

School inspection update

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Message to inspectors from the National Director, Education

Welcome to the sixth edition of 'School inspection update' and the second since the introduction of the new inspection arrangements in September 2015.

This edition includes articles on: Key Stage 2 writing assessments; Holocaust education; reporting on the most able; and reporting on SEND. It also lists some administrative updates we will be making to the inspection handbooks from September 2016, including the process for using the online staff questionnaire and clarifying what constitutes a factual accuracy check on inspection reports.

In January, we published a series of videos featuring the Regional Director for London, Mike Sheridan and the Deputy Director for Schools, Joanna Hall. The short films tackle specific myths around marking and pupil feedback, as well as lesson planning, grading and observation. These videos complement our clarifications document 'Ofsted inspection: myths'. Please share the links to the Ofsted myths document and the videos with your colleagues and other contacts, adding the hashtag #OfstedMyths if you are using Twitter.

I am encouraged by the response of teachers and school leaders that I have spoken to about our myth-busting work, but there is always more to do in this area. Some myths, like the ones surrounding marking, are harder to bust than others. The Ofsted myths document is clear on these issues and is now incorporated into the School inspection handbook. However, we must all play our full part to assure schools that we really do not want or need to see, for example, the 'cursed triple marking', lesson plans, or performance information cut in specific ways just for inspection. It is through our actions when on inspection and in our report writing that we will convince schools that these are myths that can distract teachers from their main job of teaching pupils well. As I said to HMI at our January conferences, when we are inspecting, never stop thinking like a good teacher/leader and remember what is practically possible.



Thank you for your continuing effort in ensuring that the inspection arrangements brought in last term remain constructive and valued by schools. I hope that you are able to have some time off over the Easter period and wish you a restful break when it comes.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Sean Harford". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "S" and a long, sweeping underline.

Sean Harford HMI
National Director, Education

Primary teacher assessment, particularly for writing in Year 6

Inspectors are reminded that the Government has introduced, **for this year only**, interim frameworks to support the teacher assessment judgements that schools must report on for Years 2 and 6 pupils in 2016. The interim frameworks are available through this link: www.gov.uk/government/collections/teacher-assessment-key-stage-1-and-key-stage-2.

The DfE has announced an extension of the deadline for submitting these teacher assessments until 30 June for 2016 only at www.gov.uk/government/news/primary-school-teacher-assessment-deadline-changed. Pupils will also be sitting new National Curriculum tests reflecting the **higher standard** that the Government expects. Inspectors should take into account that, during this first year, pupils and teachers will still be adapting their approach, in particular to the unfamiliar teacher assessment frameworks and the higher standards. Inspectors should also be mindful of the contribution of teacher assessment to the 2016 primary school performance measures (see www.gov.uk/government/publications/primary-school-accountability).

In reading and mathematics, the expected standard referred to is a scaled score of 100, which will be produced after the tests have been taken. In contrast, for writing (which again this year will be assessed only through teacher assessment) the expected standard referred to has been set out in the interim framework. Assessment against the interim framework will inform the school and national data for attainment and progress in writing. Inspectors are reminded that they should take into account national performance and contextual factors when considering a school's 2016 performance in writing. Inspectors should consider the impact of the changes when assessing a school's performance.

Key Stage 2 to 4 progress for pupils with prior attainment based only on teacher assessment

Issue 5 of School inspection update explained the need for inspectors to interpret Key Stage 2 to 4 progress measures carefully where prior attainment had been based solely on teacher assessment. In 2015, the national proportion based on teacher assessment at age 11 was higher than usual because it included pupils from schools, which boycotted the Key Stage 2 tests in 2010. The percentage in a school is shown in RAISEonline and the inspection dashboard. The DfE has shown in performance tables whether or not more than 50% of pupils in the school had prior attainment based on teacher assessment.

Inspectors of schools in which more than one third of pupils had their prior attainment based on teacher assessment (this equates to 26% of secondary schools) will be provided with the information below for relevant schools at the point of inspection. The key points from that note are shown below. For all schools, inspectors should interpret progress measures carefully, including those for prior

attainment groups and disadvantaged pupils that may contain high proportions with prior attainment based on teacher assessment.

