

Independent school inspection toolkit

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Please read the updated version of the toolkit found on the '[Independent school inspection: toolkit, operating guides and information](#)' page.

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Please note that this document is intended for print use and may not be fully accessible when used on screen.

Leadership and governance

Independent school standards	Not met	Met
Part 3: Welfare, health and safety Standards 11, 16	The proprietor has failed to make sure there is an effective health and safety policy in place. Risk management is not effective. Leaders do not take an active approach to managing risk and so pupils are at risk of harm through negligence and/or a lack of foresight and planning.	The proprietor has made sure there is an effective health and safety policy in place. The policy shows that the school will be alert to the risks that might arise, including during off-site activities. The school takes prompt action to mitigate against these risks. Alongside this, there is an effective risk assessment policy that covers the whole range of activities for pupils. The school considers the risks systematically, and takes appropriate steps to reduce risks as far as is reasonably practicable.
Part 3: Welfare, health and safety Standard 12	The proprietor has failed to make sure that the school is compliant with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.	The proprietor has made sure that the school is compliant with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. There is an up-to-date fire risk assessment. This ensures that procedures are in place to reduce the likelihood of fire. Fire detection and alarm systems are well maintained. Staff and pupils are familiar with fire evacuation procedures.
Part 3: Welfare, health and safety Standard 13	The proprietor has failed to make sure that the school's first aid policy is implemented effectively.	The proprietor has made sure that the school's first aid policy is implemented effectively. There are enough trained staff. First aid equipment is readily available. This is the case for both on-site and off-site activities.
Part 5: Premises and accommodation	The proprietor has failed to make sure that the school's premises meet the requirements of the standards in Part 5.	The proprietor has made sure that the school's premises meet the requirements of the standards in Part 5 and that they are suitable to meet pupils' needs. The premises are maintained well enough to ensure the health, safety and welfare of pupils and staff.
Part 6: Provision of information	The proprietor has not made sure that all the requirements of the standards in Part 6 have been met.	The proprietor has made sure that all the requirements of the standards in Part 6 have been met.

Compliance with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010	The proprietor has not made sure that there is an accessibility plan in place. (This is a plan that should outline how they will improve the physical environment and access to the curriculum and how information available to all pupils is accessible to those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).)	The proprietor has made sure that there is an accessibility plan in place. This outlines how they will improve the physical environment and access to the curriculum and how information available to all pupils is accessible to those with SEND.
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Causing concern	Attention needed	Secure	Strong	Exemplary
Leadership and governance are likely to be causing concern if one or more of the following applies: Leaders do not identify and/or prioritise the right issues or take suitable or timely action to deal with them. Leaders do not have a track record of improvement or, since being appointed, have not done everything they could reasonably do to secure improvements. The proprietor does not carry out their statutory duties. Their contribution to the school's strategic aims is weak. Any breaches of legal responsibilities are serious and have a detrimental impact on pupils. The proprietor does not carry out its statutory duties diligently.	Strategic leadership and capacity to improve (track record of improvement or of sustaining high standards)			Where a school is secure in all evaluation areas, and strong across all the themes in leadership and governance, inspectors may consider a feature of leaders' work to be exemplary. All considerations of exemplary practice will be moderated and confirmed by the national quality and consistency panel. This will include whether the practice is: ▪ embedded and sustained over time ▪ making a tangible difference to pupils' learning, development and well-being ▪ being used and/or adapted internally to support and improve other areas of the school's work ▪ being (or will be) shared externally to
	Leaders' analysis of the school's strengths or weaknesses, including in meeting the standards, lacks precision or does not consistently identify the root causes of weakness. Actions to bring about improvements, although focused on the right areas, are imprecise. This makes it difficult for leaders to know how successful their work has been and what further action is needed.	Leaders and the proprietor have an accurate understanding of the school's context, strengths and weaknesses. This informs the actions they take. They make sure the standards are consistently met. Leaders' actions are well judged and consistently effective. They improve or sustain standards. Leaders' decisions are always in pupils' best interests. Leaders make sure the school's aims, priorities, vision and values are firmly established. The positive impact of leaders' actions has been sustained over time. Leaders create a culture of continuous improvement. They actively pursue their own professional development, acting as role models for staff.	Leaders' astute understanding of the school's context, strengths and weaknesses informs and underpins their evolving response to priorities. They adjust and adapt actions as part of a responsive and continuous improvement culture. Highly effective leadership leads to consistently high standards, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. These standards are sustained over time. Improvements in any areas of weakness are rapid and sustained.	
	The proprietor's governance and oversight			
	The proprietor is inconsistent in their support for leaders' well-being.	The proprietor knows their statutory duties and carries out their role effectively, making sure the standards are met consistently over time.	The proprietor's contribution to the school's work is consistently strong. They are highly effective at holding leaders to account.	

The proprietor has failed to make sure the standards are met consistently over time. Leaders do not take decisions in the best interests of pupils. This might include gaming or off-rolling and/or using ineffective, inappropriate and/or unsafe alternative provision. The school uses ineffective, inappropriate and/or unsafe alternative provision. The proprietor is unclear about its statutory duties in relation to leaders' well-being and does not support them appropriately. Staff workload is unsustainable. Bullying and harassment go unnoticed or unchallenged. Concerns that parents raise are either ignored	The proprietor carries out their statutory duties effectively. However, their support for, and challenge to, leaders does not have enough impact on the school's work. Leaders have not made sure that the school standards have been met to a sufficient standard. These weaknesses do not have a serious impact on pupils' welfare, health and safety, academic or personal development.	The proprietor supports leaders when they face challenges and monitors their well-being. The proprietor carries out their statutory core functions effectively to help achieve the school's strategic aims. They establish an inclusive culture and practices. The proprietor supports and challenges leaders appropriately. They hold leaders to account effectively, including for the support and provision for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.	The proprietor is highly effective at supporting leaders' well-being. The proprietor knows their statutory duties and carries out their role effectively, making sure the standards are met consistently over time.	support system improvement. Once the provisional grades are confirmed and the school's report card is published, inspectors will invite leaders to submit a short case study of their work to the Ofsted Academy. We will use a panel of experts to review these case studies nationally. Successful submissions will be published as part of a series of best practice reporting.	
	Parents, carers and the community				
	Leaders' engagement with parents, carers and the community is ad hoc, minimal or not targeted appropriately. It makes little difference to pupils' success and well-being. Those parents who raise concerns with teachers and leaders sometimes remain unsatisfied with the way these are dealt with or with the outcome.	Leaders work effectively with parents, carers and the community to support pupils' success and well-being. Parents are confident that any concerns they may need to raise with the school will be dealt with effectively.	Leaders build and sustain strong, long-term partnerships with parents, carers and the community. This has a strong positive impact on pupils' achievement and well-being. Parents are confident that any concerns they may need to raise with the school will be dealt with effectively.		

