



English in primary education: Inspectors and researchers collaborating to manage the curriculum

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The Standing International Conference of Inspectorates (SICI)
Funchal, 30 – 31 March 2023



Session outline

- The Portuguese Inspectorate of Education and Science (IGEC)
- Justification for a monitoring activity
- Specificities of teaching a foreign language in primary education
- Motivation for collaboration and consultancy
- Collaboration and outcomes
- Feedback from the field
- Perceived benefits





Programmes in IGEC's Plan of Activities:

- Monitoring (regular observation of educational activities)
 - Control (compliance with the law)
 - Evaluation (organizational assessment)
 - Audit (management procedures)
 - Ombudsmanship (equity and justice in the Education System)
 - International activities
-
- ✓ Thematic activity: *Managing the curriculum and quality in preschool education*
 - ✓ Thematic activity *Managing the curriculum – teaching sciences*
 - ✓ Thematic activity *Managing the curriculum – teaching English in Grades 3 to 6*



Justification for a monitoring activity

International background

- X Portuguese students' proficiency in English was below average
- X weaknesses within the spoken and written texts being the most significant.

(European Survey of Foreign Language Competences, 2011)

National context

- X English was the second subject with the lowest scores in Grades 5 and 6 (academic year 2014-2015).



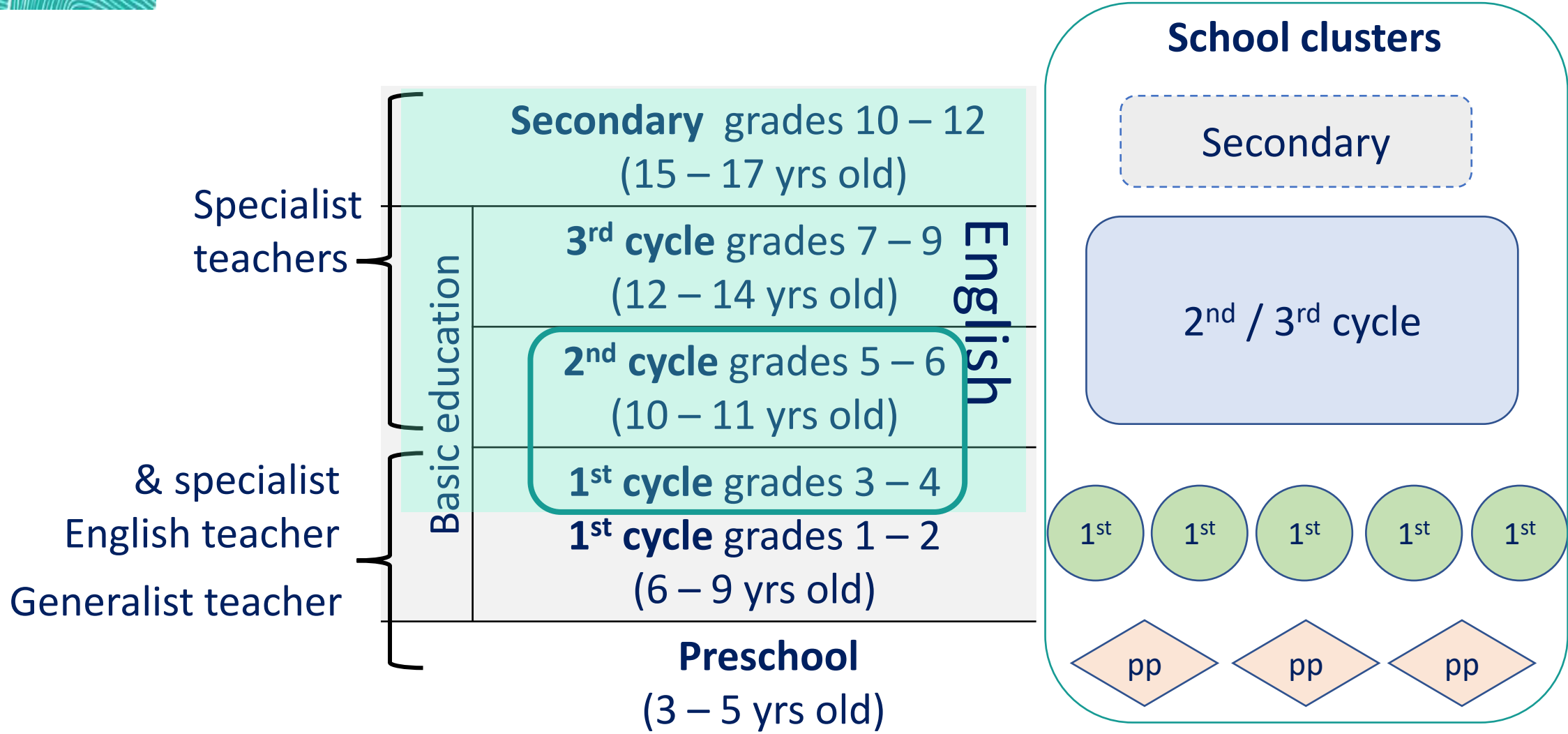
Justification for a monitoring activity

Portuguese Educational policies:

