



OFSTED PREPARATION RLT

'Ofsted exists to be a force for improvement... the primary purpose of inspection under this framework is to bring about improvement in education provision.'

Inspections Will Focus With Greater Specificity on Distinct Phases – EYFS & Sixth Form Setting Particularly – Or Providers of Specialist Education

Under the heading 'Arrangements for different types of provision', particularly under the subheadings 'Schools with early years settings' and 'Schools with sixth forms' there is new, additional clarification that separate grades will be given as part of inspections carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008.

This piece of legislation relates to the ability of the Secretary of State to direct the Chief Inspector to inspect a registered independent educational institution at any time.

Ofsted have also done away with their list of groups of learners, which outlined groups such as those with SEN as ones whose outcome inspectors would pay particular attention to. Elsewhere there are minor changes in wording and the deletion of potentially unnecessary clarifications.

The sections entitled 'The frequency and type of inspections' and 'What judgements will be made under short inspections?' in the 2015 framework are no longer present in the current version. Instead, all details related to these headings are to be found in the handbooks.

Headline changes to the New Ofsted Inspection Framework:

1. Inspection timings have changed but the initial suggestion that Ofsted could arrive within 2.5 hours has been removed;
2. There's no getting away from the Ofsted grades; they stay the same: outstanding, good, requires improvement or inadequate;
3. The judgement categories have been completely revised and will now cover: Quality of Education (this is a big one!), Behaviour and Attitudes, Personal Development, Leadership and Management;
4. Some key themes emerge (none of which will be a surprise for those who read our previous blog based on Amanda Spielman's October speech: reducing workload for teachers, an emphasis on good character and resilience among pupils, tackling off-rolling, and of course a broad, well-balanced knowledge-rich curriculum;
5. Despite what some have said, we are not sure from the revised framework that Ofsted inspectors will be 'ignoring' data, merely that they will look to understand the purpose and usefulness of internal pupil data.

Most of the publicity surrounding the new 2019 Ofsted framework has focused on confirmation of the changes to the structure of inspection, such as the revised judgements and the decision not to proceed with the proposed on-site preparation before the inspection itself.

What has received less attention, is a document that accompanies the new framework and handbook, "[Inspecting the curriculum: revising inspection methodology to support the education inspection framework](#)". This provides insight into what inspectors will be doing during the inspection and what it might feel like to be on the receiving end.

At the heart of this inspection process is the new "quality of education" judgement. The concepts of "curriculum intent, implementation and impact" have been well-rehearsed in the lead-up to the new framework, which is based on the principle that these curriculum concepts connect with teaching, learning and assessment to provide evidence for the new judgement.

But how will inspectors go about finding that evidence?

The process will involve three key activities:

- a top-level view
- a deep dive and then
- bringing it together.

The top-level view will, unsurprisingly, look at the overall curriculum offer and crucially, school leaders' understanding of their curriculum intent and how its implementation allows content to be effectively sequenced to maximise learning.

The deep dive will be where the action really begins. The lead inspector will identify a sample of subjects or topics that will be the subject of intensive scrutiny to test out how theory is put into practice.

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Bringing it together will collate the evidence available to see if there are any clear issues emerging or whether further investigation with school leaders is needed.

In primary schools there will always be a deep dive in reading, plus others in one or more foundation subjects and often one in mathematics. This will be adapted for small schools with less than 150 pupils. In secondary schools the focus will be on a sample of four to six subjects, across year and pupil groups. In both cases the deep dive will include:

- an evaluation of senior leaders' curriculum intent for each area and their understanding of its implementation and impact
- an evaluation of curriculum or middle leaders' long and medium-term planning, including their decisions on content and curriculum sequencing
- visits to a "deliberately and explicitly connected sample of lessons"
- work scrutiny from pupils in observed lessons
- discussions with teachers about content and sequencing
- discussions with pupils from the observed lessons.

Inspectors will be expected to know the purpose of the lesson or task, how it fits into a sequence of lessons over time and what pupils already know and understand. This suggests that there will need to be discussions with teachers before the lessons. As inspectors won't be looking at schools' internal data, these discussions will need to go well beyond the traditional "how many are reaching the expected standard?" Teachers will need to be able to explain what it is that pupils have learned. As before, lessons will not be graded; each lesson will be seen as one in a sequence and it will be what inspectors understand to be the overall sequence that will be evaluated to contribute towards the judgement on the quality of education.

Inspectors' view of the overall lesson sequence will be evaluated to contribute towards the judgement on the quality of education

Findings from work evaluations will complement other evidence about the implementation of the curriculum. They won't be used to judge the attainment or progress of individual pupils or to compare one pupil with another, nor will simple coverage of the curriculum by itself determine a judgement: "work scrutiny will form part of the evidence we use to judge whether the intended curriculum is being enacted." For each deep dive, the exercise will involve a minimum of six workbooks or pieces of work per subject per year group; work will be scrutinised from at least two year groups, so that evidence isn't drawn from a single cohort.