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or dealt with ineffectively.	Staff workload and well-being			
	The impact of leaders' decisions is burdensome on staff. Although leaders take action to address any bullying and harassment of staff, any learning from such incidents is slow or limited.	Leaders prioritise staff well-being. They make sure staff's work is sustainable and proportionate. Leaders protect staff from bullying and harassment.	Leaders make sure that all staff feel highly valued, are supported to do their jobs effectively, and are well protected from bullying and harassment. Consequently, staff morale and retention are high.	

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Curriculum

Causing concern	Attention needed	Secure	Strong	Exemplary
The curriculum is likely to be causing concern if one or more of the following applies. The curriculum lacks ambition, structure or coherence. Leaders have not considered its content and sequencing enough. The narrow range of subjects does not prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in Britain. The curriculum lacks ambition for disadvantaged pupils and/or pupils with SEND.	Leadership of the curriculum			Where a school is secure in all evaluation areas, and strong across all the themes in curriculum, inspectors may consider a feature of leaders’ work to be exemplary. All considerations of exemplary practice will be moderated and confirmed by the national quality and consistency panel. This will include whether the practice is: ▪ embedded and sustained over time ▪ making a tangible difference to pupils’ learning, development and well-being ▪ being used and/or adapted internally to support and improve other areas of the school’s work ▪ being (or will be) shared externally to
	The curriculum is limited in breadth, depth or ambition in some subjects and/or for some groups of pupils. Some subject/phase leaders do not have the expertise, support or time they need to design, adapt or adopt an appropriate curriculum. The curriculum in some subjects/areas is not designed effectively to build pupils’ knowledge and skills sequentially and cumulatively. Teaching, revisiting or practising knowledge and skills are not given enough time.	Leaders make sure that the curriculum is at least as ambitious in breadth and depth as the national curriculum for all pupils. Subject/area curriculums are well designed to build pupils’ knowledge and skills sequentially and cumulatively. Subject/phase leaders have the expertise and/or support they need to make sure that the curriculum achieves its aims. Leaders make sure the curriculum allows enough time for teaching, practising and revisiting knowledge and for addressing any gaps as quickly as possible.	The curriculum is expertly designed at each stage to enable pupils to develop secure, deep and fluent knowledge. This paves the way for future learning. The curriculum, whether designed, adapted or adopted, has been expertly developed over time to ensure its continued quality, effectiveness and, where relevant, subject-specific rigour.	
	Communication and language, reading, writing and mathematics			
	The curriculum provides limited opportunity for pupils to develop their reading, and language and vocabulary, both in spoken and/or written form, across a range of subjects. In primary schools, the curriculum does not place a	The curriculum extends pupils’ language and vocabulary, both in spoken and written form, and increases their reading competency across all subjects. In primary schools, the curriculum prioritises accurate and fluent word reading, spelling, handwriting and mathematics.	The school has an expertly designed curriculum, which develops pupils’ reading and writing through high-quality texts and increasingly broad vocabulary across all subjects.	

	strong enough emphasis on accurate and fluent word reading, handwriting, spelling and mathematics.			support system improvement.
	Inclusive curriculum culture and practices			Once the provisional grades are confirmed and the school's report card is published, inspectors will invite leaders to submit a short case study of their work to the Ofsted Academy. We will use a panel of experts to review these case studies nationally.
	Weaknesses in design and/or poorly considered adaptations limit some pupils' access to a broad and ambitious curriculum.	The curriculum is an entitlement for every pupil. Any adaptations are made carefully to avoid limiting expectations for disadvantaged pupils or pupils with SEND. Leaders take all reasonable steps to make sure that all pupils, including those attending alternative provision and those with SEND, can study an equally ambitious curriculum.	Leaders make sure that all pupils gain the knowledge and skills to prepare them well to access the full curriculum and the next stage of learning.	Successful submissions will be published as part of a series of best practice reporting.

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Developing teaching

Causing concern	Attention needed	Secure	Strong	Exemplary
Developing teaching is likely to be causing concern if one or more of the following applies: Leaders have an inaccurate understanding of the quality of teaching. Leaders are not doing enough to tackle weaknesses in the education pupils receive. Pupils’ experiences in lessons do not help them learn the planned curriculum effectively Leaders do not do enough to make sure that teachers have or develop the expertise to teach the curriculum. Teachers’ expectations are too low for all pupils or for particular groups of pupils. Adaptations do not meet pupils’ needs, or	Leadership of teaching			Where a school is secure in all evaluation areas, and strong across all the themes in developing teaching, inspectors may consider a feature of leaders’ work to be exemplary. All considerations of exemplary practice will be moderated and confirmed by the national quality and consistency panel. This will include whether the practice is: ▪ embedded and sustained over time ▪ making a tangible difference to pupils’ learning, development and well-being ▪ being used and/or adapted internally to support and improve other areas of the school’s work
	Leaders take action to improve the quality of teaching, although this does not always fix the underlying causes of weaknesses. Leaders’ actions are overly generic or superficial.	Leaders have an accurate, informed understanding of the quality of teaching, including for pupils with SEND. This includes the quality of subject or phase teaching, as well as whole-school strengths and areas for development.	Leaders have a nuanced understanding of the quality of teaching across subjects, phases and year groups. Focused actions, with clear milestones and desired outcomes, drive continuous improvements in the quality of teaching.	
	Professional development			
	Generic approaches to professional development undermine the quality of teaching in particular subjects or in a particular phase. There are inconsistencies in the quality of professional development, or it is not targeted well enough to have a sustained positive impact on the quality of teaching.	Leaders have in place a professional development programme that draws on training, practice and coaching to build and sustain an effective team of teachers and support staff, including early career teachers, where relevant. This professional development programme enables all staff to implement effectively, where relevant: ▪ the school’s reading (including systematic, synthetic phonics), writing and mathematics curriculums ▪ the demands of each subject curriculum	Leaders have developed a highly effective professional learning culture in which staff take responsibility for their professional learning and are keen to continually improve their expertise, drawing on the practice of others and on high-quality research evidence.	