- 2006 – 2014: English as a *Curriculum Enrichment Activity*
- September 2015: English as part of the curriculum of Grades 3 and 4
- February 2015: Recruitment group 120 (teachers of English for Grades 3 and 4)
- 2015 - 2016: *Metas Curriculares* – National Standards for English from Grades 3 to 12 (revoked)
- 2018: *Aprendizagens Essenciais* - Essential Learning for English



Education in Portugal



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The process of designing a monitoring activity

1. Legislation analysis
2. Research on methodology and didactics
 - ✓ Reading the relevant literature
 - ✓ Analyzing textbooks
3. Meeting experts from universities and other branches of the Ministry of Education
 - ✓ Meetings
 - ✓ Workshops with experts
 - ✓ Feedback on documentation



The tools

- ❖ The Itinerary Manual: a guide for the inspectors
 - Establishes the details of the phases of the intervention:
 - Before: Contacting the schools
 - During: How to collect and report
 - After: Writing the report and sending it to the school principal
 - Guiding questions for the interviews

- ❖ Guidelines with itemised prompts
- ❖ Observation form



The inspectors and interventions

Work in teams of specialist and generalist practitioners

- A former English teacher
- A former primary teacher

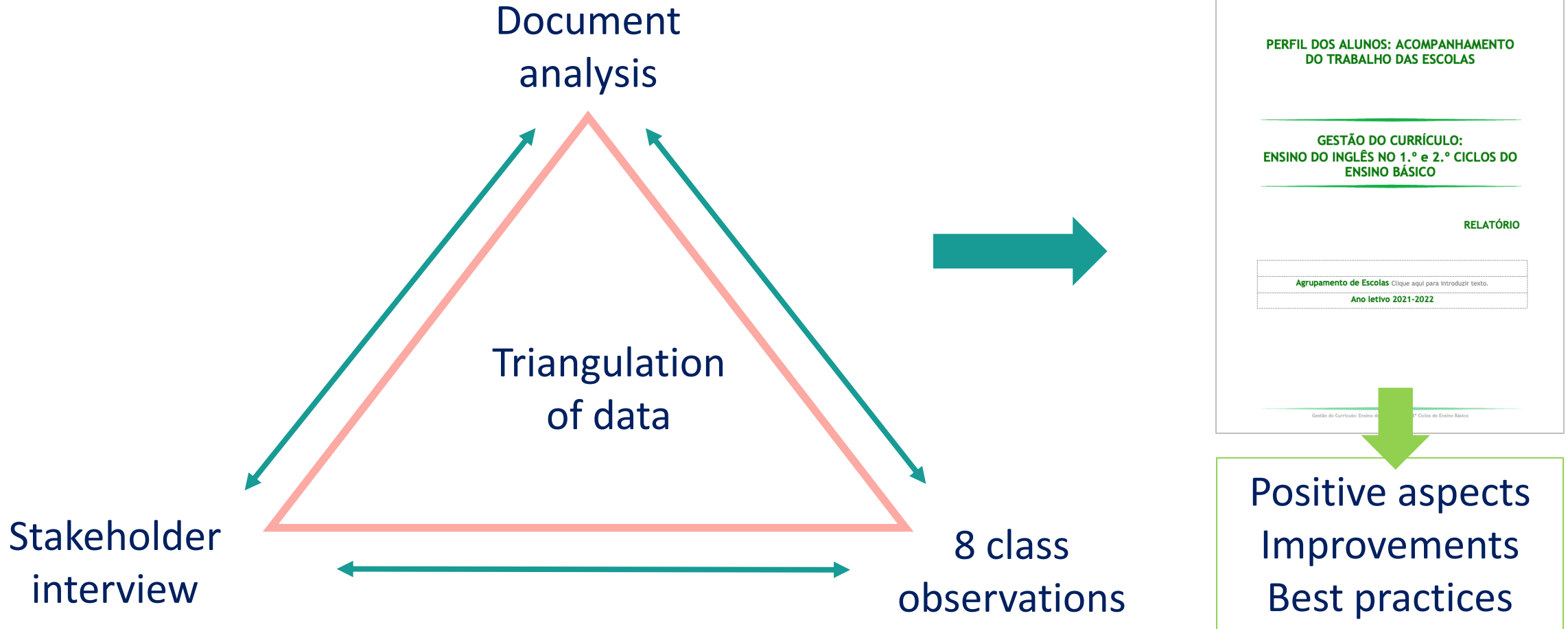
Interventions / inspections



811 school clusters in all



The interventions



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The specificities of teaching a FL in primary

