

### Inspection of religious education (RE) and collective worship

33. The Secretary of State designates certain schools as having a religious character.<sup>24</sup> In schools without a religious character, Ofsted inspects RE and collective worship as part of inspections under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. This is different in schools with a religious character. In these schools, denominational education and collective worship are inspected by a body appointed by the maintained school's governing body under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 or as provided in the academy's funding agreement.<sup>25</sup>
34. If a school has been designated as having a religious character, Ofsted is not able to comment on the content of collective worship or on denominational RE. Inspectors may, however, gather evidence from anywhere relevant (including RE lessons and assemblies) to evaluate pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, personal development and/or behaviour and attitudes. The fact that the school has been designated as having a religious character must be referenced in the 'Information about this school' section of the inspection report.
35. Section 48 inspections (or the equivalent inspection of an academy) are carried out every three to five years<sup>26</sup> (and usually within two to three years of a new voluntary-aided school or academy/free school opening). Ofsted's lead inspector will check the section 48 arrangements, including when the next inspection is due, and will write about this in the 'Leadership and management' section of the inspection report. They will ensure that the required consultation has taken place with the prescribed faith body when a school has a prescribed faith body, and decides not to use that body's inspection service but appoint its own inspector.
36. Inspectors will familiarise themselves with any issues raised in any section 48 inspection (or equivalent) held since the last Ofsted inspection. Inspectors will not, however, use that evidence in an Ofsted inspection.<sup>27</sup> The lead inspector will report if the section 48 inspection (or equivalent inspection of an academy) is overdue and that, therefore, the school is failing in its statutory duty. They will do this in the 'Leadership and management' section of the inspection report.
37. If a section 48 inspection (or equivalent inspection of an academy) happens at the same time as an Ofsted section 5 inspection, inspectors will mention this in the 'Information about this school' section.

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<sup>24</sup> A school with religious character – often called a faith school – is designated under section 69(3) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998; [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/contents). In a faith school, pupils are educated in the context of the principle of a religion. It is normal for there to be a formal link with a religious organisation.

<sup>25</sup> Regulation 9 of The Education (School Inspection) (England) Regulations 2005: [www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2005/2038/regulation/9/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2005/2038/regulation/9/made).

<sup>26</sup> Regulation 4 of The Education (School Inspection) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2009: [www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2009/1564/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2009/1564/made).

<sup>27</sup> Protocol between Ofsted and signatory faith group inspectorates.

- Safeguarding is effective. If there are any weaknesses in safeguarding, they are easily rectified and there are no serious failings that leave pupils either being harmed or at risk of harm.

#### **Inadequate (4)**

- The judgement on the overall effectiveness is likely to be inadequate when any one of the key judgements is inadequate and/or safeguarding is ineffective.

### **The quality of education**

154. Inspectors will take a rounded view of the quality of education that a school provides to all its pupils, including the most disadvantaged pupils<sup>57</sup>, the most able pupils and pupils with SEND. Inspectors will consider the school's curriculum, which is the substance of what is taught with a specific plan of what pupils need to know in total, and in each subject.

155. Inspectors will consider the extent to which the school's curriculum sets out the knowledge and skills that pupils will gain at each stage (**intent**). They will also consider the way that the curriculum selected by the school is taught and assessed in order to support pupils to build their knowledge and to apply that knowledge as skills (**implementation**). Finally, inspectors will consider the outcomes that pupils achieve as a result of the education they have received (**impact**).

#### **Intent**

156. In evaluating the school's educational intent, inspectors will primarily consider the curriculum leadership provided by school and subject leaders.

157. The judgement focuses on factors that both research and inspection evidence indicate contribute most strongly to pupils receiving an effective education that enables them to achieve highly. These factors are that:

- The school's curriculum is rooted in the solid consensus of the school's leaders about the knowledge and skills that pupils need to take advantage of the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. In this way, it can powerfully address social disadvantage.

