

Introduction to the IDSR

This document provides an overview of the inspection data summary report.

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General

What is the purpose of the Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR)?

1. The IDSR is a PDF document showing historical data for Ofsted inspectors to use when preparing for inspections and forming key lines of enquiry before an inspection.
2. During inspection, inspectors will give most weight to the outcomes, attendance and behaviour of pupils currently in the school. They will also take into account historical data. The IDSR is designed to show how well previous cohorts showed characteristics of good or better performance.

What does the IDSR look like?

3. An anonymised IDSR report is available [here](#)¹, in addition to a full list of possible sentences in the general guidance document.

Why does the IDSR differ from other school performance data tools such as Analyse School Performance and FFT Aspire?

4. The IDSR is designed to align with Ofsted's school inspection handbook, so that areas to investigate can be used to identify inspection trails. Other tools available are designed for different purposes, for example to allow schools to analyse their own data.

Where does the IDSR data come from?

5. All data in the IDSR is sourced from the Department for Education (DfE), mainly from the National Pupil Database. DfE determines the methodology for the accountability measures, such as Progress 8. More information on the accountability measures can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/primary-school-accountability>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/progress-8-school-performance-measure>

Changes in 2018

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/using-ofsteds-inspection-dashboard>

Why has data been removed?

6. Data has been removed from the IDSR to reduce replication of data which is available elsewhere, such as data in [Compare School and College Performance](#)², or in [Analyse School Performance](#)³. Sentences will draw out what is meaningful and/or significant.

Why have floor standards and coasting been removed?

7. Floor standards and coasting measures have been removed from the IDSR because, in 2018/19, the only consequence of being below the floor or coasting will be that the Regional Schools Commissioner will contact the multi-academy trust or local authority to make an optional offer of support. Ofsted inspectors will no longer comment on floor standards and coasting in inspection reports.

Areas to investigate

8. On the front page of the IDSR, the 'areas to investigate' sentences suggest key lines of enquiry, which align with the Ofsted inspection handbook. Every school eligible for a section 5 inspection has been examined using complex algorithms in key areas of performance. If deemed significant, a sentence will appear highlighting the area to investigate at inspection.

Why are they called areas to investigate if it is a strength?

9. The areas to investigate cover both aspects of historic data that suggest strengths and/or weaknesses. Where a significant strength is identified by the performance data, an inspector will triangulate evidence on inspection to confirm whether it is indeed a strength and similarly for any significant weakness identified by the data.

Why are small cohorts not included in the areas to investigate?

10. Aligned with paragraph 189 of the inspection handbook guidance (see extract below), sentences are not generated for groups that are too small to draw valid inferences from group-level performance.

'189. Inspectors will recognise that published data for small groups of children must be treated with caution. Whilst inspectors will analyse all pupil-level and group-level data, there will be some groups that are too small for group-level reporting to be

² <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/>

³ <https://sa.education.gov.uk/idp/Authn/UserPassword>

meaningful. Only if groups are large enough will inspectors be able to draw valid inferences from group-level performance. This is to avoid forming unfair judgements about a school.'

My school has no areas to investigate! Surely this can't be right?

11. All maintained schools have been assessed against the criteria that generates sentences. If a school is broadly in line with the national picture across all measures, then a sentence is unlikely to be generated. Equally, if a school has small cohorts, sentences will not appear.

Statistical significance

What is statistical significance and why has it been used?

12. Assessment data and information is only a starting point for inspectors' discussion with schools, and statistical significance testing is used throughout the IDSR to draw attention to potentially noteworthy values. These values indicate that a school's performance may be due to more than chance variation.

13. The IDSR tends to use percentile rank in addition to statistical significance testing rather than significance tests alone. An example sentence is shown below. This allows us to further identify noteworthy values to highlight to inspectors.

'Progress in reading and mathematics was significantly above average and in the highest 10%.'

Why is something commented on if it isn't of any significance?

14. The IDSR uses a range of methods to identify noteworthy trends and data points. For example, percentile rank is used to identify relative performance across time. While these values may not be statistically significant due to small cohorts, they allow us to identify consistently high or low progress scores in the IDSR.

Absence and exclusions

Why isn't absence data included in the primary IDSR?

15. Absence data will be included in all IDSRs by December each year. This is added later because data is only provided to Ofsted after the primary IDSR is finalised.

Why is exclusions data so out of date?

16. Permanent and fixed-period exclusions data is published by the Department for Education in August of the following year. For example, the 2016/17 exclusions data was published in August 2018⁴.

For information about how inspectors will consider performance and pupil-tracking information, see section 6 of [Ofsted inspection myths](#)⁵.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-in-england-2016-to-2017>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015/ofsted-inspections-mythbusting>



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