	and can do. Teachers then cannot adapt their teaching accordingly.	misconceptions. They give effective feedback that helps pupils to improve. Every teacher understands the importance of language and vocabulary, both spoken and written, specific to the subjects they teach. They explicitly teach these.		
	Inclusive teaching			
	Adaptations to teaching are not effective enough in tackling the most significant barriers to learning for pupils. They fail to support pupils' longer-term achievement and progress.	Teachers have the expertise and knowledge to make well-judged adaptations to overcome barriers to learning for pupils, particularly those with SEND and those who are disadvantaged. Any adaptations do not lower expectations of pupils or limit their access to the curriculum unnecessarily. Teachers use targeted interventions effectively, in conjunction with high-quality teaching, for pupils who need additional support. Staff draw on the advice of specialists, including the special educational needs coordinator, to improve their teaching. This includes identifying the right resources or activities to support accessibility. Teachers and support staff are deployed effectively to improve achievement for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.	Appropriate and well-judged adaptations help pupils to overcome the most significant barriers to learning, particularly for those who are disadvantaged and/or who have SEND. These adaptations effectively enable pupils to learn the curriculum, so that they secure the knowledge and skills they need for future learning.	

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Achievement

Causing concern	Attention needed	Secure	Strong	Exemplary
Achievement is likely to be causing concern if one or more of the following applies: Leaders have a poor understanding of weaknesses in pupils’ achievement and the reasons for these. They have not tackled weaknesses effectively over time or have not acted swiftly to stem a decline in achievement. Pupils lack the foundations of communication, reading, writing or mathematical knowledge. Gaps in knowledge are not tackled quickly or effectively. Pupils have not gained the necessary qualifications (where applicable) to progress to the next stage of education, training or employment.	Progress through the curriculum			Where a school is secure in all evaluation areas, and strong across all the themes in achievement, inspectors may consider a feature of leaders’ work to be exemplary. All considerations of exemplary practice will be moderated and confirmed by the national quality and consistency panel. This will include whether the practice is: ▪ embedded and sustained over time ▪ making a tangible difference to pupils’ learning, development and well-being ▪ being used and/or adapted internally to support and improve other areas of the school’s work ▪ being (or will be) shared externally to
	Pupils’ attainment and progress are patchy or not as good as they need to be over time. Leaders do not analyse the underlying causes of underachievement effectively.	Leaders make sure that pupils are making secure progress across the curriculum. They understand how well pupils are achieving and why. Pupils develop detailed knowledge and skills across the curriculum. This is evident in the quality of work they produce. Any gaps in knowledge or skills are closed quickly. Pupils take pride in the quality of work they produce. It is of a consistently high quality and demonstrates progress against the curriculum. Disadvantaged pupils achieve at least as well as their peers. Gaps between achievement of disadvantaged pupils and that of non-disadvantaged pupils are narrowing quickly. Pupils with SEND achieve well from their starting points and, where relevant, against their individual targets.	Pupils develop rich knowledge and understanding across subjects, preparing them well for more advanced study. Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND achieve strongly across the curriculum and their achievement is sustained over time.	
	Pupils have relevant and appropriate knowledge and fluency in reading, writing and mathematics			
	Pupils’ knowledge and skills in reading, writing,	Pupils have age- and phase-appropriate knowledge and skills to	Pupils quickly gain the confidence to read across the	

	mathematics, and language and communication are not as secure as they need to be, to support their learning across the curriculum or prepare them for the next stage.	progress to the next stage of learning. These include: ▪ language and communication skills to access the full curriculum ▪ accurate and fluent reading ▪ compositional skills ▪ accurate and fluent spelling ▪ legible and fluent handwriting ▪ mathematical knowledge. Pupils read with appropriate fluency and comprehension across all subjects. This helps them to develop their vocabulary and knowledge and to express their ideas articulately, both orally and in writing.	curriculum to develop their vocabulary and knowledge. This allows them to understand and articulate complex and/or new ideas, both in speech and writing, and use their knowledge across different areas of the curriculum.	support system improvement. Once the provisional grades are confirmed and the school's report card is published, inspectors will invite leaders to submit a short case study of their work to the Ofsted Academy. We will use a panel of experts to review these case studies nationally. Successful submissions will be published as part of a series of best practice reporting.
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Behaviour and attitudes