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<sup>57</sup> 'Most disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who are included in the calculation of government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route; [www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings](http://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings). Additionally, in line with government policy, other pupils who may also face educational disadvantage are those who are Children in Need of help and protection, and are receiving statutory support from local authority social care; [www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-children-in-need](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-children-in-need).

- It is clear what end points the curriculum is building towards, and what pupils will need to be able to know and do at those end points.
- The school's curriculum is planned and sequenced so that new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before, and towards those defined end points.
- The curriculum reflects the school's local context by addressing typical gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills.
- The curriculum remains as broad as possible for as long as possible, and pupils are able to study a strong academic core of subjects, such as those offered by the English Baccalaureate (EBacc).
- There is high academic/vocational/technical ambition for all pupils, and the school does not offer disadvantaged pupils or pupils with SEND a reduced curriculum.

### Curriculum flexibility

158. The curriculum sets out the aims of a programme of education. It also sets out the structure for those aims to be implemented, including the knowledge, skills and understanding to be gained at each stage. It enables the evaluation of pupils' knowledge and understanding against those expectations.
159. All pupils in maintained schools are expected to study the national curriculum subjects, religious education and age-appropriate sex education.<sup>58</sup> Academies are expected to offer all pupils a curriculum that is similar in breadth and ambition to the national curriculum, including the requirements to teach English, mathematics, science, and religious education.<sup>59</sup>
160. Schools taking radically different approaches to the curriculum will be judged fairly. The inspectorate recognises the importance of schools' autonomy to choose their own curriculum approaches. If leaders are able to show that they have thought carefully, that they have built a curriculum with appropriate coverage, content, structure and sequencing and are able to show that it has been implemented effectively, then inspectors will assess a school's curriculum favourably.

<sup>58</sup> Subject to parliamentary approval, the requirement to provide sex education will be replaced by relationships education (key stages 1 and 2), relationships and sex education (key stage 3 and 4) and health education (all key stages 1-4) from September 2020.

<sup>59</sup> See the Education Act 2002 for maintained schools and section 1A of the Academies Act 2010 for academies. All state-funded schools are required to teach a balanced and broadly based curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school; and prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

## Curriculum narrowing

161. Ofsted’s research into the curriculum has shown that some schools narrow the curriculum available to pupils, particularly in key stages 2 and 3. Our research shows that this has a disproportionately negative effect on the most disadvantaged pupils.<sup>60</sup> It is appropriate that, in key stage 1, teachers focus on ensuring that pupils are able to read, write and use mathematical knowledge, ideas and operations. From key stage 2 onwards and in secondary education, however, inspectors will expect to see a broad, rich curriculum. Inspectors will be particularly alert to signs of narrowing in the key stage 2 and 3 curriculums. If a school has shortened key stage 3, inspectors will look to see that the school has made provision to ensure that pupils still have the opportunity to study a broad range of subjects in Years 7 to 9.
162. At the heart of an effective key stage 4 curriculum is a strong academic core: the EBacc. The government’s response to its EBacc consultation, published in July 2017, confirmed that the large majority of pupils should be expected to study the EBacc. It is therefore the government’s ambition that 75% of Year 10 pupils in state-funded mainstream schools should be starting to study EBacc GCSE courses nationally by 2022 (taking their examinations in 2024), rising to 90% by 2025 (taking their examinations in 2027). It is important that inspectors understand what schools are doing to prepare for this to be achieved, and they should take those preparations into consideration when evaluating the intent of the school’s curriculum.

## Cultural capital

163. As part of making the judgement about the quality of education, inspectors will consider the extent to which schools are equipping pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life. Ofsted’s understanding of this knowledge and cultural capital matches that found in the aims of the national curriculum.<sup>61</sup> It is the essential knowledge that pupils need to be educated citizens, introducing them to the best that has been thought and said and helping to engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.

