

School inspection update

November 2018 | Issue: 16

Message to inspectors from the National Director, Education

Welcome to the latest edition of 'School inspection update'. This issue follows the fairly recent 'special edition', but with the end of the calendar year and Christmas approaching, there are important items I would like to share and clarify before we enter the New Year.

In this edition, we focus on segregation. Unlawful segregation has made headlines in recent months, resulting in lots of uncertainty and questions from the sector on the approach that Ofsted will take during inspection. With this in mind, from September 2018, the key messages are:

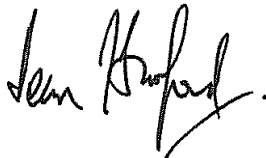
- any school segregating pupils unlawfully will have this addressed in the inspection report
- a school cannot be outstanding or good in their leadership and management where there is unlawful segregation of pupils.

This edition also includes the latest information on: the launch of electronic evidence gathering (EEG) for school inspections; and a link to a letter from Ofqual to headteachers and examinations staff about the summer 2019 exam series, including how Ofqual might support schools better.

As you know, we are developing a new education inspection framework for 2019 (EIF2019). We have already started to share our thoughts with the sectors and invited views. In January 2019, we will be consulting on, both, the framework and individual handbooks for schools, early years and further education and skills. This plays a really important part in the process of sharpening our focus on the curriculum even further.

Finally, as this is the last school inspection update of the calendar year, I want to say thank you to all inspectors for your consistent hard work this year. As the Christmas holiday approaches, I hope you all have a relaxing break and will feel suitably refreshed for the start of the new term in 2019.

Best wishes



Sean Harford HMI
National Director, Education

Segregation by sex – what inspectors will be looking at on inspection

In her speech to the Policy Exchange think tank in July this year, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) outlined the importance that promoting British values in schools has in encouraging cohesion and integration, and spoke about Ofsted's role in ensuring that schools do this well (see the full text of the speech [here](#)).

It is likely to be unlawful for schools to segregate pupils on the basis of any protected characteristics such as sex, race or faith while at school, unless permitted by the [Equality Act 2010](#) for the purposes of:

- positive action to alleviate a disadvantage associated with a certain characteristic – this could for example include pupils of one race or sex getting additional work experience of a sector in which they are under-represented (section 158)
- competitive sport, games or other competitive activities in which physical strength, stamina or physique are significant factors in determining success or failure, a school is allowed to organise separate events for boys and girls (section 195).

Further guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE) on what mixed schools must consider when separating classes by gender is available on the DfE's website [here](#).

Implications for inspectors

From September 2018, any school segregating pupils unlawfully should have this addressed in their inspection report.

A school can no longer be judged good or outstanding in leadership and management if it is segregating pupils unlawfully. If the school has genuine and imminent plans to reintegrate pupils, a judgement of requires improvement will normally be appropriate, but in other cases the grade will be inadequate for leadership and management.

Launch of EEG for school inspections from November 2018

By now, many of you may already be aware that we are launching a new way of gathering inspection evidence this academic year, using a digital tool that will allow efficient collection and use of evidence from inspections. Currently, inspectors gather evidence using a variety of methods, but the recording and evaluation of this largely involves pen and paper. The new EEG tool will allow inspectors to collect evidence electronically, straight onto an electronic device during inspection. As the actual

inspection will continue as normal, we do not expect school staff and pupils to notice any difference to the inspection experience.

Over the summer, we tested EEG in 'friendly environments' on pilot school inspections as well as live inspections. We were pleased to find that recording electronically did not hinder the discussion with school leaders, staff or pupils.

One teacher said: 'I didn't find the laptop use was intrusive at all. The inspectors were engaging in the lesson and managed to go around and speak to the pupils. The feedback we received was very clear and I felt it gave more clarity'.

A governor participating in one of the friendly inspections said: 'I found that using the laptop allowed the conversation to flow a lot more easily. There was a lot more eye contact and the inspectors were able to engage in the conversations rather than producing handwritten evidence forms.'

An inspector on a pilot inspection said: 'I feel the evidence base is much more transparent. I can review my team inspectors' evidence as it emerges.'

A real positive advantage of EEG is that it makes collation of evidence across inspections easier if, for example, we wanted to look at what inspectors are observing in relation to reading in primary schools. Collating evidence in this way will make it easier to access inspection evidence for areas, such as research and analysis, quality assurance and responding to complaints.

Implications for inspectors

From November 2018, school inspectors will start using EEG on an increasing number of school inspections. By the end of the autumn term, we anticipate completing over 200 inspections using EEG. We expect that the EEG tool will be used on all school inspections from the summer term 2019.

