

THE PERFECT INSPECTION

Ofsted

2012
Ofsted
Framework

Jackie Beere Edited by Ian Gilbert



Praise for *The Perfect Ofsted Inspection*

A highly practical and comprehensive guide that will ensure that you show your school and its achievements at its best. *The Perfect Ofsted Inspection* skilfully provides advice and guidance alongside actual case studies of how the advice works in practice. This book is a must for any leadership team, middle leader and governing body. Read in conjunction with *The Perfect Ofsted Lesson*, all schools should be better placed to meet the demands of the Ofsted visit.

Julie Summerfield, Head Teacher,
Horndean Technology College

The Perfect Ofsted Inspection offers school leaders a cogent and concise analysis of the challenges of the new Ofsted framework. In addition it offers school leaders comprehensive and competent solutions to ensure that the 'outstanding' judgement is lived, breathed and witnessed in the daily life of the school.

As with her previous books, Jackie has once again developed her own outstanding practice of separating the kernels from the husks and allowing the school leader to plan, prepare and prioritise strategies for school improvement in order to reach the 'promised land' of 'outstanding'.

Her style remains witty and her anecdotes informative, and such a personalised style adds to the enjoyment of a subject matter that can sometimes appear rather stale on the surface. She brings to life the importance of ensuring that schools are places where staff and students ought to progress daily. In this way, as a school leader, I found the book not only to be informative but also transformative.

John Toal, Director of Ethos,
Learning and Teaching, St Ambrose College

Jackie Beere's book *The Perfect Ofsted Inspection* is an essential guide to preparing for the 2012 inspection framework. It covers everything from self-evaluation to using Parent View effectively, from pointers for governors and teaching assistants to teachers and the senior leadership team. It is succinctly written with good real-life examples of outstanding practice. It is an effective summary of what a school should have in place to achieve the best Ofsted possible and it is accessible for all involved in school improvement.

We all live with the shadow of Ofsted and Jackie's book provides some bright lights to help diminish this shadow. *The Perfect Ofsted Inspection* gives schools the confidence to strive to be outstanding, to be open with inspectors and clear in the process of the inspection.

Mark Ratchford, Head Teacher,
Glaphthorn CE Lower School, Northamptonshire

The Perfect Ofsted Inspection is more than a useful addition to the literature – it is essential reading. It is also easy to like. I read it in two sessions and will read it again with a pen in hand to create a to-do list.

The book is very readable on account of the lively style, well-chosen case studies, checklists and summaries. It stands in stark contrast to the worthy tomes we all buy and never have the heart to read.

The author is suitably authoritative and brisk – and understands that a bit of bossiness saves busy staff a lot of time. Buy it.

Tim Bartlett, former head teacher

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Acknowledgements

One of the greatest pleasures of my latest career as a school improvement partner, author, consultant and trainer has been to work with inspirational head teachers and other school leaders who are dedicated to creating amazing opportunities for the learners in their schools. This book is dedicated to those who are brave enough to take on the top job, with all the challenges and opportunities it presents.

On the roller coaster of school leadership there is little more rewarding than being judged by other professionals as ‘outstanding’ – and the benefits to your school that follow are very well known. I wanted to try to capture some of the most inspiring practice I have seen in this book, so other teachers and leaders can have the very best chance to impress.

Many thanks go to my case study schools for sharing their wonderful work with me. Thank you in particular to Ranjit Samra, Colin Turner and Martin Moore. The years I have worked alongside you have been a great pleasure and an inspiring learning journey.

I would like to thank Gulshan Kayembe for generously sharing her Ofsted expertise and taking time to give me such

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useful feedback. She made me believe we can all work together to make the inspection process work for our schools. This book would not have happened if not for the encouragement of Caroline Lenton and support from Ian Gilbert and everyone else at Crown House/Independent Thinking Press, who are the most lovely bunch of publishing people you could meet.

Thank you also to my daughters, Carrie for the initial 'Perfect' inspiration, and to Lucy for constantly keeping me in touch with the life of a teacher in the classroom - I am so very proud of how resilient and determined you both are - in everything.

Finally, I must acknowledge my husband John. He made this book work so much better through his incessant attention to detail and talent for organising my often chaotic prose into something that makes sense. He is the other half of my brain, as well as my rock and my greatest supporter.

What a wonderful thing it is to write books that someone wants to read - books that may help a bit with the hugely important job of leading and teaching in schools. How lucky am I to be able to do this job! If you are reading this - thanks ...

Foreword

Clint Eastwood rides into town and goes into the saloon. He's been told the whole place needs a good shake-up. Several minutes later he leaves, guns smoking, and rides off into the sunset leaving behind a bar where the staff who haven't been sacked or shot are demoralised and wondering why they ever went into the saloon-keeping business in the first place.

Down the road, a professional and committed lady bar owner is taking her staff through what they need to do to be even better at their job. She is firm but human, making her best bar staff feel great about what they do yet want to be even better, and helping those who are less good raise their game. Throughout the process she keeps the whole staff focused on core bar-keeping principles that remind everyone why working in a saloon is the best job in the whole world.

And so, in a (not too far-fetched metaphor of a) nutshell, there you have the state of school inspection in the UK today.

On the one hand you have a gung-ho approach driven by the 'fact' that if you scratch the surface of any teacher you will find a complacent slacker who needs his arse kicked in order

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to do a half-decent job for those poor children not lucky enough to get an independent education. On the other, you have people like Jackie Beere who has spent her life in schools at all levels of the system, who is one of the UK's most respected and innovative educational pioneers and who knows that education is not about (although does involve) grades and league tables. Instead improving education is about helping teachers plan lessons that genuinely engage learners in the process of learning as well as developing skills and competencies that will help them thrive in the twenty-first century workplace.