## Sources of evidence specific to curriculum intent

164. Inspectors will draw evidence about leaders’ curriculum intent principally from discussion with senior and subject leaders. Inspectors will explore:
- whether leaders are following the national curriculum and basic curriculum or, in academies, a curriculum of similar breadth and ambition

<sup>60</sup> See our curriculum commentary phase 1: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/hmcis-commentary-october-2017>.

<sup>61</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-framework-for-key-stages-1-to-4/the-national-curriculum-in-england-framework-for-key-stages-1-to-4>.

- how carefully leaders have thought about what end points the curriculum is building towards, what pupils will be able to know and do at those end points, and how they have planned the curriculum accordingly. This includes consideration of how the intended curriculum will address social disadvantage by addressing gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills
  - how leaders have sequenced the curriculum to enable pupils to build their knowledge and skills towards the agreed end points
  - how leaders have ensured that the subject curriculum contains content which has been identified as most useful, and ensured that this content is taught in a logical progression, systematically and explicitly enough for all pupils to acquire the intended knowledge and skills
  - how the curriculum has been designed and taught so that pupils read at an age-appropriate level.
165. Inspectors will bear in mind that developing and embedding an effective curriculum takes time, and that leaders may only be partway through the process of adopting or redeveloping a curriculum. Where leaders have an accurate evaluative understanding of current curriculum practice in their school and have identified appropriate next steps to improve curriculum quality and develop curriculum expertise across the school, inspectors will evaluate 'intent' favourably when reaching the holistic quality of education judgement. They will recognise that the criteria for a judgement of good are best fit.
166. Inspectors will also consider any documents that leaders normally use in their curriculum planning, but will not request materials to be produced or provided in any specific format for inspection.

### Implementation

167. In evaluating the implementation of the curriculum, inspectors will primarily evaluate how the curriculum is taught at subject and classroom level.
168. Research and inspection evidence suggest that the most important factors in how the curriculum is taught and assessed are that:
- teachers have expert knowledge of the subjects that they teach and, where they do not, they are supported to address these gaps so that pupils are not disadvantaged by ineffective teaching
  - teachers enable pupils to understand key concepts, presenting information clearly and promoting appropriate discussion
  - teachers check pupils' understanding effectively, identifying and correcting misunderstandings
  - teachers ensure that pupils embed key concepts in their long-term memory and apply them fluently
  - the subject curriculum that classes follow is designed and delivered in a way that allows pupils to transfer key knowledge to long-term memory; it is



sequenced so that new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before and towards defined end points

- teachers use assessment to check pupils' understanding in order to inform teaching
- teachers use assessment to help pupils embed and use knowledge fluently, develop their understanding, and not simply memorise disconnected facts.

### Developing understanding, not memorising disconnected facts

169. Learning can be defined as an alteration in long-term memory. If nothing has altered in long-term memory, nothing has been learned. However, transfer to long-term memory depends on the rich processes described above. In order to develop understanding, pupils connect new knowledge with existing knowledge. Pupils also need to develop fluency and unconsciously apply their knowledge as skills. **This must not be reduced to, or confused with, simply memorising facts.** Inspectors will be alert to unnecessary or excessive attempts to simply prompt pupils to learn glossaries or long lists of disconnected facts.

### The school's use of assessment

170. When used effectively, assessment helps pupils to embed knowledge and use it fluently, and assists teachers in producing clear next steps for pupils. However, assessment is too often carried out in a way that creates unnecessary burdens for staff and pupils. It is therefore important that leaders and teachers understand its limitations and avoid misuse and overuse.

171. Inspectors will therefore evaluate how assessment is used in the school to support the teaching of the curriculum, but not substantially increase teachers' workloads by necessitating too much one-to-one teaching or overly demanding programmes that are almost impossible to deliver without lowering expectations of some pupils.