To support this new way of working, inspectors will need to request schools to allow access, where possible, to their internet connection to enable the use of EEG during the inspection.

EEG has also been rolled out for further education and skills' inspections, and social care inspections of local authorities. You can find out more about EEG by reading Sean Harford's [blog](#), published on Ofsted's website in September 2018.

Ofqual letter to headteachers regarding summer 2019 examinations and Ofqual support

In the last 'special edition' of 'School inspection update', the headline messages from the 2018 GCSE results were highlighted, with reformed 9 to 1 GCSEs being awarded for the first time. Sally Collier, the Chief Regulator at Ofqual, wrote to all the

headteachers and examinations staff on 9 October 2018 (letter available [here](#)) highlighting ways of sharing feedback and suggestions, information on summer 2019 exam series, links to an exams officer's [blog](#), and the results of Ofqual's interactive results data for GCSEs and A levels. The blog recognises that certain issues are encountered every year, including secure storage, problems with invigilator recruitment, incidents during exams (for example, fire alarm going off or pupils taken ill) and pupils that bring in mobile phones to examination rooms.

Safeguarding reminder

All inspectors should be familiar with the statutory guidance in relation to safeguarding, before going on an inspection.

- 'Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges' (www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2)
- 'Working together to safeguard children' www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2.

Inspectors should be very clear as to the standards that schools are required to maintain and should not expect to see evidence of schools taking actions beyond these standards, such as routinely checking the DBS status of existing staff. More detail of what inspectors should look at is in our own guidance '[Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills settings](#)'.

Inspectors should also make sure that all potential intelligence about safeguarding concerns, or the quality of the school's safeguarding arrangements, is properly reviewed – including pupil, staff and parent questionnaires. We are aware of a few rare cases where, due to technology issues, important safeguarding information could have been missed or not considered fully before completion of the inspection.

If inspectors are unclear as to what schools should be doing after reading the guidance, they should contact the regional duty desk.

Schools causing concern guidance

On 8 November, the DfE issued updated guidance on Schools causing concern, which can be found [here](#). The revisions are minor and are intended to keep the guidance accurate in light of the Secretary of State's speech on school accountability to the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) conference on 4 May 2018, including:

- a new 'key principles' section setting out the main implication of the speech

- amendments to chapter 2 ('coasting') to make clear that regional schools commissioners (RSCs) will no longer use formal intervention powers because a school falls within the coasting definition
- amendments to chapter 3 ('warning notices') to reflect the fact that RSCs will no longer issue warning notices on educational grounds unless the school has already been rated inadequate by Ofsted
- amendments to chapter 5 to clarify that where the DfE has mandated academy conversion, local authorities retain the responsibility for a school's improvement right up until the school closes and reopens as an academy.

Recent useful publications/announcements relevant to inspections

School census 2018 to 2019: guide for schools and LAs

The DfE no longer requires schools to collect data on pupil's proficiency in English and, as such, this has been removed from the school census collection. Schools are therefore no longer required to assess a child's proficiency in English for the purpose of transmitting to the DfE via the school census. The collection of pupil nationality and country of birth are also no longer required.

The guidance is available at the following link:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-census-2018-to-2019-guide-for-schools-and-las.

Careers statutory guidance for schools

The DfE has published a new version of the statutory guidance for schools on careers guidance and access for education and training providers.

The update includes information on new requirements and expectations that were introduced in September 2018, for schools to:

- publish information about their careers programme on their website
- name their Careers Leader and publish their contact details on their website.

The update also provides further information on the roles and responsibilities of the Careers Leaders; details about The Career & Enterprise Company's new SEND Gatsby Benchmark Toolkit; and information on destination measures.

The guidance document is available at the following link:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-guidance-provision-for-young-people-in-schools-and-access-for-education-and-training-providers

The DfE has also issued a new guidance note explaining what destination data is, what destination measures are and how they can be used to improve careers provision and outcomes for young people.

The guidance is available at the following link:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-use-destinations-data

Respectful Schools Tool

The DfE has published a Respectful School Communities toolkit designed to support schools to develop a whole-school approach, which promotes respect and discipline. This can combat bullying, harassment and prejudice of any kind.

The toolkit is available at the following link:

<https://educateagainsthate.com/school-leaders/?filter=guidance-and-training-school-leaders>

Mental health and behaviour in schools

The DfE has published an update to the 'Mental health and behaviour guidance'. The updated guidance will help schools identify pupils whose behaviour may be a result of an underlying mental health difficulty. It will direct them towards information about how they can adapt their approaches to support these pupils with their individual needs, within the context of an approach that is based on clear expectation of behaviour.

The guidance is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>



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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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