Causing concern	Attention needed	Secure	Strong	Exemplary
Behaviour and attitudes are likely to be causing concern if one or more of the following applies: Leaders do not take effective action to secure pupils' good behaviour and a consistent approach to discipline. Leaders' support for staff to manage behaviour is weak. Pupils' lack of engagement and persistent low- and/or high-level wilful disruption contribute to reduced learning and/or disorderly classrooms. A significant minority of pupils show a lack of respect for each other and/or staff, and a lack of self-discipline. Pupils frequently ignore or refuse teachers' requests to moderate	Leadership of behaviour and attitudes			Where a school is secure in all evaluation areas, and strong across all the themes in behaviour and attitudes, inspectors may consider a feature of leaders' work to be exemplary. All considerations of exemplary practice will be moderated and confirmed by the national quality and consistency panel. This will include whether the practice is: ▪ embedded and sustained over time ▪ making a tangible difference to pupils' learning, development and well-being ▪ being used and/or adapted internally to support and improve other areas of the school's work
	Aspects of the school's culture, policy or practice do not consistently reflect high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Staff are not confident or consistent in challenging poor behaviour or disruptions to learning. Pupils' behaviour and conduct are inconsistent. This limits staff's ability to create a positive learning environment throughout the school. Bullying, discrimination harassment and/or sexual abuse, although reported and logged, are not dealt with quickly or effectively enough.	Leaders establish high expectations for all pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning, including through the behaviour policy. Staff and pupils understand these expectations. Leaders communicate them clearly to parents and carers. Expectations are enforced consistently and fairly to create a calm and safe environment. Leaders and other staff teach pupils the importance of treating others with kindness, courtesy, empathy and respect and do so themselves. Leaders work closely with parents and carers to support positive behaviour. Leaders and staff deal effectively and quickly with any incidents of bullying, discrimination, harassment, sexual abuse and derogatory language and accurately record such incidents. They support those affected so that they feel safe and comfortable at school. Leaders identify patterns and trends in behaviour, including bullying. They are active in identifying problems and act swiftly and effectively to solve them.	Expert leadership creates a strong, shared culture of positive behaviour. The school establishes strong and supportive relationships with pupils and their parents and carers. These result in positive behaviour and, where it is needed, marked improvements. Leaders' consistently high-quality work to support pupils who are bullied or who may be responsible for bullying contributes to a cohesive and positive environment.	

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their conduct. This results in poor behaviour. Incidents of bullying and/or prejudiced and discriminatory behaviour, both direct and indirect, are frequent. Pupils have little confidence in the school's ability to tackle harassment, bullying, violence and/or discriminatory behaviour successfully because leaders do not take their concerns seriously and/or are too slow to act. Staff fail to make reasonable adjustments for pupils, contrary to Part 6 of the Equality Act 2010.		Leaders train staff to challenge poor behaviour confidently, consistently and fairly, including disruptions to learning. Strategies to help pupils to manage and improve their behaviour are effective. Pupils are taught to recognise unacceptable behaviour and are confident to report concerns to staff.		being (or will be) shared externally to support system improvement. Once the provisional grades are confirmed and the school's report card is published, inspectors will invite leaders to submit a short case study of their work to the Ofsted Academy. We will use a panel of experts to review these case studies nationally. Successful submissions will be published as part of a series of best practice reporting.
	Developing positive attitudes to learning			
	Pupils are generally compliant in lessons, but they are not engaged well in their learning. Pupils lack independence and rely on teachers to direct and motivate them.	Staff are systematic in teaching pupils how to approach their learning, and pupils respond with positive attitudes. Their behaviour does not normally disrupt teaching, learning or school routines. Staff take effective but proportionate action to ensure that pupils' behaviour is acceptable for learning.	Pupils are positive about learning. They show this through their self-motivation, cooperation with staff, and collaborative and supportive work with one another. Pupils consistently try to do their best. They show resilience when they face setbacks.	
	Inclusive behaviour culture, policy and practice			
	Staff do not always have the necessary expertise, confidence or support to adapt behaviour policies and practice fairly and consistently. Adjustments are not always appropriate to pupils' needs.	Leaders and staff understand each pupil's context, needs and challenges when managing behaviour and make reasonable adjustments in the light of this. Any adaptations made maintain high expectations of behaviour. Sanctions, including suspension and exclusion, are used proportionately, effectively and as a last resort to	The school's behaviour policy, culture and practice have a strong and sustained impact on improving pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning.	

	Targeted interventions for those who need them lack the necessary impact.	tackle behaviour that does not reflect the school's high expectations. Well-chosen, targeted interventions support pupils who need additional help with their behaviour. The impact is carefully evaluated to allow further adaptations, as needed.		
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Attendance

Causing concern	Attention needed	Secure	Strong	Exemplary
Attendance is likely to be causing concern if one or more of the following applies: Strategic leadership of attendance is lacking. Barriers to attendance are not identified or tackled. Attendance is consistently low for all pupils or for groups of pupils and shows little sign of sustained improvement. The school does not properly monitor pupils' attendance at alternative provision or act when they are absent.	Strategic leadership to secure the best possible attendance			Where a school is secure in all evaluation areas, and strong across all the themes in attendance, inspectors may consider a feature of leaders' work to be exemplary. All considerations of exemplary practice will be moderated and confirmed by the national quality and consistency panel. This will include whether the practice is: ▪ embedded and sustained over time ▪ making a tangible difference to pupils' learning, development and well-being ▪ being used and/or adapted internally to support and improve other areas of the school's work ▪ being (or will be) shared externally to
	Leaders do not identify and address barriers to attendance well enough, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. Some aspects of leaders' work do not support pupils to attend well. Leaders have limited insight into why this is the case.	Leaders prioritise improving attendance and punctuality and have an effective strategy in place. Leaders make sure that admission and attendance registers are completed accurately. Day-to-day processes to follow up absences are effective. Leaders analyse attendance information closely, at whole-school level and for different groups, to identify patterns and trends. They use this analysis well to identify causes of poor attendance, tackle problems and remove barriers. All staff understand the importance of paying close attention to pupils' attendance, taking opportunities to promote good attendance, and acting on absence promptly.	Leaders' steps to identify and tackle barriers result in sustained high attendance or rapid and notable improvement, both overall and for individuals and groups. All staff have a high-profile role in promoting good attendance. Training and support underpin their supportive but challenging conversations with pupils and families where attendance needs to improve.	
	Working in partnership			
	The school's work with families and external partners is limited. Support to improve attendance is inconsistent.	Leaders clearly communicate their expectations about the importance of attendance and punctuality to families. Leaders and staff work collaboratively with families, other local schools, local authorities and	Leaders and staff build and sustain strong relationships with families, other local schools, local authorities and other partners to secure the best possible attendance.	