Young language learner qualities include:

- an ability to grasp meaning
- a creative use of own limited language resources
- a capacity for indirect learning
- an inclination for play
- a tendency for imagination in learning
- an instinct for interaction and talk



(Halliwell, 1992: 3-8)



The specificities of teaching a FL in primary

L2 acquisition is facilitated by:

- ✓ exposure to rich meaningful language
- ✓ affective and cognitive engagement
- ✓ using mental resources typically used in L1 communication
- ✓ noticing how the L2 is used
- ✓ engaging in contextualised and purposeful L2 communication
- ✓ interacting with others in the L2
- ✓ focusing on meaning



(Tomlinson, 2013: 12-15)



Principles and procedures of English in primary education

Teachers should plan to ...

- ✓ include routines
- ✓ focus on developing oral skills
- ✓ integrate skills
- ✓ include a variety of activities
- ✓ give preference to action
- ✓ include whole class, pair and group work
- ✓ foster autonomy
- ✓ encourage curiosity
- ✓ make progress evident



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Motivation for collaboration

Lack of specific knowledge in the **specificities** of early language learning



Objectives

- To assess the planning, development, and evaluation of educational activities
- To promote appropriate pedagogical and didactic practices
- To improve practices
- To contribute to a more effective management of the curriculum
- To identify good practice in English language teaching



Collaboration and outcomes

May to July 2017

Feedback on the observation tool

- ✓ Using routines
- ✓ Affective aspects of language learning
- ✓ Group dynamics during the lesson
- ✓ Variety of activities
- ✓ Developmentally appropriate resources
- ✓ Developing autonomy
- ✓ Approaches to assessment
- ✓ Visible evidence of English



September 2017

IGEC Inspeção-Geral da Educação e Ciência
Gestão do Currículo: Ensino do Inglês no 1.º e 2.º CEB
Ficha de Observação da Prática Letiva (FOPL)

A. CONTEXTUALIZAÇÃO

A.1. Escola: _____ A.3. Hora: _____
A.2. Data: _____ A.4. Ano e turma: _____ A.5. N.º de alunos na aula: _____

B.1. CONTEÚDO DA AULA
Atividades realizadas: _____
O preenchimento deve atender à escala de referência de 1 a 5, em que 1 significa "não/nunca" e 5 significa "sempre"

B.2. OBSERVAÇÃO

B.2.1. A aula inicia-se com uma contextualização da(s) temática(s) a trabalhar (ex. referência ao que foi abordado na aula anterior) e/ou referência aos objetivos e às atividades que vão desenvolver e/ou com uma rotina (ex. canção, distribuição de materiais)

B.2.2. A língua inglesa é utilizada como língua de comunicação privilegiada e a língua materna somente quando necessário

B.2.3. A língua estrangeira é usada para além de palavras isoladas e da repetição e são utilizadas diversas estratégias de comunicação (ex. gestos)

B.2.4. As tarefas propostas têm o propósito de desenvolvimento da fluência e da confiança na utilização da língua por parte dos alunos mais do que na precisão do uso das estruturas linguísticas

B.2.5. É microrotacionalmente trabalhada a competência comunicativa, nas vertentes de oralidade e de escrita

B.2.6. É desenvolvida a competência intercultural aproveitando o(s) tema(s) tratado(s)

B.2.7. É dinamizada uma variedade de atividades dirigidas a todos os alunos, de acordo com as suas características e nível de proficiência

B.2.7.1. Indique com X se são trabalhadas as seguintes competências:

Compreensão oral	<input type="checkbox"/>	Interação oral	<input type="checkbox"/>	Interação escrita	<input type="checkbox"/>
Produção oral	<input type="checkbox"/>	Produção escrita	<input type="checkbox"/>	Competência estratégica	<input type="checkbox"/>
Compreensão escrita	<input type="checkbox"/>	Competência intercultural	<input type="checkbox"/>		

B.2.7.2. Quais as atividades desenvolvidas:

	1.º CEB	2.º CEB	1.º CEB	2.º CEB	1.º CEB	2.º CEB
role-play	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	concurso de soletração (ex. spelling bee e quiz time)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Uso de vídeos (ex. publicidade)	<input type="checkbox"/>
apresentações orais	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	redação de pequenos parágrafos	<input type="checkbox"/>	Uso do gauthai ou recursos similares	<input type="checkbox"/>
entrevistas em pares	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	produção de textos a partir de imagens	<input type="checkbox"/>	Uso de filmes	<input type="checkbox"/>
audição de canções e textos com atividades acopladas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	exercícios de leitura e interpretação, preenchimento de espaços	<input type="checkbox"/>	Uso de histórias	<input type="checkbox"/>
cantar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	lip-sync , escolha múltipla	<input type="checkbox"/>	Uso de flashcards	<input type="checkbox"/>
jogos produzidos pelo professor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ordenação de palavras e/ou de parágrafos, sinónimos/antónimos	<input type="checkbox"/>	Uso de movimento	<input type="checkbox"/>
jogos de tabuleiro	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	clique aqui para introduzir texto .	<input type="checkbox"/>	clique aqui para introduzir texto .	<input type="checkbox"/>

B.2.7.3. Indique quais as modalidades de trabalho realizadas pelos alunos:

- Página 1 de 2 -

- ## An observation tool
- ✓ More focused
 - ✓ Clear & concise
 - ✓ Age-appropriate
 - ✓ Just 2 sides

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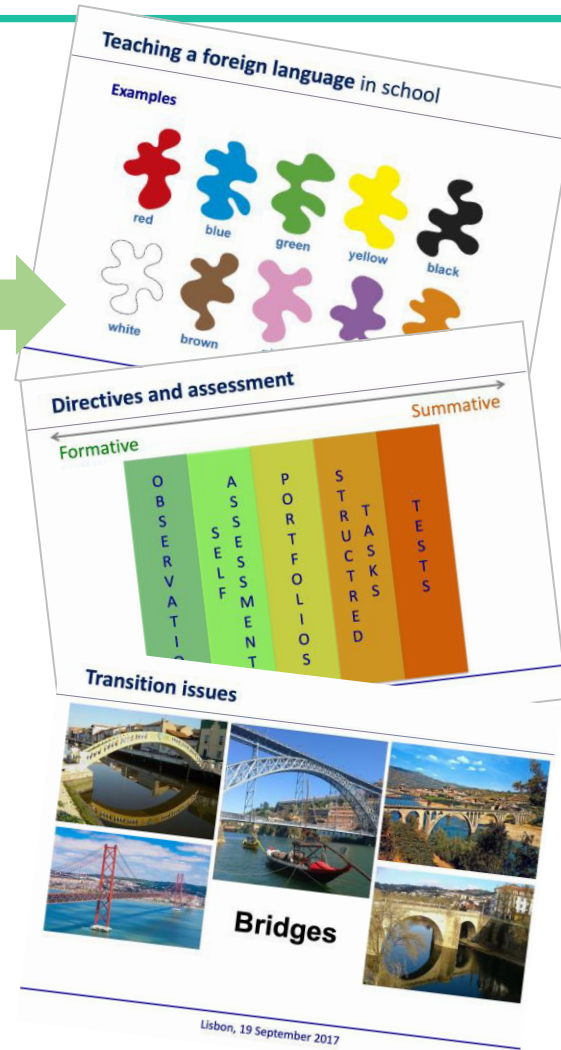
Collaboration and outcomes

September 2017

A workshop

Topics included:

- ✓ Early language learning: Theories and characteristics
- ✓ Methodologies and approaches
- ✓ Themes and topics in the National Standards
- ✓ Planning and assessment
- ✓ Transition



A practical workshop

- ✓ Useful and hands on
- ✓ Practical and memorable
- ✓ Time for questions and discussion
- ✓ Still a reference to IGEC observers

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SM



Evolution of the inspection documents

Observation form

- Introduction of numerical scale from 1 – 5
- Rephrasing of items e.g. teacher- / learner-centered
- Removing items e.g. implicit & explicit grammar

Guidelines with itemised prompts

- Legislation changes
 - Student profile
 - Essential learning document
 - Approach to inclusion
 - National citizenship strategy
- Focus on assessment



The Global Report

Some of the recommendations:

- ✓ The implementation of contextualised planning
- ✓ The planning of the assessment criteria in articulation with the Student Profile
- ✓ The implementation of mechanisms for peer observation
- ✓ Include in classroom practices ...
 - (i) the streamlining of varied activities
 - (ii) the encouragement of student autonomy
 - (iii) the promotion of student self-assessment
- ✓ The implementation of teacher evaluation routines



Perceived benefits

IGEC CONFIDENCE

Confidence in the 'specificities' e.g.

- focusing classroom observations
- justifying feedback from the visit
- being explicit about what needs improving in the report

Expert OPPORTUNITY

An opportunity to:

- understand the real work of inspectors
- see early language learning from a different perspective
- confirm concerns about particular practices (e.g. assessment criteria)



The opportunities



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Thank you and *Obrigada!*

And now for questions!

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