172. The collection of data can also create an additional workload for leaders and staff. Inspectors will look at whether schools' collections of attainment or progress data are proportionate and represent an efficient use of school resources, and are sustainable for staff. The report of the Teacher Workload Advisory Group, 'Making data work',<sup>62</sup> recommends that school leaders should not have more than two or three data collection points a year, and that these should be used to inform clear actions.

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<sup>62</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-workload-advisory-group-report-and-government-response>

173. Schools choosing to use more than two or three data collection points a year should have clear reasoning for what interpretations and actions are informed by the frequency of collection, and the time that is taken to set assessments, collate, analyse and interpret the data created from this, and then act on the findings. If a school's system for data collection is disproportionate, inefficient or unsustainable for staff, inspectors will reflect this in their reporting on the school.<sup>63</sup>

### Sources of evidence specific to curriculum implementation

174. The following activities will provide inspectors with evidence about the school's implementation of its intended curriculum:

- discussions with curriculum and subject leaders and teachers about the programme of study that classes are following for particular subjects or topics, the intended end points towards which those pupils are working, and their view of how those pupils are progressing through the curriculum
- discussions with subject specialists and leaders about the content and pedagogical content knowledge of teachers, and what is done to support them
- discussions with classroom teachers about how often they are expected to record, upload and review data
- observations of and interviews with pupils or classes who are following this curriculum in lessons, including scrutiny of the pupils' work
- reviews of schemes of work or other long-term planning (in whatever form subject leaders normally use them), usually in discussion with curriculum leaders.

175. In order to allow the effective triangulation of evidence, inspectors will ensure that they gather a variety of these types of evidence in relation to the same sample of pupils. Inspectors will also ensure that the samples of pupils they choose are sufficient to allow them to reach a valid and reliable judgement on the quality of education offered by the school overall.

### Impact

176. When inspectors evaluate the impact of the education provided by the school, their focus will primarily be on what pupils have learned.

177. Inspection experience and research show that the most important factors to consider are that:

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<sup>63</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-workload-advisory-group-report-and-government-response>

- a well-constructed, well-taught curriculum will lead to good results because those results will be a reflection of what pupils have learned. There need be no conflict between teaching a broad, rich curriculum and achieving success in examinations and tests
- what the school has in place to ensure that the most disadvantaged pupils<sup>64</sup> and pupils with SEND are given the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life
- national assessments and examinations are useful indicators of the outcomes pupils achieve, but they only represent a sample of what pupils have learned. Inspectors will balance these with their assessment of the standard of pupils' work from the first-hand evidence they gather on inspection
- learning must build towards a goal. At each stage of pupils' education, they are being prepared for the next stage of education, training or employment. Inspectors will consider whether pupils are ready for the next stage by the point they leave the school or provision that they attend
- inspectors will also consider whether pupils at ages 16 and 18 are ready for the next stage and are going to appropriate, high-quality destinations
- if pupils are not able to read to an age-appropriate level and fluency, they will be incapable of accessing the rest of the curriculum, and they will rapidly fall behind their peers. (See paragraphs 280-282.)

### **Inspectors will not use schools' internal assessment data as evidence**

178. While they will consider the school's use of assessment (see paras 170 to 173 above), inspectors will not consider schools' internal assessment data during an inspection. Rather, they will want to use the official IDSR as the starting point and get to see at first hand the quality of education as experienced by pupils and understand how well leaders know what it is like to be a pupil at the school. This is because:

- internal data has its limitations and may not be an accurate representation of the education of pupils at the school. The time pressure of inspection does not allow for inspectors to validate the accuracy of the data as presented by leaders
- inspectors will gather evidence of the quality of education in schools

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<sup>64</sup> 'Most disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who are included in the calculation of government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route; [www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings](http://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings). Additionally, in line with government policy, other pupils who may also face educational disadvantage are those who are Children in Need of help and protection, and are receiving statutory support from local authority social care; [www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-children-in-need](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-children-in-need).