A deep dive will involve four to six lesson visits, meaning that in a secondary school there will be around 30 lesson observations, in addition to the other activities listed above.

Each inspection will begin with the top-level discussion. After that there will be a degree of flexibility around the order of what happens next. The intention is that, as many activities as possible are carried out jointly with school and curriculum leaders, so that the inspectors'

planning can respond to emerging hypotheses. As with current practice, the team meeting at the end of day one will bring together the available evidence for the four main judgements and then plan activity for the following day.

When Will An Ofsted Inspection Take Place?

With regards to the 'when' of an Ofsted inspection, the handbooks shed some light:

- Inspection can take place at any point from five school days after the first day pupils attend that term.
- Notably, the length of time a Section 8 'short inspection' is to be lengthened to 2 days, rather than 1 day, to ensure 'good' schools are 'good' within the new framework. However, in response to the consultation inspectors will continue to be on site for only one day for section 8 inspections of the smallest schools (with 150 or fewer pupils).
- The draft framework included proposals that the lead inspector would have an on-site conversation with school leaders and would complete certain preparations on-site. This has since been dropped due to objections. Instead, there will be a 90-minute phone call between the lead inspectors or their nominated delegate the day before inspection begins.

However, it also clarifies that 'Ofsted may conduct inspections without notice. When this happens, the lead inspector will normally telephone the school about 15 minutes before arriving on site.'

New Key Judgement Categories Have Been Introduced

Whilst schools will still be graded as either outstanding, good, requires improvement or inadequate, it is against quite different criteria that they will be judged.

The most obvious changes are the removal of a specific category for outcomes and the broader category 'quality of education'.

Details of the four new categories, exploring both what the inspectors will be looking for, and how they intend to make their judgements:

Quality Of Education

In short, Ofsted will be looking for schools that are offering a well thought-out, knowledge-led curriculum. They are looking for a curriculum that also promotes mastery of skills, whilst allowing pupils opportunities.

This should include ones that simulate – especially tasks that simulate experiences pupils are likely to encounter in later life, be it employment-focused or to do with day-to-day tasks like financial planning or keeping a home – to revisit topics to embed and reuse knowledge and skills acquired as part of the scheme of following a knowledge-rich, expert-led curriculum.

In this category are the three 'I's Intent, Implementation, Impact. These three act as subcategories and will not be graded separately. This is the category that is probably going to cause the most interest in the new framework and requires some time to familiarise oneself with.

Intent – What Inspectors Will Be Looking For

Here the focus is on the curriculum and the aspirations schools have for their learners (for the sake of expediency this is now Ofsted's catch-all term for children, pupils, apprentices, trainees and adult learners).

Under the new framework, schools should have high and equal expectations, providing an ambitious curriculum, which is studied by all.

There appears to be an emphasis on the curriculum being knowledge-rich; however, the handbook insists strongly that *'this must not be reduced to, or confused with, simply memorising facts. Inspectors will be alert to unnecessary or excessive attempts to simply prompt pupils to learn glossaries or long lists of disconnected facts'*.

The other main aspect of the curriculum is that it must deliver cultural capital defined in the handbook as *'the essential knowledge that pupils need to be educated citizens, introducing them to the best that has been thought and said and helping to engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.'*

However, there is also mention of the inclusion of skills teaching within the curriculum, particularly regarding preparation for both future learning and employment.

A key message that rings loud and clear throughout the documents is that the curriculum:

- Must be broad and balanced;

- Should provide a wide range of subjects;
- Should have an emphasis should be on how coherent and well sequenced it is, with knowledge, skills and cultural capital all appearing to play a part in this.

How 'Intent' Will Be Judged

In the handbook, it is made explicit that *'Ofsted will judge schools that take radically different approaches to the curriculum fairly. They will assess a school's curriculum favorably when leaders have built a curriculum with appropriate coverage, content, structure and sequencing and implemented it effectively.'*

Inspectors will draw evidence about leaders' curriculum intent principally from discussion with senior and subject leaders focusing on endpoints, specific and appropriate content and the sequencing of the content.

Implementation – What Inspectors Will Be Looking For

Under the Implementation heading, we see attention being drawn to how teachers and other teaching staff do their job and how leaders support them, particularly regarding subject knowledge, presentation of material, assessment, feedback, responsive teaching and recall of material.

With regards to how material is presented (or taught), the handbooks clarify that *'Ofsted does not advocate that any particular approach should be used exclusively in teaching. Different approaches to teaching can be effective'*.

It is interesting to note here that reading gets its own bullet point: *'Inspectors will make a judgement on the quality of education by evaluating the extent to which a rigorous approach to the teaching of reading develops learners' confidence and enjoyment in reading. At the early stages of learning to read, reading materials are closely matched to learners' phonics knowledge'*.

