
2024 Inspection Briefing



School and Early Years
Improvement Service



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Education Inspection Framework (EIF)

- Quality of Education (curriculum, teaching, learning, assessment and outcomes)
- Behaviour and attitudes
- Personal development
- Leadership and management



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Timing

- In general, schools with legacy overall outstanding or good grades will usually be inspected within the 4 academic years after their last inspection, schools that are requires improvement or inadequate will usually be inspected within 2.5 years. This is dealt with in paragraphs 37 to 73 of the most recent inspection handbook published on 16th of September 2024
- Guidance aimed at helping schools work out when their next inspection would be, based on factors including their last overall graded judgment, is now obsolete
- Ofsted said it would be setting out the expected dates for when it will next inspect schools inspected this term
- Most good schools will have an ungraded inspection. Some will receive a graded inspection
- Those outstanding schools that last received a graded inspection before September 2015 will receive an initial graded inspection. Schools that last received a graded inspection after this date will normally receive an initial ungraded inspection



Biggest changes for this term/year

- new a approach set to be piloted over Autumn term
 - Call on Monday
 - Inspection Tuesday and Wednesday
 - Usually...
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- If a school is open in a week that includes a bank holiday, Ofsted “may notify the school on the Tuesday of that week” and inspections could fall on a Wednesday and Thursday in those weeks.



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Biggest changes for this term/year

Removal of 'overall effectiveness' judgement for graded inspections

- Changes outcome at end of inspection
- Outcomes will relate to the effectiveness of leaders' actions in maintaining standards
- Still evaluating against the EIF



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Biggest changes for this term/year

“On ungraded inspections we will no longer conduct deep dives from September... Instead, we want ungraded inspections to feel more like monitoring visits.... The emphasis of these inspections will be on providing school leaders with opportunities to demonstrate where they have improved and to discuss where they still have work to do.”

Sir Martyn Oliver, His Majesty's Chief Inspector, 4 May 2024

More on this and 'focus areas' later...



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Intention -space for professional dialogue

- Understanding: context, leaders' priorities since the previous inspection and their progress in addressing them. Leaders' views of what the school does well and where there might be more work to do.
- Making the most of meetings to keep leaders informed, greater flexibility around gathering evidence for the quality of education.



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Intention - greater flexibility

- Focusing on 'groups' of subjects - spending more time visiting lessons with leaders, discussing the impact of their work. Talking to pupils and looking at pupils' work as they go. Reducing the impact on staff and subject leaders. Keeping leaders 'in the loop'. Moving away from specific spotlight areas.



Another change...

Logos banned for schools inspected this year...



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Ungraded inspection, inspectors will still usually focus on:

- Leadership and management – whether leaders take effective action to sustain and/or improve a school’s performance across all areas of work, and if they take decisions in the best interests of children
- Quality of education – inspectors will consider the extent to which pupils achieve well and are well prepared for their next steps
- Behaviour – inspectors will consider whether the school is a safe & positive environment for pupils and if they get the support they need
- Attendance – inspectors will consider whether the school is doing all they reasonably can to achieve the highest possible attendance
- Pupils’ personal development – inspectors will consider the extent to which pupils are well prepared for life beyond the school. Inspectors will also consider staff’s well-being (including workload).
- They will be particularly alert to any evidence that suggests that the school may be gaming or off-rolling.
- Inspectors will normally take the same approach for inspecting safeguarding as that used on a graded inspection.



Outcomes for ungraded inspections

- 1 – School has taken effective action to maintain standards identified at the previous inspection
- 2 – Evidence suggests that the school's work may have significantly improved across all areas – so next inspection will be graded
- 3 – Evidence suggest that aspects of the school's work may not be as strong as at the previous inspection – so next inspection will be graded
- 4 – The inspection is deemed graded



Phone call – focussing on...