- inspectors will have meaningful discussions with leaders about how they know that the curriculum is having an impact.

179. Inspectors will, however, ask schools to explain why they have decided to collect whatever assessment data they collect, what they are drawing from their data and how that informs their curriculum and teaching.

### Sources of evidence specific to curriculum impact

180. Inspectors will gather evidence of the impact of the quality of education offered by the school from the following sources:

- nationally generated performance information about pupil progress and attainment. This information is available in the IDSR, which is available to schools and inspectors, and will be analysed for its statistical significance in advance by Ofsted's data and insight team
- first-hand evidence of how pupils are doing, drawing together evidence from the interviews, observations, work scrutinies and documentary review described above (see 'Implementation – sources of evidence')
- nationally published information about the destinations to which its pupils progress when they leave the school<sup>65</sup>
- in primary schools, listening to a range of pupils read
- discussions with pupils about what they have remembered about the content they have studied.

181. Inspectors will recognise that some schools are in turn-around, including when they have been brokered into a MAT or rebrokered from one to another. In these schools, the quality of education may have been poor and may now be showing significant and sustained improvement. In these situations, nationally generated performance data may lag the current quality of education in the school and so inspectors will view the national data in this context.

### Reaching a single quality of education judgement, drawing together intent, implementation and impact

182. Inspectors will **not** grade intent, implementation and impact separately. Instead, inspectors will reach a single graded judgement for the quality of education, drawing on all the evidence they have gathered, using their professional judgement.

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<sup>65</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/destinations-of-ks4-and-ks5-pupils-2017>

## Grade descriptors for the quality of education

In order for the quality of education provided by the school to be judged **outstanding**, it must meet the following criteria:

### Outstanding (1)

- The school meets **all** the criteria for a good quality of education securely and consistently. In **addition**, the following applies.

#### Intent

- The school's curriculum intent is strong. Across the school, it is evident from what teachers do that they have a firm and **common understanding** of the school's curriculum intent and what it means for their practice.

#### Implementation

- The school's implementation of the curriculum is **consistently strong**. Across all parts of the school, series of lessons contribute well to delivering the curriculum intent.
- The work given to pupils, over time and across the school, consistently matches the aims of the curriculum in **being coherently planned** and sequenced towards **cumulatively sufficient knowledge** and skills for future learning and employment.

#### Impact

- The impact of the taught curriculum is strong; pupils' work across the curriculum is consistently of a high quality.
- Pupils consistently achieve highly, particularly the most disadvantaged. Pupils with SEND achieve the best possible outcomes.

183. In order to judge whether a school is good, requires improvement or is inadequate, inspectors will adopt a 'best fit' approach, relying on the professional judgement of the inspection team.

184. \* [The sections of criteria in square brackets, below, are included in recognition that not all schools will have had the opportunity to complete the process of adopting or constructing their curriculum fully by September 2019. The bracketed sections are transitional only, and Ofsted will review the handbooks before September 2020 to identify whether they should be deleted.]

## Good (2)

### Intent

- Leaders adopt or construct a curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and including pupils with SEND, the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life. This is either the national curriculum or a curriculum of comparable breadth and ambition. [If this is not yet fully the case, it is clear from leaders' actions that they are in the process of bringing this about.\*]
- The school's curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and employment. [If this is not yet fully the case, it is clear from leaders' actions that they are in the process of bringing this about.\*]
- The curriculum is successfully adapted, designed or developed to be ambitious and meet the needs of pupils with SEND, developing their knowledge, skills and abilities to apply what they know and can do with increasing fluency and independence. [If this is not yet fully the case, it is clear from leaders' actions that they are in the process of bringing this about.\*]
- Pupils study the full curriculum; it is not narrowed. In primary schools, a broad range of subjects (exemplified by the national curriculum) is taught in key stage 2 throughout each and all of Years 3 to 6. In secondary schools, the school teaches a broad range of subjects (exemplified by the national curriculum) throughout Years 7 to 9, [or is in the process of transitioning to such arrangements.\*] The school's aim is to have the EBacc at the heart of its curriculum, in line with the DfE's ambition, and good progress has been made towards this ambition.