		other partners to improve attendance.	Over time, these working partnerships have a strong and positive impact on pupils' attendance, particularly for pupils who do not attend well or have not attended well in the past.	support system improvement. Once the provisional grades are confirmed and the school's report card is published, inspectors will invite leaders to submit a short case study of their work to the Ofsted Academy. We will use a panel of experts to review these case studies nationally. Successful submissions will be published as part of a series of best practice reporting.
Attendance				
Leaders have not prioritised their actions so that they secure the best possible attendance of pupils who find it difficult to attend. Part-time timetables are used for longer than necessary or treated as a long-term solution, or plans for returning pupils to full-time education are unclear. Leaders are inconsistent in making sure that pupils attend their alternative provision.	Leaders build a culture of community and belonging and promote positive relationships and attitudes between teachers, parents and pupils so that every pupil feels valued, safe and understood. Leaders and staff pay close attention to the needs of pupils who are absent because of mental or physical ill-health and/or SEND. They provide them with suitable support to attend when they can, to keep up and to catch up, working closely with families to do so. The school does everything it can to minimise the impact of absence on pupils' attainment, well-being and wider life chances.	Leaders pay close attention to every element of the school's work to make sure it is a place that pupils want to attend. They make careful adjustments to pupils' provision, when necessary. In the rare instances where part-time timetables are needed, alongside other suitable interventions and support, these ultimately improve pupils' attendance demonstrably. Alternative provision, where used, has a demonstrable positive impact on pupils' attendance and engagement.		
Inclusive attendance culture and practices				
Leaders have not prioritised their actions so that they secure the best possible attendance of pupils who find it difficult to attend.	Leaders build a culture of community and belonging and promote positive relationships and attitudes between teachers, parents and pupils so that every pupil feels valued, safe and understood.	Leaders pay close attention to every element of the school's work to make sure it is a place that pupils want to attend. They make careful		

	Part-time timetables are used for longer than necessary or treated as a long-term solution, or plans for returning pupils to full-time education are unclear. Leaders are inconsistent in making sure that pupils attend their alternative provision.	Leaders and staff pay close attention to the needs of pupils who are absent because of mental or physical ill-health and/or SEND. They provide them with suitable support to attend when they can, to keep up and to catch up, working closely with families to do so. The school does everything it can to minimise the impact of absence on pupils' attainment, well-being and wider life chances.	adjustments to pupils' provision, when necessary. In the rare instances where part-time timetables are needed, alongside other suitable interventions and support, these ultimately improve pupils' attendance demonstrably. Alternative provision, where used, has a demonstrable positive impact on pupils' attendance and engagement.	
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Personal development and well-being

Causing concern	Attention needed	Secure	Strong	Exemplary
Personal development and well-being are likely to be causing concern if one or more of the following applies: A significant minority of pupils do not receive a wide, rich set of experiences. Disadvantaged pupils or those with SEND miss out on aspects of the school's wider offer. Pupils do not receive the pastoral support they need. Leaders, including the proprietor, undermine or fail to promote equality of opportunity. Significant weaknesses in the quality of the school's personal development programme are not identified or addressed.	Leadership of personal development and well-being			Where a school is secure in all evaluation areas, and strong across all the themes in personal development and well-being, inspectors may consider a feature of leaders' work to be exemplary. All considerations of exemplary practice will be moderated and confirmed by the national quality and consistency panel. This will include whether the practice is: ▪ embedded and sustained over time ▪ making a tangible difference to pupils' learning, development and well-being ▪ being used and/or adapted internally to support and improve other areas of the school's work
	Leaders' provision for pupils' personal development and well-being lacks coherence and/or focus. While some pupils experience an effective personal development programme, including a range of wider opportunities beyond the taught curriculum, it is not always well matched to the needs, interests and/or ambitions of particular groups of pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils and/or those with SEND. Leaders do not check whether the school's personal development programme has the impact they desire, including whether all pupils are able to benefit from the wider opportunities available. The careers programme does not provide pupils with consistent, high-quality careers guidance and meaningful encounters with the world of work.	Leaders have ensured a broad, engaging and inclusive programme of personal development that spans the core curriculum and extra-curricular activities. The programme covers the content of the statutory relationships and sex education/relationships, sex and health education framework. This programme: ▪ develops pupils' character, motivation, confidence and resilience ▪ incorporates pupils' personal, social and health education, including their mental and physical health ▪ teaches the importance of equality of opportunity and respect for diversity ▪ prepares pupils for the opportunities, decisions, responsibilities and experiences of later life ▪ broadens pupils' experiences and provides opportunities for them to develop their talents and	The programme of wider opportunities is expertly designed and balanced. It is well suited to the school's context and pupils' needs, ambitions and aspirations. Leaders carefully track access to make sure these opportunities are enriching, accessible and targeted. Pupils participate enthusiastically in a wide range of artistic, musical, sporting and cultural activities. They are proud to represent their school and community. Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND benefit fully. Careers provision is high-quality, structured and sequenced effectively and fully integrated into the curriculum. It is tailored to the needs, ambitions and aspirations of individuals. Leaders work in continuous partnership with parents/carers, local employers and further and	

Leaders have created a culture and/or environment that places undue pressure on pupils or undermines pupils' emotional health and/or well-being. Leaders have not made sure that the curriculum teaches pupils about healthy relationships. Leaders' do not have an effective careers programme. They fail to use the Gatsby benchmarks to develop and improve careers provision.	Some pupils do not receive impartial and independent advice and guidance.	interests in areas such as the arts, music and sport - allows pupils to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. Where relevant, there is an appropriate careers programme. The programme includes: - impartial advice and guidance, from well-trained staff - opportunities for workplace experiences - engagement with employers, colleges, training providers and universities. Leaders make sure that staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to deliver the personal development programme.	higher education institutions to provide a package of guidance, opportunities and experiences that strengthen pupils' decision making and next steps.	being (or will be) shared externally to support system improvement. Once the provisional grades are confirmed and the school's report card is published, inspectors will invite leaders to submit a short case study of their work to the Ofsted Academy. We will use a panel of experts to review these case studies nationally. Successful submissions will be published as part of a series of best practice reporting.
Pastoral support and pupils' well-being				
Pastoral support is limited in its impact because it is imprecisely targeted and/or not fully matched to pupils' needs. Leaders are inconsistent in their work with external agencies, where this work is appropriate and relevant to pupils' needs. While leaders listen to pupils' views, they are slow to take	Leaders' pastoral support is: - informed by evidence - provided in partnership with parents and carers - integrated well with external agencies, where appropriate - well matched to pupils' needs - targeted at pupils who may need extra support, guidance or care.	All staff are active and highly vigilant in supporting and caring for pupils. Relevant staff have the necessary expertise to provide high-quality support and care. The school draws on strong and sustained relationships with parents and carers, and with external agencies, to provide pupils with the best possible care and support,		