Value added (VA) models are used to estimate the outcome for pupils with similar prior attainment and then calculate how far above or below this each pupil has attained. With test data, many different prior attainment values are available; the VA model assigns a different estimated outcome for each one. In contrast, with teacher assessment, only whole-level data are available so the estimated outcome used for VA models will be the same for every pupil at each level. For example, all pupils with Level 5 teacher assessment will have an estimated outcome based on the midpoint of the level, which is Level 5.5.

Past data for all pupils with a Level 5 **test** score have shown that more of these pupils have a score **below** Level 5.5 than above it, and so would have estimated outcomes based on a score **below** Level 5.5. However, all pupils with Level 5 **teacher assessment** would have their estimated outcomes based on a score of Level 5.5. The effect of this on their VA score will depend on whether or not they were actually a high Level 5 attainer. If they were a high Level 5 attainer, their prior attainment will have been underestimated, in which case they would be more likely to exceed their estimated outcome and so have a high VA score. If they were actually a low Level 5 attainer (and hence their prior attainment score was an overestimate) they would be less likely to attain their estimated outcome so would have a lower VA score.

For Level 3 prior attainment, the situation is reversed. As would be expected, past data for all pupils with a Level 3 test score have shown that more of these pupils have a score **above** Level 3.5 than below it.

When considering VA and Progress 8 data for the 2015 cohort, inspectors should take into account:

- the percentage of Year 11 pupils in the school for whom only teacher assessment was available at Key Stage 2 (shown in the Inspection dashboard and RAISEonline summary report)
- the number of pupils with prior attainment at levels 5B and 3B (shown in the RAISEonline sub-level version of tables for expected and more than expected progress) as all pupils with prior attainment based on teacher assessment are shown in sublevel B, bearing in mind that these numbers will also include pupils with sublevel B test scores
- the number of disadvantaged pupils with prior attainment at levels 5B and 3B (shown in RAISEonline sublevel tables)
- any information provided by the school about the prior attainment of the cohort and groups, particularly disadvantaged pupils, and their progress (such as VA figures from the RAISE ready reckoners).

2015 Key Stage 4 floor standards

Inspectors should now use the 2015 secondary school floor standards and the school's validated 2015 results shown in performance tables at www.education.gov.uk/schools/performance/. The DfE published the floor standards on 21 January 2016 in a Statistical First Release (SFR) to accompany the secondary school performance tables at www.gov.uk/government/statistics/revised-gcse-and-equivalent-results-in-england-2014-to-2015. The December 2015 issue 5 of [School inspection update](#) announced this date for using the 2015 Key Stage 4 floor standards and gave details of the 2015 primary school floor standard. The validated Inspection dashboards contain the 2015 primary school floor standards.

A school will be below the 2015 Key Stage 4 floor standard if:

- fewer than 40% of pupils achieved five or more A* to C GCSEs (or equivalent) including English, (applies to schools that **have not** opted-in to Progress 8)
- fewer than 73% of pupils made expected progress in English
- fewer than 68% of pupils made expected progress in mathematics.

A school that opted in to the Progress 8 performance measure for 2015 will be below the floor standard if:

- its Progress 8 score is below -0.5 and
- the upper band of the 95% confidence interval is below zero.

The list of the 327 schools that opted in is on:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/progress-8-school-performance-measure-early-opt-in-schools.

When the 2015 validated inspection dashboards for secondary schools are published, they will contain the 2015 floor standards and indicate whether the school has met them.

Interim minimum standards

When inspecting school sixth forms, inspectors should now use the 2015 interim minimum standards that were published on 1 March in the download section of the performance tables at www.education.gov.uk/schools/performance/download_data.html.

For 2015, 45% of eligible learners must attain an APS per entry of at least 172 points in academic qualifications to meet the academic standard and 194 points in vocational qualifications to meet the vocational standard.

