

*Welcome to the Autumn 2011 newsletter for schools.*

**Welcome to the autumn 2011 Newsletter which marks the beginning of the second cycle of BSI inspections.**

In the summer 2011 newsletter we reminded schools of Nick Gibb's, MP Minister of State for Schools, letter to all independent schools, their associations and the inspectorates, entitled 'Future Inspection Arrangement for Independent Schools' that set out the new arrangements and the criteria for the interval for future inspections, either three or six years. The summer newsletter can be found on the BSI website [www.bridgeschoolsinspectorate.co.uk](http://www.bridgeschoolsinspectorate.co.uk). BSI has now started this new cycle in October 2011 using these criteria.

### **Results of school survey.**

During the summer BSI surveyed all its schools about, amongst other things the new cycle – thanks to those who returned the questionnaire. For those schools on a six year cycle, BSI proposed a one day interim visit by a lead inspector as a health check after about three years. A letter would be sent to the school after the visit summarising the findings. It would not be published. The survey results showed that schools would welcome such a visit and the proposal was ratified by the BSI Board in October. There is no additional cost to schools. It is part of the inspection service BSI provides. Here is a reminder of what our service includes:

- High quality S162A statutory inspections with experienced retired HMI inspectors as Lead Inspectors and trained Team Inspectors with knowledge of the faith character of BSI schools.
- Interim one day visits by Lead Inspectors for six year cycle schools.
- BSI helpline – help and advice readily available by phone or email.
- Termly newsletter – relevant information and updates for busy head teachers and proprietors.

### **Inspection evaluation.**

After each inspection we ask schools to evaluate the experience. The overwhelming verdict is that schools find BSI inspections thorough, fair and helpful for further improvement and they particularly value the professional dialogue with inspectors. We welcome your thoughts on all aspects, so that we can improve our service even further – please let us know!

Ofsted thinks so too... please find the latest evaluation of the work of BSI by Ofsted in the annual letter (September 2011) to be found on the BSI website. Quotes include:

"inspections of good quality"

"inspection model is effective... inspections well prepared... effectively lead with a high degree of professionalism"

A typical comment from a head teacher was that, "inspector was courteous, professional and thorough".

*For more information visit us at:*

**[www.bridgeschoolsinspectorate.co.uk](http://www.bridgeschoolsinspectorate.co.uk)**

## Updates on...

1. **Standards for school premises** – this is a DfE consultation and is seeking views on revisions to the regulations governing school premises, including for independent schools and on a reduction in the amount of guidance produced by the DfE. You will be aware of the many requirements in part 5 of independent school regulations on premises and accommodation. The consultation document can be found on the DfE website:  
  
<http://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=consultationDetails&consultationId=1784&external=no&menu=1>  
(Ref. DfE 00090-2-011)  
The consultation closes on 26 January 2012.
2. **Possible changes to independent school regulations** – the DfE is engaged in discussions with various groups about this and BSI will keep schools informed as more becomes known to us.
3. **Changes to school inspections. Maintained schools – independent schools next?** You will have read about the new Ofsted s5 framework for inspecting maintained schools from January 2012 that was announced on 30th September (Ofsted website – Ref. 110128). Consultation on possible changes to the Ofsted framework for independent schools is to come – again we will keep schools informed when this is available.

*Let us know your thoughts...*

**As always – we would welcome news items and other suggestions from you.**

**Your thoughts are just an email away – [bsi@btinternet.com](mailto:bsi@btinternet.com)**

## Also...

BSI continues to be actively involved in discussions and consultations with DfE and Ofsted on developments concerning inspection and independent schools. Through our newsletters and helpline we seek to keep you up to date too!

## Other BSI activities.



If you check out the BSI website, you'll find a new section for college inspections. BSI has been approved by UK Border Agency (UKBA) to provide Tier 4 educational oversight for privately further education colleges with a clear religious purpose. We will begin these inspections in 2012.

*Finally, we send warm greetings to our colleagues in AMSUK for Al-Hijra, New Year's Day (1 Muharram 1433 AH, November 26th 2011) and the year ahead. Also, good wishes for a joyous Advent season to our colleagues in CST.*

**BSI contracts.** Please send to the BSI office any signed contracts with accompanying paperwork by November 30th to avoid payment penalties. Thank you so much.