The reading focus is repeated both under the Impact heading and in the handbooks (where there is also a special mention for math is, clarifying that in good schools learners will be *'able to apply mathematical knowledge, concepts and procedures appropriately for their age.'*).

How 'Implementation' Will Be Judged

Inspectors will draw evidence about curriculum implementation from discussions with curriculum and subject leaders and teachers, observations of and interviews with pupils or classes, scrutiny of the pupils' work, and reviews of schemes of work or other long-term planning.

There are some interesting notes in the handbooks, which suggest that evidence of good work in progress could result in a 'Good' judgement even if not fully implemented.

The new Ofsted Framework states that: 'Those pupils behind age-related expectations are provided with the opportunities to learn the mathematical knowledge and skills that are necessary to catch up with their peers', and this is something we specialise in here at Third Space Learning. To find out a little more about how we apply the EIF to the way we teach math is here at TSL, look here.

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Impact – What Ofsted Inspectors Will Be Looking For

Under this heading, we get our first mention of data: *'learners develop detailed knowledge and skills across the curriculum and, as a result, achieve well.'*

However, the focus is not solely on data.

The new framework also outlines there should be focus on doing things that *'allow [learners] to go on to destinations that meet their interests, aspirations and the intention of their course of study'*. The emphasis certainly is not solely, on what we would class as academic success and there is a recognition of the fact there are more ways of defining success.

How 'Impact' Will Be Judged

In order to evidence these inspectors will not be using schools' internal assessment data as evidence and will only look at nationally generated performance data such as that which is available in the IDSR.

They will also look for first-hand evidence of how pupils are doing, drawing together evidence from the interviews (including discussions with pupils about what they have remembered about the content they have studied), observations, work scrutinies and documentary review (including pupils' exercise books or folders) as well as nationally published information about the destinations to which pupils progress when they leave the school. In primary schools, they will also listen to a range of pupils read.

Behaviour And Attitudes

Behaviour and Attitudes – What Inspectors Will Be Looking For

Here we have a brief category with just 4 points for inspectors to consider – 4 points that are expanded upon in the judgement criteria in the handbooks.

Rather notably some new buzzwords and phrases have crept into the statements under this heading. In the 2015 framework the term ‘high expectations’ didn’t appear with reference to the behaviour, attitudes or conduct of pupils. The word ‘positive’ was previously used to refer to the general culture of the school but now we see it with reference to learners’ own attitudes.

We also see other words, which have gained prominence recently in education, particularly relating to aspects of good character:

‘[learners are] committed to their learning, know how to study effectively (there are clear links here to the cognitive science research that Ofsted have been taking notice of), are resilient to setbacks and take pride in their achievements’ – as well as a curriculum rich in knowledge, skills and cultural capital, so it seems that Ofsted also want to value good character education too.

Under the Behaviour and Attitudes heading us also, find a new mention of bullying and discrimination, which was previously only mentioned in the leadership and management category. In response to consultation, there is new emphasis on how swiftly and effectively providers take action if these issues occur. There is also suggestion that inspectors may begin to make judgements on this based more on the experience that learners speak of rather than on what leaders say or think they are doing.

How ‘Behaviour and Attitudes’ Will Be Judged

In order to make judgements about bullying and discrimination and – hopefully – its lack, inspectors will hold discussions with pupils (from a range of different backgrounds and who have different experiences of the school’s approach to behaviour) and individual interviews with staff (particularly trainees, supply staff, NQTs, administrative support staff and catering staff). They will also use information from pupil and staff surveys and observations.

In addition to focusing on policies and approaches to minimise or eliminate bullying and discrimination, they will evaluate the effectiveness of exclusion and alternative strategies to exclusion.

Personal Development

– What Inspectors Will Be Looking For

Another brief category with another 4 points, and with further mention of character development (resilience, confidence and independence) and the importance of learners' discovery of their interests and talents, we also find a mention of how schooling should be preparation for life, and thankfully, this doesn't specify as adults meaning that one conceivable reason for education is to help learners to navigate life in the here and now.

Here we also find reference to British values (democracy; the rule of law; individual liberty; and the mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith) as well as a mention of how learners keep themselves mentally and physically healthy. There is also an interesting removal of the following statement: *'understanding of how to keep themselves safe from relevant risks such as abuse, sexual exploitation and extremism, including when using the internet and social media'*.

Perhaps the removal is a positive step – was the old statement a hangover from an earlier mentality of victim blaming?

Now the emphasis is on what adults need to do (it is outlined under the Leadership and Management judgement that leaders have a responsibility to safeguard learners) rather than on the personal responsibility of learners to keep themselves safe.

However, should it go one-step further to teaching learners about how not to be a perpetrator of these crimes?