	account of them. Pupils do not always see staff as trusted adults they can turn to for support.	Leaders and staff are vigilant about identifying pupils, or particular groups of pupils, who may be particularly vulnerable or need additional support. Pupils understand and are confident in accessing pastoral care when they need it. Leaders listen to, and take account of, pupils' views.	especially disadvantaged pupils and/or those with SEND.	
Inclusive opportunities and practices				
	Leaders' personal development and careers programme, including the wider opportunities afforded to pupils, are not honed to take account of all pupils' needs, ambitions and aspirations, particularly those of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. Some opportunities and activities may not be fully accessible and/or have limited take-up.	The personal development programme is an entitlement for every pupil. Any adaptations for individual pupils or groups are made carefully to avoid limiting expectations for disadvantaged pupils and/or pupils with SEND. Leaders take all reasonable steps to make sure that all pupils, including those attending alternative provision, within or external to the school, and/or those with SEND, can access the same personal development and careers programme.	Leaders' personal development and careers programme, including accessibility and take-up of the wider opportunities afforded to pupils, is expertly designed to meet the needs, ambitions and aspirations of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. All pupils feel welcome, valued and respected. They feel that they belong within the school community.	

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Inclusion

Causing concern	Attention needed	Secure	Strong	Exemplary
Inclusion is likely to be causing concern if any one or more of the following applies: Across the school's work, leaders fail to meet pupils' needs. Inclusive practices do not ensure an acceptable standard of education and/or care for disadvantaged pupils and/or those with SEND. Support for disadvantaged pupils and/or those with SEND is ineffective. Leaders do not identify pupils who are disadvantaged or have SEND, or pupils who may face barriers to their learning and/or well-being. Leaders' strategy for supporting disadvantaged pupils is ineffective.	Inclusive practices (across all toolkits)			Where a school is secure in all evaluation areas, and strong across all the themes in inclusion, inspectors may consider a feature of leaders' work to be exemplary. All considerations of exemplary practice will be moderated and confirmed by the national quality and consistency panel. This will include whether the practice is: ▪ embedded and sustained over time ▪ making a tangible difference to pupils' learning, development and well-being ▪ being used and/or adapted internally to support and improve other areas of the school's work ▪ being (or will be) shared externally to
	Aspects of the school's inclusive practices need attention.	Across the school's work, inclusive practices are secure so that all pupils feel welcomed and valued, and have a sense of belonging to their school and community	Across the school's work, inclusive practices are strong.	
	Identifying and meeting needs, and removing barriers			
	Leaders' support for pupils who face barriers to their learning and/or well-being is not sufficiently precise, sustained or effective.	Leaders quickly and accurately identify pupils who face barriers to their learning or well-being that might make them vulnerable. Leaders make sure that these pupils receive effective support, drawing on external specialists, as necessary. Leaders make sure that any use of alternative provision is suitable, safe and in the best interests of pupils.	Leaders quickly and accurately identify pupils who face barriers to their learning or well-being that might make them vulnerable. Leaders make sure that these pupils receive effective support, drawing on external specialists, as necessary. Leaders make sure that any use of alternative provision is suitably safe and in the best interests of pupils.	
	Supporting disadvantaged pupils			
	Leaders lack a precise understanding of their disadvantaged pupils' needs and/or do not use suitable evidence to inform their	Leaders have a secure understanding of their disadvantaged pupils' needs and use appropriate evidence to inform their strategy for supporting disadvantaged pupils.	Leaders use a rich set of well-analysed quantitative and qualitative data to understand the needs of their disadvantaged pupils.	

		Leaders make sure that their work is effective in improving pupils' achievement. They do not lower expectations for pupils with SEND.		
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Early years

Causing concern	Attention needed	Secure	Strong	Exemplary
Early years is likely to be causing concern if any one or more of the following applies: Leaders have not met the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) in full. This has a significant impact on the safety and well-being and/or learning and development of children. Leaders have low expectations for what children in the early years can and should achieve. The curriculum is poorly designed and does not meet children's needs or provide the necessary foundations for their schooling. Leaders or staff have a weak understanding of the areas of learning	Leadership of the early years			Where a school is secure in all evaluation areas, and strong across all the themes in the early years, inspectors may consider a feature of leaders' work to be exemplary. All considerations of exemplary practice will be moderated and confirmed by the national quality and consistency panel. This will include whether the practice is: ▪ embedded and sustained over time ▪ making a tangible difference to pupils' learning, development and well-being ▪ being used and/or adapted internally to support and improve other areas of the school's work
	Leaders have misunderstood or only partially applied the statutory requirements of the EYFS but this does not have a significant impact on the safety and well-being and/or the learning and development of children. Children's learning, development and/or welfare and well-being are not being identified and addressed consistently. Senior leaders recognise the importance of early years, but this is not reflected consistently in the decisions they make about curriculum design and/or making sure there are well-trained leaders and/or staff in early years.	Leaders make sure the statutory requirements of the EYFS are met in full. They have the same high expectations of children in the early years as they do across the rest of the school. Senior leaders make sure that the early years are prioritised so that every child, especially those who are disadvantaged and/or those with SEND, get the best start in life. Leaders and staff work in close partnership with parents and carers, other settings, childminders and/or out-of-school provisions to make sure there is continuity of education and care for all children.	Leaders and staff from across the school understand the importance of the early years in laying the foundations for all future learning. This is reflected in whole-school decision-making and approaches to continuous improvement. Leaders and staff have fully integrated the early years into the life of the school so that there is a seamless transition as children progress through the early years and into key stage 1 and beyond.	
	Learning and development requirements			
	Some aspects of the curriculum are not designed or implemented well enough to meet children's needs. The frequency and/or quality of interactions between staff	The curriculum is planned and sequenced effectively to support all children's progression through the EYFS, appropriate to their age and stage of development.	The curriculum is expertly designed and sets out for each area of learning the knowledge and skills that children need to secure in preparation for later learning.	

