consulted about the ongoing development of the school, Inspectors meet with groups of pupils in the pastoral care interviews and also discuss their learning with them in class.

- 9) Could you please supply a copy of the questionnaires which are currently sent to parents whose children attend a primary school or a post-primary school which is being inspected.**

ETI response

As outlined in ETI's response to question 1, parents receive a letter prior to an inspection, advising how the questionnaire can be accessed online. A hard copy of the questionnaire is only provided if a parent cannot access the online version. Sample questionnaires can be accessed on the ETI website at:

<http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/support-material/support-material-post-primary/sample-parents-questionnaire-post-primary.htm>

10) Are the above questionnaires sent to all parents?

ETI response

As part of the inspection process, ETI provides the school with letters for each parent, which direct the parents to the online questionnaire on the ETI website.

11) Do parents submit their responses direct to ETI or via the school?

ETI response

Questionnaire responses are submitted direct to ETI.

12) How does ETI select the pupils to whom it talks in both primary and post-primary schools respectively?

ETI response

The reporting inspector, who leads the inspection, takes a random selection of pupils from a list of all the pupils within each relevant year group of the school that is being inspected.

13) Typically, how many primary school pupils and how many post-primary school pupils does ETI speak to when it carries out an inspection?

ETI response

Focus groups of pupils are spoken to as part of the inspection of safeguarding and pastoral care. Typically approximately six to eight, year six pupils would be involved in such a discussion. These pupils are also spoken to in their classroom situation regarding the learning in that lesson and more generally.

ETI values the opportunity to speak to as wide a range of pupils as possible and makes time to do so. Inspectors will also speak to prefects, young people undertaking extra curricular activities and those who are representing their school, for example, in competitions.

14) Are post-primary schools assessed on the provision of all subjects which are taught at that school during full standard inspections?

ETI response

This information can be accessed through the ETI website at;
<http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/support-material/support-material-post-primary/information-for-parents-post-primary.htm>

Since September 2013, ETI uses the school development plan as the starting point for the inspection. The inspection is then tailored to the school's priorities for improvement which will always include literacy and numeracy and therefore a range of subjects will be observed.

15) How does ETI select the subjects which it investigates in-depth with regard to each full standard inspection of a post-primary school?

ETI response

This information can be accessed through the ETI website at;
<http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/support-material/support-material-post-primary/information-for-parents-post-primary.htm>

Since September 2013, ETI uses the school development plan as the starting point for the inspection. The inspection is then tailored to the school's priorities for improvement which will always include literacy and numeracy and therefore a range of subjects will be observed.

16) What is the ratio of inspectors to teachers which ETI uses to determine how many inspectors are required to visit a particular school?

ETI response

The information below represents 'typical' team size and composition. It should be noted, however, that the size and composition of an inspection team may also be determined on the basis of proportionate risk, and that there may be additional members added to a given team, for example, to facilitate the induction of new inspectors. Associate Assessors are also involved in inspections, survey evaluations and dissemination work.

Primary inspections (2/3 day and 5 day model)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•• The size of the inspection team will be dependent on the size of the school. A general guide is one member of ETI for 3/4 teachers• Minimum team size of 2 ETI• Maximum team size of 7 ETI + AA(s)
Post-primary inspections	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•• Minimum team size of 4 ETI + AA• Maximum team size of 7 ETI + AA(s)• A post-primary team is based on the size of school.

17) What is the minimum proportion and number of lessons observed by ETI during a focused or standard primary school inspection?

ETI response

There is no set minimum proportion and number of lessons observed during a focused or standard primary school inspection. The inspection team endeavours, over the inspection period, to sample as much teaching as is necessary, commensurate with other activities such as holding discussions with pupils and school staff and reviewing documentation. This usually means that all teachers are observed, at least twice during the period of the inspection.

18) What is the minimum proportion and number of lessons observed by ETI during a full standard post-primary school inspection?

ETI response

There is no set minimum proportion and number of lessons observed during a post-primary school inspection. The inspection team endeavours, over a three-day period, to sample as much teaching as is necessary, commensurate with other activities such as holding discussions with pupils and school staff and reviewing documentation. In a smaller or medium-sized school this usually means that all teachers are observed, sometimes, depending on circumstances and the number of different subjects they may teach, two or three times during the period of the inspection. In large and very large schools, most of the teachers are observed at least once.