In response to the consultation, there are also some amendments to the 'personal development' grade descriptors to better reflect the importance of high-quality pastoral support.

How 'Personal Development' Will Be Judged

To make judgements in the personal development category, inspectors will look at the range, quality and take-up of extra-curricular activities, the promotion of British Values, the development of pupils' character, the quality of debate and discussions that pupils have and the pupils' understanding of how equality and diversity are promoted and celebrated.

Leadership And Management

Leadership and Management – What Inspectors Will Be Looking For & How It Will Be Judged

Leaders will be judged largely in the same way as they were under the previous framework. Inspectors will make decisions about whether or not leaders have:

- An ambitious and inclusive vision;
- A concern for the continuing professional development of staff, with a focus on training rather than on performance management;
- Ensured there is no cheating – it is a shame that this has to be made clear, but hopefully it will stop some current pernicious practice;
- Engaged with their community, particularly learners and staff;
- Acted in order to protect staff;
- Ensured high levels of safeguarding.

Governance will also come under review during inspections, as previously.

The sources of evidence specific to leadership and management will be meetings with leaders (including MAT senior staff if appropriate – including the CEO or the CEO's specified delegate) to discuss how well they know the school, meetings with governors and interviews with staff and pupils.

Inspectors will also look at responses to the staff and pupil questionnaires and Parent View.

There Will Also Be an Increased Focus on Reducing Workload

A final and encouraging point to note is that throughout the draft framework document and the draft handbooks there are references to workload, placing the onus not only on leaders but also on teachers.

With reference to assessment and the data collection, input and analysis it involves, Ofsted now suggest that leaders *'do not use it in a way that creates unnecessary burdens for staff or learners'*.

The framework and handbooks also contain more general outlines for leaders saying that they should be aware of the main pressures that are on staff and take account of them, realistic and constructive in the way they manage their staff (including their workload), and that any workload issues are consistently dealt with appropriately and quickly.

It is not just workload that leaders need to protect their staff from; the framework also states that leaders should *'protect their staff from bullying and harassment.'* The criteria for outstanding leadership also include the statement: *'Staff consistently report high levels of support for well-being issues.'*

In order to lead on improvements to workload problems, Ofsted also point out that:

- Teachers should not be selecting resources and materials, which create unnecessary workload;
- That teaching shouldn't be unnecessarily elaborate; and
- That differentiated approaches, which require a great deal of planning time are not necessary.

Raleigh Learning Trust Action plan

What Actions Should You Now Take

Step 1: Take some time to read the framework and relevant handbooks, particularly if you are in the process of curriculum design, and consider its implications.

Step 2: Know how you are designing the curriculum for your school and why so you are ready to discuss it with inspectors from the 3 perspectives (intent, implementation and impact). Remember your curriculum needs to be a specific plan of what pupils need to know overall, and in each subject, as well as in each year.

Step 3: Explain to key stakeholders who are aware of the new framework, particularly governors, what the main changes might be, explain how your school is already meeting the standards and reassure them that there need be no knee-jerk changes in the meantime.

Step 4: In reading the documentation, did anything strike you as being a good point for change in your school? If so, do not change for Ofsted's sake but perhaps take the time now to begin to effect positive change, make sure it is done in a measured, manageable and effective manner.

Helpful Links

- [Ofsted's new handbooks and framework](#);
- [Ofsted's research findings to draw up the framework](#);

Documents and Policies to have ready

Leadership and Management	Quality of Education	Behaviour and Attitudes	Personal Development
SEF SIP OFSTED Action plan Curriculum development Governors mins Link Gov activity CPD	Lesson Observations Book trawls Learning walks Teacher and Support staff appraisals CPD Subject planning Curriculum development and organisation KS4 data SATS Mid-term data Predicted data National comparison data KS4 predicted data Vulnerable groups data	Exclusion data 3 year trends Attendance data Pupil questionnaires	Pupil Parliament / voice activity SMSC data
	Assessment Policy Teaching and Learning Policy Curriculum Policy Good Practice guides Case studies	Behaviour Policy Handling Policy Safeguarding Policy Good Practice guides RPI Certificates SCR info Safeguarding training Attendance Policy Case Studies	Case studies

The 90 Min Conversation

As the proposed site visit on the afternoon prior to day one of the inspection will not be implemented, the telephone call with the headteacher will assume much greater importance. It will include discussion of the school's

- context and progress since the last inspection,
- current strengths and weaknesses (particularly in relation to the curriculum),
- access to the curriculum
- and a discussion about which areas of the school might be the subject of deep dives.

The conversation will last, Ofsted says, around 90 minutes and will make a significant contribution to the lead inspector's initial hypotheses about the school. Headteachers might find it helpful to have ready, the key points that they want the lead inspector to take on board as an aide-memoire when the call comes.