

# Information for teachers about inspection: lesson observations

---

**This document has been archived.**

This leaflet is for teachers whose school is due for inspection. It explains how and why Ofsted carries out lesson observations, what teachers should expect when their lessons are observed and what feedback teachers can expect to receive. It also explains how inspectors record lesson observations without grades.

**Published:** September 2014

---

**Reference no:** 140102



Corporate member of  
Plain English Campaign  
Committed to clearer communication

**361**

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/140102](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/140102).

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

No. 140102

© Crown copyright 2014



Ofsted will be inspecting your school over the next two days. Inspectors may visit your classroom to gather evidence.

In most instances, inspectors will record evidence about achievement, behaviour and safety, leadership and management, and the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of pupils. Inspectors are likely to look at work done in books and folders, and speak to pupils.

Inspectors offer senior leaders the opportunity to accompany them when they visit lessons. However, any information recorded by inspectors should not to be used by the school for individual performance management purposes.

During the inspection, inspectors consider the school's own view of the quality of teaching, assessment data, and test and examination results. They do this to gain a view on the impact of teaching over time.

Inspectors will not expect to see any particular approach to teaching. Nor will inspectors expect extensive lesson plans, or plans written in a particular way. It is for schools and teachers to decide how to teach and how to plan. However, if you do have a lesson plan, inspectors will look at it when they are in your classroom.

Whenever possible inspectors will offer you the chance to talk about what they observe. This provides a useful opportunity for professional dialogue about strengths and areas to improve in teaching. Inspectors may also ask you for your views on the quality of teaching across the school. They may also discuss other aspects of the school's work such as leadership, how well teachers are supported in establishing high standards of behaviour, and any matters relating to behaviour or the safeguarding of children.

Inspectors have provided the school with an inspection questionnaire for staff. If it is circulated by the school, please complete it. If you want to speak to inspectors, do approach them directly or write any comments on the back of the questionnaire. We are interested in the views of all teachers, including newly qualified teachers.

Fuller detail of our approach to inspection can be found in the *School inspection handbook*: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120101](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120101).

## **Lesson observations without grades**

In June and July 2014, Ofsted piloted a new approach to recording evidence about the quality of teaching during school inspections. It has been agreed to take this approach in all school inspections from September 2014.

Inspectors will **not** grade the quality of teaching, or enter such a grade on the evidence form for individual lesson observations, learning walks or equivalent activities. Instead, inspectors simply record any evidence gathered onto the form. They use this to provide any feedback to teachers. Each inspector will then draw all the evidence they have gathered about teaching in the school into a summary, which

will inform the inspection team's joint discussion and judgement about the overall quality of teaching across the school.

Inspectors may adopt different approaches to observation, such as staying for a substantial amount of time, talking with particular groups of pupils in detail and reading their work in books over time, not just for that lesson. Inspectors may also offer feedback in different ways, such as to groups of subject or key stage teachers.

The focus of inspectors is on the impact of teaching over time across the school and not on the performance of individual teachers.