19) What is the minimum proportion of teachers whose teaching is observed by ETI during a focused or standard primary school inspection?

ETI response

In a primary school inspection, all teachers are observed by ETI.

20) What is the minimum proportion of teachers whose teaching is observed by ETI during a focused or standard post-primary school inspection?

ETI response

There is no set 'minimum proportion of teachers whose teaching is observed by ETI during a post-primary inspection. As the first day of the inspection involves all inspectors conducting class pursuits the majority of the teachers will be observed during that day. As outlined in ETI's response to question 18, the inspection team endeavours, over a three-day period, to sample as much teaching as is necessary, commensurate with holding discussions with pupils and school staff and reviewing documentation. In a smaller or medium-sized school this usually means that all teachers are observed, sometimes, depending on circumstances and the number of different subjects they may teach, two or three times during the period of the inspection. In large and very large schools, most of the teachers are observed at least once.

21) Could you please provide details of the following:

- **any focused or full standard inspection reports published between January 2000 and December 2013 with regard to the primary schools listed in Table 1, p.9 of the attached submission from ParentsOutLoud which are not already listed in that table (in each instance, excluding all follow-up inspection reports and inspection reports which focus on particular, specialist areas e.g. library provision)**
- **any full standard inspection reports with regard to the post-primary schools listed in the same Table 1 which are not already listed in that table (in each instance, excluding all follow-up inspection reports and inspection reports which focus on particular, specialist areas e.g. library provision)**

ETI response

This information is widely available and in the public domain. Previous inspection reports can be accessed on the ETI website, using the search facility at:

<http://www.etini.gov.uk/search.jsp/search.lsim?sr=0&nh=10&cs=iso-8859-1&sc=&sm=0&mt=1&ha=eti-cms&qt=>

22) How often does ETI carry out a focused inspection of each primary school and a full standard inspection of each post-primary school?

ETI response

Until September 2010, ETI aimed to inspect each school at least once every seven years with more frequent inspection of a school being undertaken where it was deemed necessary. In September 2010, ETI introduced a more proportionate and risk-based inspection strategy whereby the need for an inspection is identified by information from school performance indicators, risk factors including the length of time since the last formal inspection and from on-going monitoring of schools by inspectors at local level.

Using a proportionate risk based approach. ensures that inspection resources are targeted to where they are most needed and will have the greatest impact rather than a one size fits all approach. All inspections, irrespective of duration, report on the overall effectiveness of the school, achievements and standards, quality of provision for learning and leadership and management. Follow-up inspections (of schools that are satisfactory or below) are equally robust and re-evaluate overall effectiveness of provision. The follow-up inspection assures parents that the necessary improvements identified at the original inspection have been implemented.

By the end of the current academic year almost 90% of primary schools and 97% of post-primary schools will have been inspected within seven years. During the last business year alone, 17% of primary schools (144) and 22% of post primary schools (46) had either an inspection or a follow-up inspection. There is ongoing monitoring of all schools by the District Inspector which is unique to schools in Northern Ireland.

The focused inspection (typically five days) of primary schools and a short inspection (typically two days) conducted in small primary schools or in those deemed to be low risk have been replaced since September 2013. There is just one approach to primary school inspection with the differentiation being between low risk/small schools (2 days) and higher risk/larger schools (5 days). All of these inspection types included/includes an evaluation of overall effectiveness, achievements and standards, quality of provision for learning and leadership and management.

In the post-primary sector, standard inspections (typically five days) were undertaken evaluating overall effectiveness, achievements and standards, quality of provision for learning, and leadership and management. Two or three subject departments were inspected. The post-primary model of inspection has been revised (still five days) with a stronger focus on self-evaluation and the whole school rather than on individual departments. This was introduced in September 2013. There is no equivalent of a short inspection at the post-primary level.

23) Has the policy with regard to frequency of inspections changed within the past three years and, if so, what was the previous policy?

ETI response

Please see ETI's response to question 22.

24) What was ETI's annual expenditure in 2011-12 and 2012-13?

ETI response

ETI's annual expenditure in 2011-12 was £5,408,696.83 and in 2012-13, it was £5,747,792.59.

25) In 2012-13, what proportion of ETI's annual expenditure was spent on delivery of its services (i.e. inspections and regulatory events)?

ETI response

All of ETI's annual expenditure was spent on delivering its services in 2012-13.

