SCHOOL ROOF INSPECTION CHECKLIST

This is a roof inspection checklist for a school or a campus. It assumes several roofs of different ages and systems on one site, which is the normal situation rather than the exception.

Run it in the autumn, so that what you find can be specified over the winter and built in the summer holiday.

BEFORE YOU GO UP

Walk the site at ground level first with a roof plan, marking every roof area including the low ones over corridors and canopies. On an older site this usually finds areas nobody has on record.

Agree access, safeguarding and a named site contact. Keep ladders and hatches secure throughout.

AREA BY AREA

RECORD FOR EACH ROOF AREA	WHY
☐ A number, fixed forever	So findings can be located and compared
☐ System and apparent age	Areas differ, and so do their remaining lives
☐ Construction date if known	Extensions date the junctions that fail
☐ What is below it	A leak over a corridor differs from one over a store
☐ Access route	How anybody gets there to repair it

THE ROOF SURFACES

LOOK AT	WHAT A PROBLEM LOOKS LIKE
☐ Drainage	Blocked outlets, missing strainers, standing water, no overflows

LOOK AT	WHAT A PROBLEM LOOKS LIKE
☐ Gutters, particularly internal	Debris, moss, sagging, open joints, staining below
☐ Seams and laps	Edges lifting, dirt lines, hand applied mastic
☐ Perimeter and edge metal	Open joints, lifted sections, loose bars
☐ Upstands at parapets and walls	Membrane pulling away, a gap at the top
☐ Junctions with extensions	Where two roofs of different ages meet
☐ The open field	Splits, punctures, blisters, scuffs
☐ Moss and organic growth	Common on shaded school roofs, marking damp areas

THE DETAILS THAT FAIL HERE

LOOK AT	WHAT A PROBLEM LOOKS LIKE
☐ Rooflights and lanterns	Crazed, cracked, flashing lifted, condensation inside
☐ Canopy and walkway roofs	Ponding, blocked outlets, corrosion at fixings
☐ Plant enclosures	Ponding on a small flat roof nobody visits
☐ Soil vents and extracts	Collars split, flashing slipped
☐ Lightning protection	Tape fixed through the membrane, loose clips
☐ Ball guards and netting	Fixings into the roof, damage from impacts

THE EQUIPMENT

LOOK AT	WHAT A PROBLEM LOOKS LIKE
☐ Boiler flues and terminals	Staining, corrosion, sealant failed at the base
☐ Ventilation and extract units	Curbs sealed with mastic, panels left open
☐ Condensate discharge	Running onto the membrane, a permanently damp patch

LOOK AT	WHAT A PROBLEM LOOKS LIKE
☐ Solar arrays	Debris at the upwind edge, ballast moved, worn membrane
☐ Cable and data runs	Resting on the membrane, fixings through the roof
☐ Aerials and masts	Fixed through the roof without a detail

INSIDE THE BUILDING

LOOK AT	WHAT A PROBLEM LOOKS LIKE
☐ Corridor and hall ceilings	Stains, sagging tiles, water marks near a junction
☐ Classrooms below flat roofs	New staining, damp at a wall head
☐ Plant and boiler rooms	Trays, buckets, standing water
☐ Store rooms	Damage nobody has reported because nobody is in there
☐ The leak log	Where it dripped, when, and in which weather

WHAT TO DO WITH IT

1. **Walk the site at ground level first.** It finds the roofs nobody has on record.
2. **Number every roof area and keep the numbering.** A single grade for a campus means nothing.
3. **Inspect in autumn, specify in winter, build in summer.** The window is known years ahead.
4. **Keep a leak log between inspections.** Date, room, weather. Five columns.
5. **Give the low level roofs their own attention.** They are the oldest and the most disruptive.

Want the reasoning behind this? Read how building type changes the roof and what an inspection program covers.

Walked by _____ Date _____ Roof _____