16 to 19 study programmes inspection dashboard

16 to 19 study programme pages have been developed for the inspection dashboard and are due for publication this month. They contain progress, attainment, destinations and retention data. They include information on whether or not the 2015 Interim minimum standards have been met for academic qualifications and for vocational qualifications. They will also be available to further education and skills providers with Level 3 learners. They will be available to inspectors and providers on the RAISEonline site. Anonymous versions and guidance will also be available in the public RAISEonline library

www.raiseonline.org/documentlibrary/ViewDocumentLibrary.aspx.

Holocaust education

By law, children in England are taught about the Holocaust as part of the Key Stage 3 history curriculum. This usually occurs in Year 9 (age 13–14). While academy schools do not have to follow the National Curriculum, many are likely to deliver Holocaust education as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. Similarly, although independent schools are not obliged to deliver the National Curriculum, many do deliver Holocaust education.

On 24 January 2016, the Education Select Committee published a [report](#) that found that too few teachers, particularly history teachers, are being trained to teach the Holocaust. It reported that, while much of the training available for teachers is of a high standard, more also needs to be done to extend its reach to subjects other than history, such as English, drama or PSHE.

Inspectors should be aware of the work being done with schools by the following organisations, which are funded by the DfE.

[The Centre for Holocaust Education and UCL Institute of Education](#), established in 2008, provides professional development programmes, which shows how Holocaust education can be picked up across different parts of the curriculum.

The [Holocaust Educational Trust](#), established in 1988, aims to educate young people from every background about the Holocaust and the important lessons to be learned for their lives today. The Trust works in schools, universities and in the community to raise awareness and understanding of the Holocaust, providing teacher training, an outreach programme for schools, teaching aids and resource material.

Implications for inspectors

Inspectors should familiarise themselves with the training and other resources that are available to schools and be aware that schools may refer to this as evidence during inspections. This might be relevant to the content of the curriculum across different subject areas, as well as being used as evidence of how the school is contributing to pupils' learning, including their personal development.

Pay progression and pupil performance

During an inspection, inspectors should look to see how the school is monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and how this links to teachers' performance management and the teachers' standards. Inspectors should consider the systems in place and evaluate the extent to which governors understand how the school makes decisions on pay progression and performance.

Inspectors should not:

- report about pay and progression in a way that narrows the focus of performance management, for example on any link between test and examination results and teachers' pay
- look for evidence that governors are hands on and getting involved in operational matters within the school, including in relation to performance management and pay (except for the headteacher where it is their direct responsibility)
- report in any way that gives the impression that governors need to be directly involved in the process of teachers' performance management. Reports should focus on the impact of the work of governors and trustees and must not suggest Ofsted's condolence of their operational involvement in this process.

Inspectors need to ensure that they are familiar with the [School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document](#) and how it links to the Teachers' Standards. There is also recent guidance from the DfE – [Implementing your school's approach to pay](#), which is relevant.

Reporting on the most able

Paragraph 179 of the School inspection handbook (paragraph 159 of the Non-association independent school inspection handbook) is clear that one of the key foci for inspection reporting is how well the school supports the achievement of the most able pupils. The level of detail in inspection reports should reflect this focus. Along with all relevant groups as set out in the handbook, reports must include a substantial account of the teaching and outcomes for this important group of pupils to demonstrate how the school meets their needs.

Reporting on planning for lessons

Planning for learning over time is important to ensure pupils' progression. However, Ofsted does not require schools to provide individual lesson plans to inspectors. Equally, Ofsted does not require schools to provide previous lesson plans. Our interest is in how planning contributes to what takes place in lessons and the impact on learning.

Inspection reports need to demonstrate clearly that Ofsted is focused on the quality of planned lessons and learning, and not on lesson plans themselves. Ofsted does not want to see any particular type of planning. Some reports and areas for improvement (AfIs) emphasise too much on differentiated planning 'to meet all individual pupils' needs, **all** the time, to make sure **all** pupils **always** make good progress'. When drafting reports, inspectors must ensure that they do not inadvertently set unmanageable expectations for teachers in AfIs or in the main body of the report.

DSEN or SEND?

Please note, when reporting on pupils who have a disability or have special educational needs, we should use the terminology 'special educational needs and disabilities' or 'SEND' in inspection reports, in order to reflect the words used in the revised special educational needs and disability code of practice. Please do not use the phrase 'pupils who have a disability or have special educational needs' or 'DSEN'.