### Implementation

- Teachers have good knowledge of the subject(s) and courses they teach. Leaders provide effective support for those teaching outside their main areas of expertise.
- Teachers present subject matter clearly, promoting appropriate discussion about the subject matter being taught. They check pupils' understanding systematically, identify misconceptions accurately and provide clear, direct feedback. In so doing, they respond and adapt their teaching as necessary without unnecessarily elaborate or individualised approaches.
- Over the course of study, teaching is designed to help pupils to remember long term the content they have been taught and to integrate new knowledge into larger ideas.
- Teachers and leaders use assessment well, for example to help pupils embed and use knowledge fluently, or to check understanding and inform teaching.

Leaders understand the limitations of assessment and do not use it in a way that creates unnecessary burdens on staff or pupils.

- Teachers create an environment that allows pupils to focus on learning. The textbooks and other teaching materials teachers select – in a way that does not create unnecessary workload for staff – reflect the school’s ambitious intentions for the course of study and clearly support the intent of a coherently planned curriculum, sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and employment.
- The work given to pupils is demanding and matches the aims of the curriculum in being coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge.
- Reading is prioritised to allow pupils to access the full curriculum offer.
- A rigorous and sequential approach to the reading curriculum develops pupils’ fluency, confidence and enjoyment in reading. At all stages, reading attainment is assessed and gaps are addressed quickly and effectively for all pupils. Reading books connect closely to the phonics knowledge pupils are taught when they are learning to read.
- The sharp focus on ensuring that younger children gain phonics knowledge and language comprehension necessary to read, and the skills to communicate, gives them the foundations for future learning.
- Teachers ensure that their own speaking, listening, writing and reading of English support pupils in developing their language and vocabulary well.

### Impact

- Pupils develop detailed knowledge and skills across the curriculum and, as a result, achieve well. This is reflected in results from national tests and examinations, which meet government expectations, or in the qualifications obtained.
- Pupils are ready for the next stage of education, employment or training. They have the knowledge and skills they need and, where relevant, they gain qualifications that allow them to go on to destinations that meet their interests and aspirations and the intention of their course of study. Pupils with SEND achieve the best possible outcomes.
- Pupils’ work across the curriculum is of good quality.
- Pupils read widely and often, with fluency and comprehension appropriate to their age and are able to apply mathematical knowledge, concepts and procedures appropriately for their age.

**Requires improvement (3)**

- The quality of education provided by the school is not good.

**Inadequate (4)**

**The quality of education is likely to be inadequate if any one of the following applies:**

- The school's curriculum has little or no structure or coherence, and leaders have not appropriately considered sequencing. Pupils experience a jumbled, disconnected series of lessons that do not build their knowledge, skills or understanding.
- Teaching is frequently of poor quality.
- The range of subjects is narrow and does not prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in modern Britain.
- Pupils cannot communicate, read, write or apply mathematics sufficiently well for their age and are therefore unable to succeed in the next year or stage of education, or in training or employment. (This does not apply for pupils with such complex or severe SEND that this would be impossible.)
- Pupils' progress is consistently low and shows little or no improvement, indicating that pupils are underachieving considerably.
- The progress that disadvantaged pupils make is consistently well below that of other pupils nationally and shows little or no improvement.
- Pupils with SEND do not benefit from a good-quality education. Staff's expectations of them are low, and their needs are not accurately identified and/or being met.
- Pupils have not attained the qualifications appropriate for them to progress to their next stages of education, training or employment.

**Behaviour and attitudes**

185. This judgement considers how leaders and staff create a safe, calm, orderly and positive environment in the school and the impact this has on the behaviour and attitudes of pupils.