- Understanding the context of the school and exploring anything that emerged from inspection preparation.
- What have been the school's priorities since the last inspection? Why? has this led to sustained or improved standards?
- What is school currently working on improving? Why? Impact?
- Identifying 'Focus Areas'



Identifying focus areas

- Focus areas are a **way of shaping ungraded inspection** activity.
- They take into account the school's context and priorities.
- They stay **within the scope of the EIF and the inspection handbook**.
- They will allow inspectors to **evaluate whether leaders take effective action to maintain or improve performance in all areas of the school's work** and make decisions in the best interests of pupils.
- There will usually be **three or four** focus areas.
- At least **two focus areas should relate to the quality of education** for a group of subjects.
- In primary schools, inspectors will normally consider **early English and mathematics knowledge and skills** and at least one other group of subjects from the wider curriculum.
- Others will reflect **what leaders have been working on related to other parts of the education inspection framework**.
- Inspectors will record their rationale for selecting the focus areas.



Early English and mathematics knowledge

Will focus on:

the extent to which pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged (including those with SEND) are able to read, write and use mathematical knowledge, ideas and operations to an *age-appropriate level and fluency* so that they are able to access a broad and balanced curriculum

School inspection handbook, paragraph 305.



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Examples of focus areas

- 1: Quality of education in early English and mathematics, focus on early reading, including the impact of staff training.
- 2: Quality of education in wider curriculum, through history, geography and science, including the effectiveness of assessment.
- 3: The school's work to reduce bullying.
- 4: The school's work to ensure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe and healthy



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Examples of focus areas

1. The quality of education in science, English, geography and history, including the impact of leaders' work to address weaknesses in adaptive teaching pedagogy at key stage 3 (SEND). *Rationale: IDSR showed science weaker compared to others while hums a strength, + conversation showed leaders have worked on SEND and adaptive teaching in particular.*
2. The impact of the curriculum in vocational subjects, including the impact of leaders' work to ensure they meet the needs of vulnerable pupils. *Rationale: IDSR/AB and conversation shows high take up. Part of leaders' approach to make the curriculum meet pupils' needs and aspirations.*
3. The impact of leaders' work to improve the quality of careers education, including for pupils with SEND. *Rationale: PIR, context, conversation all showed this needed to improve from where it was, to raise sustained destinations.*
4. The effectiveness of leaders' actions in improving pupils' behaviour. *Rationale. Was an area for improvement from last report - leaders have focused on this post pandemic.*



- Updated handbook published on 16 September
- Routine inspections restart w/b 23 September
- Ungraded inspections begin w/b 7 October
- Webinars for sector – 19 and 23 September



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Quality of Education

Pre-inspection

Introductory conversation with school leaders
Context
Curriculum

Deep dive

Senior leaders
Curriculum intent.
Understanding of implementation and impact.

Curriculum leaders
Long- and medium-term thinking and planning.
Rationale for content choices and sequencing.

Lesson visits
Evaluate where a lesson sits in a sequence, and leaders'/teachers' understanding of this.

Work scrutinies
of pupils in observed classes.
Where possible, jointly with teachers/leaders.

Teachers
Understand how the curriculum informs their choices about content and sequencing.

Pupils
From observed lessons. How well do they build schema and recall learning.

Connecting evidence to reach a judgement
Forming a view of quality of education

If there is insufficient evidence, or if leaders wish to present more, we will collect additional evidence. We may also collect additional evidence to identify whether or not the strengths and weaknesses that inspectors have seen during the deep dives are systemic.

Bringing it together



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Other aspects in inspector training...

- Strong foundational knowledge is important
- Basics of communication, language, reading, maths
- 'Executive function' – the ability to transfer learning to other contexts

Foundational knowledge:

- Has a significant impact on a child's later success and life chances, especially for the most vulnerable pupils
- Needs to be taught as pupils will not necessarily 'discover' it
- Vulnerable pupils may need more explicit teaching and practice.
- Pupils should secure foundational knowledge before they undertake complex tasks
- Should be a priority, at whatever age