Use of the online Google surveys for staff and pupils

Paragraph 57 of the (section 5) [School inspection handbook](#), states that: 'The views of staff in schools are gathered through a questionnaire that the inspection coordinator sends to the school alongside the formal notification of inspection. The school is asked to distribute the questionnaire to all staff...' Please note that this is no longer the case. The inspection coordinator sends the school a link to an online Google survey so that the school can distribute the link to staff, rather than a hard copy of the questionnaire.

This administrative amendment will be made to the handbook with effect from September 2016.

The hardcopy questionnaire is currently still in use for standard inspections of independent schools. We will consider replacing this with an online survey for autumn 2016 inspections.

Using the Google survey on short inspections

When a section 8 short inspection converts to a section 5 full inspection, or a section 8 inspection is deemed a section 5 inspection, it is not necessary to re-open the access to the online survey. Inspectors should continue to use other inspection methods to gather views including talking to staff and pupils.

Using of Parent View on short inspections

When a section 8 short inspection converts to a section 5 full inspection, or a section 8 inspection is deemed a section 5 inspection, it is not necessary to open access to the comments box on Parent View. Inspectors will be able to access any data already

on Parent View and should continue to use other methods to gather views of parents.

Special measures and serious weaknesses – monitoring and statements of action

Paragraph 159 of the (section 8) '[Handbook for short, monitoring and unannounced behaviour school inspections](#)' states:

'At the end of a monitoring inspection, the lead inspector will consider whether the school has made sufficient progress and no longer requires special measures. Where this is the case, the section 8 inspection will be deemed a section 5 inspection. All the judgements required by the section 5 school inspection handbook will be made and a full inspection report produced.'

Inspectors are reminded that the decision to deem the section 8 monitoring inspection as a section 5 inspection will be made **before** the end of the inspection, as further evidence to support the section 5 inspection judgements will be required.

This also applies to paragraph 169:

'At the conclusion of each monitoring inspection, the lead inspector should consider whether the school continues to require special measures.'

The lead inspector should consider whether the school continues to require special measures before the conclusion of each monitoring inspection, as further evidence to support the section 5 inspection judgements will be required when the lead inspector decides to take the school out of special measures.

We recognise that this wording is not as clear as it should be, so we will be amending our guidance from September 2016.

Paragraph 173 of the handbook states:

'At the end of the first monitoring inspection, the inspector will provide oral feedback on the fitness for purpose of the statement of action and the school's improvement plan.'

As the initial assessment of the statement of action and improvement plan are now conducted as a desk-based exercise, with a letter being sent to the school confirming the outcome, we are providing clarification about what needs to be covered in the first monitoring inspection.

The first monitoring inspection is now likely to be a number of months after the desk evaluation. It is possible that circumstances will have changed in the interim. Therefore, the lead inspector should check to see whether any subsequent changes have been made to the priorities in the statement of action and consider the impact

of the actions on the school. The first monitoring inspection provides the opportunity to confirm the extent to which the statement of action has been implemented and the impact of this on the progress that the school is making towards removal from the category of concern.

Reporting on school compliance with school information regulations

When preparing for inspection, inspectors should check the school's website for background information, including in relation to statutory requirements to publish certain information. The requirements on schools are set out in the DfE guidance document '[What maintained schools must publish online](#)'. For academies, including free schools, the funding agreement should set out what they are required to publish online. The [independent school standards](#) specify what independent schools must publish online.

Inspectors should note that some requirements to publish information do not specify the means by which the information must be published. For example, in relation to the public sector equality duty, schools are required to publish their accessibility policy but not necessarily on the website. However, many of the things that schools do need to publish online are relevant to the equality duty, for example the SEND report.

If, during preparation for inspection, an inspector finds that the school's website does not contain information to show clearly how they are meeting their equalities obligations, inspectors should ask school leaders to explain how they meet these duties. A school might be able to demonstrate that it is meeting its equalities obligations in many ways including its culture, ethos, curriculum offer, provision for pupils' SMSC and analysis of outcomes for different groups of pupils.

