

Teacher-institution relationships

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Agenda

What impact do different school inspection regimes in Europe have on teachers?

How are they (aiming to) support(ing) teachers?

- Defining 'school inspections' and models of school inspection
- The role of teachers in school inspections
- School inspections and teachers' practices and professional development

School inspection



SICI

The Standing International
Conference of **Inspectorates**

Better Inspection, Better Learning

School inspection

“School inspections are external evaluations of schools, undertaken by officials outside of the school with a mandate from a national/local authority. Regular visits of schools are an essential part of school inspections to collect information about the quality of the school, check compliance to legislation and/or evaluate the quality of students’ work (e.g. through observations, interviews and document analysis).”

school accountability

supervision

monitoring

audit

quality review

external evaluation

institutional assessment

inquiry

inspection

visitation

scrutiny

In most countries: inspections
assess school quality, not
individual teachers.



The role of teachers in inspection

In most countries, teachers are employed by the school (principal, school board).

Inspections are therefore of schools *-not teachers-* and the principal is responsible for school quality and has decision-making power to improve school quality.

Models of teacher accountability: teacher licensing, league tables of teachers (from aggregated student test results). *Not discussed here*

Models of school inspection

- Who is responsible for the quality monitoring and improvement of schools: the state, professional community, parents/students on school committees
- The type of quality concept inspected: compliance to regulation, quality of teaching and the school organisation and/or student outcomes
- The consequences of failing an inspection: sanctions, support, additional monitoring
- The purpose of inspection: control, transparency, improvement, liaising between schools and government.

Two extremes

1. Reliance on hard data, focused on monitoring and accountability, sanctions for failing schools (e.g. England).
2. Use of a variety of data sources, interested in school self-evaluation, and emphasizing collaborative improvement (e.g. Scotland and certain parts of Central and Eastern Europe).

The role of teachers in inspection

1. Observations, focus group and interviews to collect data on overall teaching quality in the school (+ often informal feedback)
2. Teachers as additional inspectors
3. Involvement in school self-evaluation
4. Peer review and teacher professional development as a requirement from inspection

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Teacher-level outcomes from school inspections

1. Emotional and Psychological Reactions
2. Instructional Practice and Curriculum Effects
3. Teacher Turnover, Stability, and Organizational Effects

Mechanisms of impact

Cluster	Core Mechanism
1. Feedback & Acceptance	inspection impact operates through interpersonal communication and inspection feedback. Whether feedback is accepted and leads to improved practice depends on how it is delivered and received. Constructive, dialogic feedback is associated with learning; authoritarian feedback tends to provoke resistance.
2. Setting Expectations and normative guidance	Inspections work by defining and communicating standards (“setting expectations”) that shape teachers’ professional norms and behaviours. Inspection is a norm-setting device — it defines what “good teaching” is. Teachers’ practice changes when they internalize these norms.
3. Capacity-Building	When inspection processes include dialogue, feedback, and teacher involvement, they can stimulate professional learning, reflection, and cooperation (particularly when promoting school self-evaluation that engages teachers)
4. Pressure and control	External control and surveillance, often producing unintended effects: teacher stress, turnover, and performativity — that undermine sustainable school improvement.



Whether/how teachers respond to school inspections is highly situational and influenced by –for example- their school principal, their professional values and capacity and wider policies and societal values for education



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