



INFORMATION NOTE FOR PRIMARY AND POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS REVISED INSPECTION ARRANGEMENTS FROM 25 NOVEMBER 2021

As of 25 November 2021, revisions have been made to the inspection arrangements set out in Circular 32/2021 and Circular 33/2021. Information on the revisions are available here.

The Inspectorate of the Department is very conscious of the impact that the Covid pandemic has had, and continues to have, on the work of schools. It has adjusted its inspection programme for schools in the light of this context. As and from 25 November, inspection activity will be confined to the following:

- (1) Child protection inspections, which monitor the implementation of the Department's *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-primary Schools 2017* in fulfilment of the Minister's obligations under the Children First Act 2015;
- (2) Inspections of schools located in Special Care Units and Child Detention Centres where educational provision is made available to children who are detained under court orders (these facilities are required to be inspected annually because of the high vulnerability of the learners concerned);
- (3) Essential follow-up inspections to monitor the implementation of urgent recommendations arising from previous child protection and other inspections;
- (4) Advisory-focussed Sustaining Safe Provision of Schooling (SSPS) visits that are undertaken to monitor the implementation of anti-Covid measures that ensure that schools are safe working and learning environments; these inspections are required under the national "Work Safely Protocol COVID-19 National Protocol for Employers and Workers" and reported upon regularly to the Health and Safety Authority and the Department of An Taoiseach
- (5) Urgent emergency visits to schools.

The programme of incidental (short) inspections, which were notified in advance and which were taking place in the current term are being deferred to later in the school year. These visits have been focused on: monitoring anti-bullying measures in schools; the use of shortened timetables for students; and the provision of advice and support to



schools as they seek to address the learning needs of students whose learning has been affected by the Covid pandemic.

All other types of inspection (such as whole-school evaluations, curriculum evaluations, subject inspections, inspections of DEIS action planning, etc.) have already been cancelled in the current term. This was notified to schools in Circulars 32/2021 and 33/2021. As set out in those circulars, the inspection programme will be kept under review in the light of evolving public health advice.

Inspectorate, Department of Education

23 November 2021