



Dear Principal, Teachers, Special Needs Assistants and Members of the School Community,

I hope that your work is progressing well as you start the final term of this school year. In this update from the Inspectorate, I would like to let you know about some of the changes we have introduced recently in our work. These changes have been shared and discussed with the education partners as we continue to work collaboratively to develop our evaluation practices.

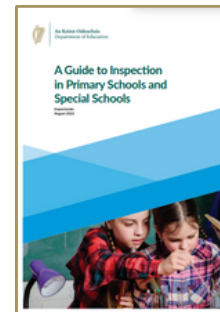
## Emphasising improvement and highlighting excellence

We updated our published inspection guides last month. The main change was that we revised the *Quality Continuum*, which inspectors use when evaluating aspects of a school's work during an inspection.

The revised continuum now includes an "Excellent" level, which will enable inspectors to identify and acknowledge where practice is exemplary.

We are committed to ongoing development and improvement of education provision. As a result, we have placed greater focus on improvement, by adjusting the titles and descriptors of the two lower levels of the *Quality Continuum*, which are:

- Requires improvement to achieve a good standard, and
- Requires significant improvement to achieve a good standard.



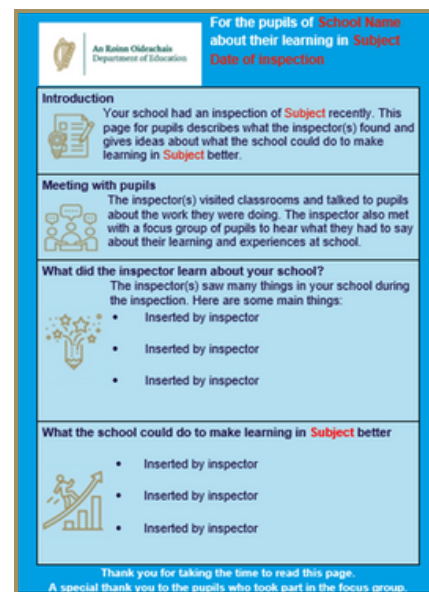
Click on the image to access the updated guide to inspection.

## Enhancing children's participation in inspection

We have been working with children over the past few years to enhance how we include them in inspections. This work showed us that children would like us to share information with them after inspections.

Therefore, we trialled including a page for children in inspection reports, presenting some of the findings and recommendations from the inspection, using appropriate and child-friendly language. The feedback from schools and children in the trial was both helpful and positive.

We are now beginning to gradually introduce the children's page in some Curriculum Evaluation (CE) reports. The image gives an idea of what that page will look like.



Some of our other resources for children are available [here](#).

## Thematic reports

Recently, we have looked at the theme of inclusion in some of our inspections. In some schools, we gathered information on the quality of education for children from Ukraine and for children who are learning English as an additional language. We then published thematic reports that outlined our overall findings.

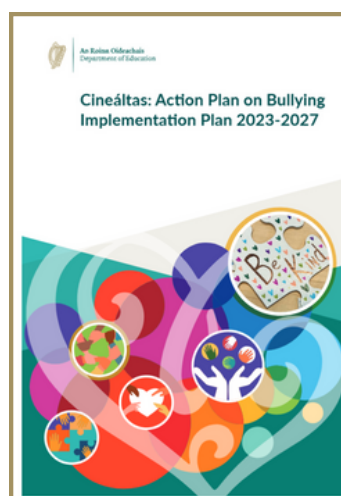
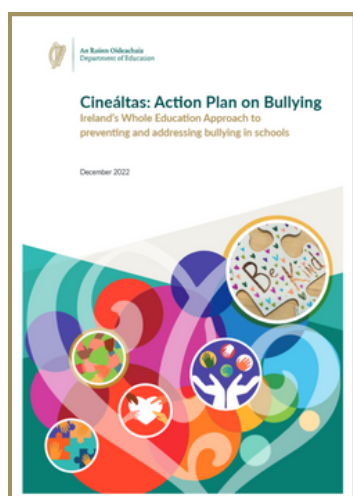
Separately, we also published a report describing the quality of education for children who attended a summer programme in 2023.

These reports highlight what is working well and they make recommendations for schools and for the education system.

The reports are available [here](#).



## Cineáltas and inspection



We are developing an inspection model currently that will evaluate the extent to which a school has appropriate strategies in place to promote wellbeing, prevent and address bullying, and promote a positive and inclusive school culture. This is one of the actions in the Department's implementation plan for *Cineáltas: The Action Plan on Bullying*.



A consultation about this new model of inspection will start this term, and the work to date has been undertaken in collaboration with teachers, school leaders and children in a number of primary schools.

## A new Inspectorate homepage on gov.ie



We have created a new Inspectorate homepage, available at [www.gov.ie/DEInspectorate](http://www.gov.ie/DEInspectorate)



We hope this will help you to access our published materials in a more user-friendly manner.

The image shows the various categories of publications on this homepage.



I want to thank everyone with whom we have engaged in our inspection, advisory and developmental work so far this year. This partnership approach, based on a spirit of mutual respect and reciprocity, is very important to us and something we deeply value.

As we enter the final term of the school year 2023-2024, I want to wish all children, special needs assistants, teachers, school leaders and school communities, the very best for the remainder of this school year.



Le gach dea-mhéin,

*Yvonne Keating*

Yvonne Keating,  
Chief Inspector

http://  
Useful  
links

- Access school inspection reports [here](#)
- Access Inspectorate publications [here](#)