Inspectors should ensure that, when writing their report, they address whether the school meets requirements and if not, what requirement(s) is (are) not being met. Therefore, one of the following sentences should be included in the 'Information about the school' section of the inspection report:

The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

or

The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about 'x', 'y' or 'z' on its website.

The above will be added to the inspection handbooks from September 2016.

Complaints

In the (section 8) '[Handbook for short, monitoring and unannounced behaviour school inspections](#)', paragraph 186 on page 44 currently states:

'Under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 (the Act), Ofsted can undertake inspections to follow up concerns about schools that are not in a category of concern but that have been brought to Ofsted's attention through, for example, a qualifying complaint made to Ofsted under section 11 of the Act or by other means.'

Please note that 'section 11' should read '**section 11A**', which is the specific section of legislation covering complaints investigation. We will amend the handbook to this effect from September 2016.

Amendments to the factual accuracy check (FAC) process

Over recent weeks a team of colleagues from Inspection Quality, Legal, Complaints and Policy completed a full review of the factual accuracy check (FAC) process. This review was prompted initially by an issue with the Office Base system not sending the lead inspectors' (LI) response back to the provider. Furthermore, colleagues were aware of the increasing complexity and length of FAC responses from providers. Often a lengthy FAC response is a challenge to the inspection and not an FAC. To try to prevent unnecessary, lengthy debate with providers in responding to the FAC, we are providing a definition of FAC and expectations for lead inspectors when dealing with FAC. The FAC must be entirely objective and factual.

To aid this and to help educate providers, we have agreed a definition of FAC as a process, which:

- gives the provider a chance to check facts in the inspection report and provide corrections to any factual errors
- may include checking any factual information such as the number of pupils on roll, spelling of names, dates, roles and key terms used by the provider
- does not include challenges to the judgements in the inspection report, or concerns about conduct issues, which should be made through the official, published complaints process.

This definition will be explained to the provider in a letter at the point when the inspection report is uploaded to the provider portal when the FAC is required.

Implications for inspectors

Changes on OfficeBase

The lead inspector will respond to the FAC through the portal. The layout of the screen where the lead inspector responds to the FAC will include a text box adjacent to each FAC point raised by the provider. The lead inspector should only provide a response to matters of factually accuracy and not engage in a dialogue with the provider about issues which constitute a formal complaint.

Recent publications/announcements relevant to inspections

Introduction of a new methodology for measuring attainment in Key Stage 2 science sampling

Information about how attainment in Key Stage 2 (KS2) science sampling is measured can be found here: www.gov.uk/government/news/introduction-of-a-new-methodology-for-measuring-attainment-in-key-stage-2-science-sampling.

Following a change in the approach to collecting the KS2 science results, the data for 2014 are not comparable with the previous published data. Additional changes will be introduced in 2016 following the introduction of the new National Curriculum.

As a result of the methodology change, the data from the 2014 assessment will be revised following the 2016 assessment, and will be reported on the same basis as the new measures in future. Therefore the standard KS2 science bulletin will be replaced by a methodology paper published on 28 January 2016, which sets out the changes and the impact on the statistical series.

Safeguarding concerns: guidance for inspectors

On 25 February 2016, Ofsted published this document, which outlines what an inspector should do if, during an inspection, they learn that a child or young person is potentially being harmed or is at risk of harm. This guidance explains what the inspector should and should not do.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-concerns-guidance-for-inspectors

For further reading see:

Ofsted's safeguarding policy www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-safeguarding-policy

Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills
www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-safeguarding-in-early-years-education-and-skills-from-september-2015

Statement by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector on the wearing of the full veil in schools

Sir Michael Wilshaw has now instructed inspectors to mark down institutions if they judge that the wearing of the veil is acting as a barrier to learning and to positive social interaction. See www.gov.uk/government/news/statement-by-hm-chief-inspector-on-the-wearing-of-the-full-veil-in-schools.

Examination timetables and religious events

On 15 January 2016, the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) issued a statement clarifying how the GCSE and A-level exam timetable is set
www.gov.uk/government/news/exam-timetables-and-religious-events-jcq-statement