

Section 48 Inspection Handbook

Introduction

1. If a school has a religious character, as determined by the Secretary of State for Education, under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, denominational religious education and the content of collective worship are inspected under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005. Academies (and free schools) designated as having a religious character by the Secretary of State are inspected in an equivalent way by virtue of a provision in the academy's funding agreement.
2. In the Education Act 2005 (Section 48), the governing body of foundation schools which have a religious character are held responsible by law for the appointment of a person to undertake the inspection of denominational education and collective worship. The inspectors who conduct section 48 inspections are appointed by the school's governing body or the foundation governors in a voluntary controlled school, having consulted with person(s) prescribed in regulations (normally the appropriate religious authority) where applicable.
3. ISKCON Foundation is the designated religious authority for all those Avanti schools which are designated as Hindu faith schools. Both the Trust and ISKCON Foundation as the religious authority, are inspired by and draw upon the teachings of Krishna Caitanya, part of the same religious tradition as the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON). This means that the nature of Collective Worship and Religious Education (RE) will broadly reflect the practices and teachings of ISKCON. The Trust and the religious authority are independent legal entities, and they may choose to collaborate with ISKCON in instances which will benefit the Avanti schools.
4. Avanti schools' core purpose is to inspire spiritually compassionate change makers and to promote '*educational excellence, character formation and spiritual insight*'. '*The Avanti Way*' is the core document that sets out the beliefs, virtues and educational offer for all its schools. It aims to help pupils develop six virtues: self-discipline, respect, empathy, integrity, courage and gratitude. In addition to the national curriculum, Avanti schools teach the Sanskrit language; meditation and yoga; and philosophy, religion and ethics (PRE). Avanti schools adopt an inclusive approach to the teaching of religious education, within the context of British values and Britain as a multi-faith and multi-cultural society. Therefore, the PRE curriculum includes teaching other major world religions: Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and Sikhism.
5. The core purpose of the Section 48 inspection is to:
 - provide schools with a clear independent evaluation of their strengths and the areas in which they need to improve;
 - allow the Board of Trustees and ISKCON Foundation to gather valid evidence of the quality of the religious life, PRE and Collective Worship in its faith designated schools;
 - provide parents with information about their children's spiritual development and religious life; and

- gather evidence that schools are responding to inspection outcomes, leading to better quality of Hindu faith education and provision.

Part 1: How schools will be inspected

The school inspection cycle

1. In line with statutory regulations, the AST CEO will ensure Trust schools, to which Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 applies, are inspected within five school years from the end of the school year in which the last S48 inspection took place. Schools which were previously identified as Standard 3 (not achieving the required standard) in either a Section 5 or Section 48 inspection will be inspected within two years.
2. For all other schools, they will be inspected every three years.

The school inspection process

Before an inspection

3. The inspection will usually take place over one or two days, depending on the size of the school. However, the Trust will take a range of factors into consideration when deciding the final inspection tariff for each school. Inspection teams will comprise at least two inspectors.
4. The lead inspector will contact the principal providing one week's notice before the inspection to:
 - agree to a timetable to cover inspection activities over the inspection period;
 - the inspector will make the final decision about the inspection timetable and activities to ensure all data is gathered to inform evaluations
 - discuss the school's own self-evaluation report, other documents, and the school's development since the last inspection.
5. The lead inspector will review the previous inspection report, any previous monitoring reports, the school's self-evaluation, the Priority Action Plan, and examination results where relevant in secondary schools.
6. The school must provide the following information:
 - key information about the school's context, including number on roll, pupil profile and characteristics, local community demographics, and the school's partnerships with other organisations;
 - strategic documents that set out the school's vision, goals and objectives and its own evaluation of progress in relation to these;
 - the school's PRE curriculum and information on how it is structured;
 - the school's collective worship programme and information on how it is structured;
 - the previous S48 inspection report;
 - records on exclusions, behaviour, and bullying; and

- the school timetable for the two inspection days, staff list, maps and information on any planned disruptions to the day.