they teach and the way in which young children learn. Relationships between staff and children are not supporting children's emotional well-being effectively. Children fail to form secure attachments with trusted adults. By the end of Reception, children are unprepared for Year 1. They cannot communicate, read and/or spell phonically decodable words to a level that is appropriate for their age. They do not have basic fluency in number and shape, space and measure.	and children does not support children's development well enough or meet their individual needs. Children are not supported to develop their communication and, language and vocabulary consistently well.	This includes frequent opportunities for children to practice and consolidate their learning and to develop their attention and sustained focus, so that they are ready for Year 1. The curriculum ensures that children acquire a wide vocabulary, communicate effectively and, in Reception, secure a knowledge of phonics, preparing the foundations for future learning. Staff engage in frequent, high-quality interactions with children to support their development and extend their language and vocabulary across all areas of learning. Staff present information clearly to children, check their understanding, and identify and address misconceptions to improve children's learning. The school's curriculum for teaching systematic, synthetic phonics, early reading and handwriting is systematic and cumulative. The mathematics curriculum is sequenced well. It ensures that children have sufficient practice to be confident in using and understanding numbers as well as the vocabulary to talk mathematically.	Staff show an expert knowledge of all areas of learning and the way in which young children learn. They put this knowledge into practice to enable children to achieve highly across all areas of learning. Staff's interactions with children are highly effective in improving children's communication and language and vocabulary. This is the case within and across all areas of learning, especially for disadvantaged children and/or those with SEND.	being (or will be) shared externally to support system improvement. Once the provisional grades are confirmed and the school's report card is published, inspectors will invite leaders to submit a short case study of their work to the Ofsted Academy. We will use a panel of experts to review these case studies nationally. Successful submissions will be published as part of a series of best practice reporting.
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Well-being and welfare requirements		
Relationships between staff and children are not consistent in promoting secure attachments, well-being and/or children's independence.	Care practices meet the needs of the range of children who attend. Staff, including a key person where required, develop positive relationships with children. This helps children to form secure attachments and supports their well-being and independence. Staff help children to understand, appropriate to their age and stage, how to make healthy choices to support their emotional and physical development. Staff support children to take well-managed risks to develop their resilience and understanding of personal safety.	Staff develop warm, positive and responsive relationships with children. This enables all children to thrive and develop the confidence and independence they will need for future learning.
Achievement and preparation for key stage 1		
Children are not prepared well enough for the next stage in their learning. They do not develop knowledge and skills effectively across all seven areas of learning. The needs of disadvantaged children and/or those with SEND are not identified precisely and/or addressed with sufficient urgency to enable them to achieve well.	Children develop secure knowledge and skills across the seven areas of learning appropriate to their age and stage of development and in line with the school's curriculum. Children with lower starting points, disadvantaged children and/or those with SEND achieve well. By the end of Reception, children are well prepared to reach a good level of development, paving the way for future learning in Year 1 and beyond.	Children develop a broad range of vocabulary and a detailed understanding across the seven areas of learning, in line with their age and stage of development. Children use their knowledge and skills confidently and with automaticity. They are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of learning.

Sixth form

Causing concern	Attention needed	Secure	Strong	Exemplary
Sixth form is likely to be causing concern if any one or more of the following applies: The design, coverage, sequencing and/or teaching of the curriculum does not provide adequately for all students. Students’ achievement is significantly lower than national averages. Disadvantaged students and those with SEND do not make enough progress. Students have not attained the qualifications, skills or behaviours that they need to progress to their next stage of education, training or employment The curriculum does not prepare students for the opportunities,	Strategic leadership of the post-16 programmes of study			Where a school is secure in all evaluation areas, and strong across all the themes in the sixth form, inspectors may consider a feature of leaders’ work to be exemplary. All considerations of exemplary practice will be moderated and confirmed by the national quality and consistency panel. This will include whether the practice is: ▪ embedded and sustained over time ▪ making a tangible difference to pupils’ learning, development and well-being ▪ being used and/or adapted internally to support and improve other areas of the school’s work
	Leaders have not made sure that the post-16 curriculum sufficiently meets the students’ academic needs, career aspirations and context.	Leaders have made sure that the post-16 programmes of study are designed to meet the students’ academic needs, career aspirations and context.	Leaders have an accurate understanding of the cohort of post-16 students and have designed programmes of study that are inclusive and enable all students to achieve well.	
	Achievement on post-16 programmes of study			
	Students do not achieve well when compared with national averages, but there is strong evidence that this is improving.	Leaders ensure that students attain well and make good progress from their starting points.	Where relevant, students’ achievement is significantly higher than national averages, across all qualification types.	
	Retention on courses is below national averages (where applicable), but there is strong evidence of improvement.	Students study English and mathematics when they enter the sixth form without a GCSE grade 4 and gain the relevant qualifications.	Retention on courses is significantly above national averages.	
		All students receive high-quality impartial advice and guidance that ensures they go on to appropriate education, employment or training.		
		Retention on courses is at least in line with national averages (where applicable).		

responsibilities and experiences of life in Britain.	Learners' preparedness for their next steps			being (or will be) shared externally to support system improvement. Once the provisional grades are confirmed and the school's report card is published, inspectors will invite leaders to submit a short case study of their work to the Ofsted Academy. We will use a panel of experts to review these case studies nationally. Successful submissions will be published as part of a series of best practice reporting.
	Leaders have planned opportunities for students to benefit from work-related learning. However, these opportunities are not high-quality and/or lack relevance for many students.	Leaders have planned a relevant programme of work-related learning. This takes account of students' needs and career aspirations. Leaders have established effective partnerships with local employers and higher education institutions to fulfil this.	Leaders have established a comprehensive, purposeful programme. This is closely aligned to each student's individual needs and career aspirations. All students benefit from this.	
	Wider opportunities			
	Leaders have designed a suitable range of wider opportunities to prepare students for adult life. However, these opportunities are not closely aligned to students' needs and aspirations.	Leaders have an accurate understanding of the students' needs. They have designed a suitable range of wider opportunities that prepare students for adult life, such as citizenship programmes and volunteering, as well as opportunities outside their taught courses, such as those related to developing leadership qualities.	Leaders have designed a comprehensive, purposeful range of high-quality opportunities that prepare students for adult life. All students benefit from these opportunities.	

