

## **SPECIFICATION FOR THE REVIEW OF SHELL SCHOOLS**

### **Purpose**

The review of Shell and Shell affiliated schools has a dual

purpose:

- To support the schools in fulfilling the shared mission statement that: 'through excellent teaching and organisation, they maximise children's learning in a way which enables them to achieve high social, personal and academic standards, enjoy learning, adapt to other education systems and develop both a national and an international perspective'.
- To provide assurance to Shell International and parents that schools are providing high quality education.

These two aspects have equal importance, meaning that reviews of individual schools are both supportive and rigorous.

The core objective of each school review is described by Shell Education Services Department (SESD) as being to:

- Measure the quality of learning, and the factors that affect learning, against the standards of top quality primary education.
- Advise Shell Schools on linking performance reviews with school improvement plans and with professional development.
- Guarantee good quality reviews based on current best practice and that is adapted to meet the needs of Shell Schools and the curricula they offer, such as the IPC/NTC. This is to be delivered in co-operation with SESD.
- Provide appropriate support and guidance for those who undertake the review; guaranteeing that they are fully informed about Shell Schools.

### **Principles**

Some important principles underlie the review of Shell schools. These are:

- **Focus on learning**  
Schools exist to enable children to learn. Any assessment of a school's effectiveness should then focus on how successful it is at doing this. The review of Shell schools is concerned primarily with how well children learn. Review teams look at other things as well, but mostly in terms of how these things affect learning.
- **Self-evaluation**  
To a large extent a review of any school should be a validation of its own self-evaluation. SESD expects schools to carry out a continuous evaluation of learning and to produce an annual self-evaluation report as part of its third term report. Review teams put great emphasis on this report and any other self-evaluation carried out by the school.
- **Support**  
Reviews of Shell schools are conducted in a belief that everyone involved in the schools wants them to be successful and is committed to high standards of learning. Review teams want to applaud that commitment and celebrate success. They also want to support schools in their drive to make things even better. They do not adopt the deficit model, often associated with some inspection procedures, in which the approach can appear to be one of looking for shortcoming and finding fault. They will, however, provide positive criticism where appropriate, helping schools to improve where necessary.
- **Rigour**  
Reviews of Shell schools are rigorous as well as supportive. Review teams are delighted to identify and acknowledge strengths. They are also committed to suggesting ways in which a school can get better –

particularly in enabling learning. This rigour makes reviews more credible to stakeholders

- **Accountability**

Each Shell school is part of a greater whole, being a member of the world's largest group of company international schools and of an even greater commitment to the education of the children of expatriate staff. As company schools there is an expectation on Shell schools to conform to certain norms, to provide a quality service and to contribute to business goals. The review of Shell schools is one of the ways in which Shell holds schools accountable.

- **Improvement**

It is a characteristic of professionals to aim for continuous improvement. No matter how good an individual or an organisation might be there is always room for improvement – if only because the context is always changing. Review teams are delighted to identify and acknowledge strengths. They are also committed to suggesting ways in which a school can get better – particularly in enabling learning. Their reports will therefore always include suggestions for improvement with the most significant items being identified as firm recommendations.

## The process

- Schools are reviewed on a three-year cycle – although SESD may opt to replace a school review by an IPC Accreditation visit
- Where possible, reviews are normally grouped on a regional basis in order to minimise travel costs. Nevertheless no more than two reviews will be conducted in one tour.
- The size of a review team is determined by the size of the school to be reviewed and is set out in the contract between Shell International and Improve Education.
- In order to ensure their independence, review teams consist of people who are not directly employed by ImEd. They are selected by ImEd and approved by SESD which expects them to be at 'IPC mastering level'.
- If a school has a significant Dutch stream, SESD may request that at review team include a Dutch reviewer.
- Where possible and practical, all team members will have experience of working as a primary school teacher, of working with international schools and of conducting school reviews or inspections.
- Schools will be provided with brief 'pen pictures' of the members of their review team.
- The length of time that a review team spends in a school depends on the size of the school and is set out in the contract between Shell International and ImEd
- The time spent in school includes production of the first draft of the report and initial oral feedback to the leadership team
  
- A review *must* take into consideration the school's own self-evaluation and refer to this in discussions, investigations and reports.
- As part of the review, the team will normally
  - meet with the head teacher
  - meet with the deputy head teacher
  - meet with teachers
  - meet with parents
  - meet with children
  - meet with the Board Chair and/or HR manager
  - read specified documentation
  - observe lessons
  - observe other activities
  - look at children's work
- A school or operating unit might want the review team to go beyond the terms of the specification so that, for example, detailed feedback is given to each teacher or advice is provided on particular subjects or aspects of the school. Such an extension is possible in negotiation with ImEd and SESD but is likely to involve additional expense.
- The review is a review of the school as a whole, not of the work of individual teachers. However the review team will, on request and if time permits, provide teachers with individual and confidential feedback on their teaching. It is the head teacher's responsibility to bring this to teachers' attention.
  - The review team will produce a written professional report for the school and SESD. This report will include the whole team's judgements on
    - Learning
    - Teaching for Learning
    - Conditions for Learning
    - The emphasis will be on 'learning' and then on 'teaching for learning' and 'leadership and management. Other aspects of 'conditions for learning' will be covered to the extent to which the time allocation allows.
- The review report will include:

- Information to SESD and to the Shell School being reviewed, about the quality of learning and the factors that affect learning and recommendations on how these can be improved.
- Focus on the integral cycle of quality control where school improvement, staff development, the facility, the materials and schemes of work, the assessments of staff and children are built around the improvement of children's learning.
- A detailed description of the school as a total operation; all processes involved and the satisfaction level of all stakeholders who are directly or indirectly involved.
- The report will also include suggestions and recommendations for action.
- The draft report will be submitted to the head teacher to check for *factual accuracy and clarity* before publication. The team leader is responsible for considering the head teacher's comments. He or she will refer back to other team members if there are specific queries to be answered. The team leader is not bound to alter the draft report to incorporate the head teacher's comments. Changes in judgements or recommendations will only be made if they are based on something that is factually incorrect.
- The team leader is responsible for producing the final report.
- ImEd will send the final report to the head teacher and SESD within four weeks of the completion of the review.
- The head teacher will pass the final report to the HR Manager or equivalent.
- The review team will also produce a summary report for parents.
- It is important for everyone to remember that a school review is part of an ongoing cycle of development, improvement and quality assurance rather than a one-off event to be seen in isolation

## **The Framework**

### **1 Learning**

The review team will consider learning in its wider sense – including such things as academic, personal, social, moral and physical development. There will, where possible and appropriate, be particular reference to the learning of specific groups including:

- Boys
- Girls
- Children who are more able (i.e. those whose ability is reckoned to be higher than the majority of children of their age)
- Children who have been identified as having special educational needs
- Children whose first language is different from the language of instruction

There will also be reference to progress as well as to absolute attainment

The review team will draw on the school's own self-evaluation of children's learning

- 1.1 The extent to which children gain new knowledge, skills and understanding
- 1.2 The extent to which children consolidate existing knowledge, skills and understanding
- 1.3 The extent to which children's learning is appropriate
- 1.4 The extent to which children's learning is sufficient
- 1.5 The extent to which children's measured attainment compares with appropriate external benchmarks set by, for example, the English National Curriculum, the Dutch Kerndoelen and the IPC Learning Goals.

### **2 Teaching for Learning**

#### **2.1 Quality of teaching**

- 2.1 The extent to which teaching helps children learn
- 2.2 The extent to which teaching takes into account relevant differences between children
- 2.3 The extent to which teaching promotes children's independent and collective learning
- 2.4 The extent to which teaching fosters children's personal development
- 2.5 The extent to which teaching helps children to develop an international perspective

### **3 Conditions for Learning**

#### **3.1 Leadership and management**

- 3.1.1 The extent to which the school's leadership and management contribute to the quality of teaching and learning
- 3.1.2 The extent to which the school's leadership and management create a sense of direction for the school
- 3.1.3 The extent to which the school communicates its sense of educational direction, its policies, procedures and expectations to its staff
- 3.1.4 The extent to which the school's leadership and management reflect Shell policies
- 3.1.5 The extent to which the school involves its staff in determining its future direction and improvement

#### **3.2 The curriculum**

- 3.2.1 The extent to which the curriculum is planned to enable children to learn and reach high levels of attainment
- 3.2.2 The extent to which the curriculum helps children to develop an international perspective
- 3.2.3 The extent to which the curriculum is based on the English National Curriculum, the Dutch kerndoelen and/or the International Primary Curriculum
- 3.2.4 The extent to which the curriculum reflects Shell curriculum policies

#### **3.3 Educational climate**

- 3.3.1 The extent to which the climate within the school encourages, enables and celebrates children's learning
- 3.3.2 The extent to which the climate within the school helps children to develop an international perspective
- 3.3.3 The extent to which the climate in the school is safe and structured
- 3.3.4 The extent to which the climate in the school is stimulating and challenging

#### **3.4 Care for quality**

- 3.4.1 The extent to which the school monitors and evaluates its performance, particularly in relation to children's learning
- 3.4.2 The extent to which the school uses evidence to set well founded targets for improvement, particularly the improvement of children's learning
- 3.4.3 The extent to which the school implements the actions necessary to achieve the intended improvements.

#### **3.5 Care for children**

- 3.5.1 The extent to which the school assesses and monitors children's learning
- 3.5.2 The extent to which the school uses what it knows about children's learning to raise their levels of attainment
- 3.5.3 The extent to which the school provides support and guidance for children's personal development
- 3.5.4 *Pupil monitoring system*
  - Note: This section applies to Dutch streams only*
  - 3.5.4a *The extent to which teachers systematically monitor children's development*
  - 3.5.4b *The extent to which teachers systematically determine any special needs a child may have*
  - 3.5.4c *The extent to which the school makes it possible to provide special guidance for children*
  - 3.5.4d *The extent to which teachers systematically evaluate the implementation of intervention plans for individual children*
  - 3.5.4e *The quality of the school's policies and procedures for able children*

### **3.6 Professional development**

- 3.6.1 The extent to which the school monitors the professional performance of its staff and its effect on children's learning
- 3.6.2 The extent to which the school enables and promotes the professional development of its staff, particularly in relation to the improvement of children's learning

### **3.7 Partnerships**

- 3.7.1 The extent to which the school communicates with parents about their children's learning and levels of attainment
- 3.7.2 The extent to which the school communicates with parents about what their children learn and do
- 3.7.3 The extent to which the school involves parents in supporting their children's learning
- 3.7.4 The quality of the information provided to parents about the school's educational direction, its curriculum, its policies and its procedures
- 3.7.5 The quality of the consultation with parents about the school's educational direction, its curriculum, its policies and its procedures
- 3.7.6 The extent to which the school works with others to provide a high standard of education

### **3.8 The availability and use of resources**

- 3.8.1 The extent to which the school is resourced to enable learning to take place
- 3.8.2 The extent to which the school makes use of its available resources – including ICT – to enable children to learn and reach high levels of attainment

### **3.9 Other issues**

- 3.9.1 The review team will also investigate, subject to agreement, any specific issues identified by the operating unit, the education services department or the school.