Which is where this book comes in.

Building on the phenomenal success of her *Perfect Ofsted Lesson* book for the Independent Thinking Press, *The Perfect Ofsted Inspection* takes the reader simply but assertively through all that any school needs to do in order to present themselves in the best possible light next time Clint and his team of gunslingers ride into town.

But this is not a book about simply doing well in an Ofsted inspection. Jackie's own brand of school improvement runs far deeper than mere window dressing. What's more, surprising though it may seem at first glance, the new Ofsted framework and Jackie's passion for genuine quality in educational experience do converge nicely. Developing independent learning, moving away – well away – from an over-reliance on 'chalk and talk' lessons, providing opportunities for developing skills and competencies, genuinely engaging learners in their own learning, planning for and measuring progress,

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using assessment and data as tools to support learning, working at an emotional as well as an intellectual level – all of these have been staples in Jackie’s work for many years. Nice now of Ofsted to catch up.

Quality teaching and learning in the classroom on its own does not an ‘outstanding school’ make however. Schools still regularly let themselves down at leadership level. This is why Jackie’s new book behaves like the love child of an authoritative guide and an expert coach standing there with a simple checklist and a firm but caring face to ensure that all school leaders – from the head and governors to the heads of department and middle leaders – get the basics right. Basics that are relevant whatever type of school you are and whether you are about to be on the receiving end of a visit from Clint or not.

Education is a political football and it is a political game as old as the hills to decry something publicly in order to achieve the leverage with the public and the press to make significant (often self-serving and ideological) changes. It’s the same with the National Health Service. To ride into town all guns blazing under a banner of ‘making things better’ is cheap, easy leadership, whether you are the Secretary of State for Education, the head of Ofsted, the executive director an academy chain or a head teacher. To walk purposefully into town with a genuine desire to introduce lasting improvements firmly and professionally that bring the best out of all hard-working and committed staff is something that takes a much greater degree of professionalism and skill. We are all

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fortunate that Jackie Beere is able to show us this alternative approach to improvement before all the saloon keepers give up, pack up and head for the hills.

Ian Gilbert
Santiago
Valentine's Day 2012

Introduction

An Ofsted inspection is *the* key performance indicator. Every school wants to get it right because the consequences are huge for the head, the staff, the students and the whole community. Getting it right means ensuring that the judgements made are fair and justified. Unfortunately, there are schools that feel the judgements Ofsted have made got their school wrong.

This book has been written to help you to make sure that your school does all that it can to ensure that the judgements are not only right, but ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’. If you follow the advice given here you’ll be able to embed great learning and leadership that is sustainable and which will continue to deliver the very best results for your pupils.

Working over the years as an advanced skills teacher, head, school improvement partner, consultant and trainer in so many schools, I have seen the very best and the very worst practice. I have also seen excellent schools that have not been able to show off their strengths, leading to judgements that have been wrong (and vice versa). With a new evaluation schedule, framework and head of Ofsted in 2012, now is the

The Perfect Ofsted Inspection

perfect time to consider how to prepare your school be the best it can be.

2012

The 2012 inspection framework intends to focus only on areas that have the most impact on improving educational outcomes, making judgements in just four areas:

- The achievement of pupils in the school
- The quality of teaching in the school
- The behaviour and safety of pupils at the school
- The quality of leadership and management in the school

At the same time inspectors will look at how well the school meets the needs of *all* pupils (see Chapter 2) and how it promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development to also make a judgement on:

- The overall effectiveness of the school

The triangulation of attainment data, classroom practice and leadership priorities will still define the quality of the leadership and the provision of the school. The key is to ensure that all of the above bullet points are fully addressed and equally 'outstanding'.

Strategy 7. Rigorous self-evaluation – know thyself!

The self-evaluation form (SEF) is dead. Long live the SEF!

One of the very best things seen in many ‘outstanding’ schools in the last five years has been the process of rigorous self-evaluation at all levels within the school organisation. Although it is no longer compulsory to file a SEF online, inspectors will expect to see a (concise) summary of it (Ofsted 2012a: 18). Your SEF is still your most important tool for improvement. Now we can tailor this process to suit ourselves. This section makes some suggestions drawn from schools with the very best practice. An example of self evaluation practice from Eliot Primary School in London can be found on the Ofsted good practice website (www.goodpractice.ofsted.gov.uk/downloads/documents/Eliot_Bank_Good_Practice_Example.pdf).

The principle purpose of self-evaluation is that you know your school well enough to be able to write your own school inspection report. Your challenge is to write your own Ofsted report six months before they come, so that when they arrive they don’t have to change a word!

John Wells from Clevedon School wrote the report he wanted six months before Ofsted arrived. Having had a surprise ‘satisfactory’ report twelve months previously he wanted staff to be absolutely clear what he expected. But first he had to

More Jackie Beere Books ...

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THE PERFECT *Ofsted* INSPECTION

demonstrates how to get the very best from an Ofsted inspection as well as delivering great learning in your school, every lesson, every day, whether being inspected or not.

"Gives schools the confidence to strive to be outstanding, to be open with inspectors and clear in the process of the inspection."

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Julie Summerfield, Head Teacher, Horndean Technology College

Jackie Beere is a School Improvement Partner, Independent Thinking Associate and trainer having been a secondary school headteacher. She taught in primary and secondary schools before becoming an Advanced Skills Teacher leading and implementing innovative teaching and learning strategies. This work led to her being awarded an OBE for services to education in 2002.

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