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Safeguarding

All schools should have an open and positive safeguarding culture that promotes the welfare of and puts pupils' interests first. Leaders must ensure they follow the Department for Education's latest statutory guidance in 'Working together to safeguard children' and 'Keeping children safe in education'.

This means schools:

- protect pupils from maltreatment and harm, whether it is within or outside the home, including online. They are vigilant, maintaining an attitude of 'it could happen here'
- act as a safeguarding partner in line with 'Working together to safeguard children'
- are open and transparent, sharing appropriate information with others and actively seeking expert advice when required, making sure all safeguarding decisions are accessible for appropriate scrutiny, accepting of challenge to ensure the right decisions are made, and recognising that safeguarding issues might occur in any provision at any time to ensure that all those who work with pupils are trained well in their responsibility to pupils to support them to be safer and are empowered to speak out and act upon where there may be concerns
- recognise children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, sexual abuse and child sexual and criminal exploitation
- actively seek and listen to the views and experiences of pupils, staff and parents, taking prompt action to deal with any concerns
- have appropriate safeguarding and child protection arrangements, which:
- identify pupils who may need early help and be a partner in multi-agency working
- identify pupils and who are at risk of harm or who have been harmed. This can include, but is not limited to, neglect, abuse (including by their peers), grooming, exploitation, sexual abuse and online harm
- secure the help that pupils need and, if required, refer in a timely way to those who have the expertise to help
- manage safe recruitment and allegations about adults who may pose a risk to pupils
- take into account the additional safeguarding challenges that pupils, including disabled pupils, those with SEND and those who are non-verbal, may face.
- are receptive to challenge, and reflect on their own practice, to ensure that the impact of safeguarding policies, systems and processes are kept under continual review
- must maintain, if they are maintained schools, a single central record of pre-appointment checks, in paper or electronic form
- must maintain, if they are academies, a single central record, in paper or electronic form, that details the checks carried out in each academy within the trust. There is no requirement to maintain an individual record for each academy, but the information should be recorded in such a way that the details about individual academies can be provided separately.

Not met	Met
Culture	
Leaders and/or the proprietor have not ensured a culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and pupils are kept safe and feel safe. There is a closed culture. Leaders are not open to challenge and/or do not learn from issues or incidents. Pupils have little confidence that the school will address concerns about safety, including risk of abuse, because leaders have not taken their views seriously and/or addressed relevant concerns.	Leaders and/or the proprietor have established a culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and pupils are kept safe and feel safe. All staff are vigilant and carry out their responsibilities effectively for keeping pupils safe. Leaders, staff and/or the proprietor are receptive to challenge and are reflective about their own practices. This ensures that the impact of safeguarding policies, systems and processes is kept under continual review.
Safeguarding information for all staff to know and do	
Leaders and/or the proprietor do not fulfil their responsibilities regarding safeguarding information for staff, as set out in 'Working together to safeguard children' and part one of 'Keeping children safe in education'. Leaders, staff and/or the proprietor do not know and enact their role in safeguarding pupils. Serious failings in safeguarding practice lead pupils, or particular groups of pupils, to be unsafe.	Leaders, staff and/or the proprietor know and enact the statutory requirements for safeguarding. Staff understand the indicators of possible safeguarding concerns and follow the school's systems confidently and consistently.
Management of safeguarding	
Leaders and/or the proprietor do not fulfil their responsibilities regarding management of safeguarding, as set out in 'Working together to safeguard children' and part two of 'Keeping children safe in education'. The provider does not fulfil its responsibilities under the Prevent duty. The proprietor does not exercise strategic oversight of all aspects of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils.	Leaders and/or the proprietor fulfil their responsibilities regarding management of safeguarding, as set out in 'Working together to safeguard children' and part two of 'Keeping children safe in education'. Leaders fulfil their responsibilities under the Prevent duty.

Safer recruitment	
Leaders and/or the proprietor do not fulfil their responsibilities regarding safer recruitment, as set out in 'Working together to safeguard children' and part three of 'Keeping children safe in education'. Statutory requirements are not met. For example, there are breaches of the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.	Leaders and/or the proprietor fulfil their responsibilities regarding safer recruitment, as set out in 'Working together to safeguard children' and part three of 'Keeping children safe in education', including alternative provision, host family arrangements and private fostering. Leaders and/or the proprietor have rectified minor safeguarding issues identified during the inspection and/or are taking steps to resolve them. Pupils are kept safe and feel safe.
Safeguarding concerns or allegations	
Leaders and/or the proprietor do not fulfil their responsibilities regarding reporting, referrals and record-keeping, as set out in 'Working together to safeguard children' and part four of 'Keeping children safe in education'. Leaders and/or the proprietor do not handle safeguarding allegations against adults appropriately. Leaders are not aware of their duty in relation to referrals to the DBS.	Leaders and/or the proprietor fulfil their responsibilities regarding reporting, referrals and record-keeping, as set out in 'Working together to safeguard children' and part four of 'Keeping children safe in education'.
Child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment	
Leaders and/or the proprietor do not fulfil their responsibilities regarding child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment, as set out in 'Working together to safeguard children' and part five of 'Keeping children safe in education'. Leaders do not handle allegations of sexual abuse swiftly and appropriately. This is likely to lead to pupils being put at risk of significant harm.	Leaders and/or the proprietor fulfil their responsibilities regarding child-on-child sexual violence and sexual harassment, as set out in 'Working together to safeguard children' and part five of 'Keeping children safe in education'.

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