26) What budget has ETI been allocated for 2013-14, and for each of the next five years (if this information is available)? (We understand that there is to be a 20% cut in ETI's budget over the next five years, but this information is not verified).

ETI response

Based on current assumptions, the anticipated expenditure for ETI for 2013/2014 is £5.6m approximately. Currently there is no forecast budget allocation available at directorate level for the next five years.

27) What budget is allocated in 2013-14 for primary inspections, and what budget for post-primary inspections?

ETI response

Please see ETI's response to question 26.

28) How many staff inspectors are employed by ETI to carry out primary and post-primary inspections, respectively, and at what grades?

ETI response

ETI has 37 full time inspectors to carry out primary and post primary inspections; and these are supplemented from time to time by inspectors with the relevant experience from other phases; all of these are Grade 6. Since there is a tendency to work across phases, it is not possible to give separate accurate designations of primary and post-primary inspectors.

29) How many inspectors are employed on a freelance or contractual/sub-contractual basis by ETI to carry out primary and post-primary inspections, respectively, and at what grades?

ETI response

Currently, there are no inspectors employed on a freelance or contractual/sub-contracted basis by ETI to carry out primary and post-primary inspections.

30) How many inspections and regulatory events (of all types of educational and training institution inspected by ETI) were carried out in the financial year 2012-13 (or in 2012 if the information is not available for the financial year)?

ETI response

During the 2012-13 financial year 239 inspections of all types of education and training institutions were completed.

31) How many focused inspections of primary schools were carried out in the financial year 2012 – 2013 (or the calendar year 2012), excluding specialist inspections of e.g. library provision?

ETI response

In total during the 2012-13 financial year, there were 118 primary school inspections (this includes preparatory, primary and independent schools).

32) How many full standard inspections of primary schools were carried out in the financial year 2012-13 (or the calendar year 2012)?

ETI response

Using a proportionate risk based approach ensures that inspection resources are targeted to where they are most needed and will have the greatest impact rather than a one size fits all approach. All inspections, irrespective of duration, report on the overall effectiveness of the school, achievements and standards, quality of provision for learning and leadership and management. Follow-up inspections (of schools that are satisfactory or below) are equally robust and re-evaluate overall effectiveness of provision. The follow-up inspection assures parents that the necessary improvements identified at the original inspection have been implemented. There is ongoing monitoring of all schools by the District Inspector which is unique to schools in Northern Ireland.

The focused inspection (typically five days) of primary schools and a short inspection (typically two days) conducted in small primary schools or in those deemed to be low risk have been replaced since September 2013. There is just one approach to primary school inspection with the differentiation being between low risk/small schools (2 days) and higher risk/larger schools (5 days). All of these inspection types included/includes an evaluation of overall effectiveness, achievements and standards, quality of provision for learning and leadership and management.

In total during the 2012-13 financial year, there were 118 primary school inspections (this includes preparatory, primary and independent schools).

33) How many full standard inspections of post-primary schools were carried out in the financial year 2012-13 (or the calendar year 2012)?

ETI response

During the 2012-13 financial year, 26 post-primary schools were inspected.

34) Could you please provide details of all thematic reviews, relating to schools, which have been published by ETI within the last three years, and of any press releases which were issued with regard to these reviews?

ETI response

This information is available in ETI's annual business reports, which can be accessed on the ETI website at:

- 2009-2010 <http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/support-material/support-material-general-documents-non-phase-related/support-material-general-documents-about-the-education-and-training-inspectorate/annual-business-report-2009-2010.htm>
- 2010-2011 <http://www.etini.gov.uk/index/support-material/support-material-general-documents-non-phase-related/support-material-general-documents-about-the-education-and-training-inspectorate/annual-business-report-2010-2011.htm>
- 2011-2012 <http://www.etini.gov.uk/annual-business-report-2011-2012>

Please note that the 2012-2013 business report is still being finalised and is not yet published on ETI's website.

If you are unhappy with the level of service you have received in relation to your request, you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of the letters. You may write to Garth Manderson, Departmental Information Manager, Rathgael House, Balloo Road, Bangor, BT19 7PR, or send an email to garth.manderson@deni.gov.uk if you wish to make a complaint.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a review of our original decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynn Hayes". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'L' and 'H'.

LYNN HAYES (MRS)
Head of Inspection Services Branch