During an inspection

7. To gather evidence, the team will hold inspection questions focused on the IQs with the principal, the PRE subject leader, the spiritual well-being leader, and any other leaders deemed appropriate by the principal and/or inspector. They will also interview the chair of the school stakeholder committee (SSC) or another representative of the Trust, as well as representatives of parents and pupils. Some interviews may be conducted via telephone or video calls (for example, with SSC members). In addition, inspectors will carry out a range of other activities to gather first-hand evidence of the school's effectiveness. These may include observations of teaching and analysis of a wide range of school documentation.

After an inspection

8. The lead inspector will prepare a written report on the inspection. A draft report will be sent to the school within 12 working days of the end of the inspection for factual inaccuracy checks. The principal shall respond to the draft report within 2 working days. A final report will be sent to the school within 15 working days of the completion of the inspection.
9. The school will send a copy of the final report, without charge, to all registered parents/carers of registered pupils at the school, within 5 working days from the date of receipt of the final report. It will also post a copy of the report on the school's website.

Part 2: The Inspection Questions (IQs)

Inspectors will make judgements and report on four Inspection Questions:

IQ 1

How does the quality of the school's provision for religious life reflect ISKCON traditions and enable pupils and adults to flourish?

- How does the school's provision for religious life reflect ISKCON traditions and the educational mission outlined in the Avanti Way?
- What is the range and quality of religious experiences on offer to pupils?
- How well do pupils and adults contribute to and participate in the religious life of the school and within the wider community?
- How well does the provision for religious life enable pupils and adults to flourish?

IQ 2

How does the quality of the curriculum, teaching, assessment and learning in PRE enable pupils to make good progress and achieve well, including in their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development (SMSC) and in their behaviour?

- How well is the PRE curriculum organised and sequenced so that pupils build steadily on their prior knowledge?
- How well does teaching meet the needs of all learners?
- How well do pupils respond to teaching in and out of lessons?
- How effectively is assessment used to move learners on in their learning?
- How well do pupils achieve in PRE?
- What is the impact of PRE on pupils' SMSC development and their behaviour?

IQ 3

How does the quality of Collective Worship enable pupils and adults to flourish spiritually?

- How well does collective worship reflect ISKCON traditions and promote the educational mission outlined in the Avanti Way?
- How well do pupils respond to collective worship and how does this influence their day to day living?
- What is the impact of collective worship on pupils' SMSC development and behaviour?

IQ 4

How well do leaders promote, monitor, evaluate and improve the quality of provision for religious life and for collective worship?

- How effectively do leaders promote a learning and working environment which reflects the principles outlined in the Avanti Way and enables pupils and staff to flourish?
- How effectively do leaders monitor the quality of teaching and learning of PRE?
- How effectively do leaders ensure staff develop the knowledge and skills necessary to ensure effective teaching and learning of PRE?
- How well do leaders evaluate the impact of the school's work, identify key strengths and areas for improvement and bring about effective change?
- How well do leaders develop, promote, and foster, positive relationships with all stakeholders, including those from within and outside the Hindu community?

Making an overall judgment

ISKCON Foundation

Having reviewed all available evidence in relation to the four IQs, inspectors will use one of the following three overall statements to describe the school's effectiveness.

S1: Strong Standard. The inspection findings indicate the school is living up to ISKCON expectations as a Hindu school and is enabling pupils and adults to flourish. (all IQs answered)

S2: Expected Standard. The inspection findings indicate the school has many strengths, but there are also issues that leaders need to address as a matter of priority. (Unable to answer 1 or more IQ, but not including IQ 4)

S3: Needs Attention. The school has insufficient strengths and/or leaders do not demonstrate the capacity to meet the ISKCON expectations. (Unable to answer IQ4 or more than 1 of IQs 1-3)