

Monitoring inspections of schools that have serious weaknesses

Guidance for inspecting schools that require significant improvement and have serious weaknesses under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

This guidance sets out the judgements that inspectors make and report on during monitoring inspections of schools that have serious weaknesses. It indicates the main activities that need to be undertaken from the time the school is notified of the monitoring inspection until publication of the monitoring inspection letter to the school.

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Introduction

1. Schools are deemed to have serious weaknesses under section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, where the Chief Inspector is of the opinion that:

‘the school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.’¹
2. A school with serious weaknesses is ‘inadequate’ (grade 4) in one or more of the key areas, and/or there are important weaknesses in the overall provision for pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, leaders, managers and governors are judged to be capable of securing improvement (this means that leadership and management are judged at grade 3 or above). These schools are schools causing concern.
3. Monitoring inspections of schools with serious weaknesses are carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, but Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector (HMCI) may elect to treat them as section 5 inspections using his powers under section 9 of the Act. These monitoring arrangements do not prejudice the Chief Inspector’s power under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 to ‘inspect any school in England in circumstances where [s]he is not required to do so by section 5...’ of the Act.
4. This guidance sets out the judgements that inspectors make and report on during monitoring inspections of schools that have serious weaknesses. Further general guidance, briefing papers on school inspections and other materials are available on Ofsted’s website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.
5. All monitoring inspections are carried out in accordance with the principles and code of conduct for inspectors set out in *The framework for school inspection*.² In conducting the monitoring inspection, inspectors will follow the methodology and protocols set out in the *School inspection handbook*.³
6. Schools deemed to have serious weaknesses are not required to prepare a separate action plan but are expected to amend their existing plans to address the areas for improvement identified by the section 5 inspection. The local authority⁴, proprietor or sponsor⁵ must submit a statement and a plan of action to HMCI within 10 working days of the school receiving the inspection report.

¹ Education Act 2005, s44; <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents>.

² *The framework for school inspection from September 2012*, Ofsted, 2012; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090019.

³ *School inspection handbook (120101)*, Ofsted, 2012; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120101

⁴ Ss.15(2)(d) and 15(2)(e) Education Act 2005: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/section/15

⁵ Ss. 17(1A)(d) and 17(3)(a) Education Act 2005: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/section/17>

7. While a school with serious weaknesses will be monitored under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 it may also have access to intervention/support strategies to assist the school's improvement. These may include for example:
 - an invitation to a good-practice dissemination conference covering a range of key common weaknesses identified through inspection evidence (governance and performance management, achievement and use of data, best practice in assessment, improving teaching and progress in learning, self evaluation)
 - an invitation to specific subject or aspect workshops
 - links, brokered by HMI, with stronger schools, locally as well as nationally
 - an invitation to headteachers to accompany HMI on a visit to a 'high performing' school or a re-inspection of a school that has made good progress in addressing areas for improvement

8. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) will usually conduct the first monitoring inspection visit within four to six weeks of the publication of the inspection report. During this one day inspection, the HMI will meet with the headteacher, the chair of governing body and an appropriate representative of the local authority, academy proprietor or academy sponsor. The HMI will discuss the implementation of the statement of action and the school's improvement plan and determine whether these are fit for purpose. Where any change of staffing has taken place since the previous inspection, a review of the single central register will take place. The inspector will also outline the likely pattern of future monitoring.

9. Following the first monitoring inspection, a school may receive up to two further monitoring inspections over the period of 18 months following the section 5 inspection that identified serious weaknesses.

10. If, during the period of monitoring, inspectors are of the opinion that the school is making sufficient progress for the serious weaknesses designation to be removed they may recommend bringing the section 5 reinspection forward. In such cases the section 5 reinspection will take place at the earliest opportunity.

11. If, after a programme of monitoring lasting up to 18 months, the school is still in the serious weaknesses category of concern it must be reinspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Staffing inspections

12. The lead inspector for the first monitoring inspection of a school judged to have serious weaknesses will perform this role throughout the period that the school is monitored and conduct the subsequent section 5 reinspection.

13. Each school is allocated up to four inspector days for monitoring and support, in addition to the first monitoring inspection day. The lead inspector will decide

how to use these days flexibly to best support the school and meet the priorities for each monitoring inspection (see also paragraph 8).

14. Where a school judged to have serious weaknesses has residential or boarding provision, a social care inspector will be allocated as a team member to the monitoring inspection and, if necessary, to subsequent monitoring inspections, which will include the inspection of any national minimum standards that have not been met. The inclusion of a social care team inspector would only occur where boarding or residential provision was identified as an area for improvement at the last inspection⁶.

Before the inspection

Notification

15. Prior to the **first** monitoring inspection visit, to ensure that the key strategic partners are available, the HMI will normally inform the school no more than two days before the start of the monitoring inspection.
16. For subsequent inspections, the HMI will normally inform the school from noon on the working day before each monitoring inspection visit starts, that it is to be inspected. Lead inspectors should be aware that they may not get through to the school immediately. They should reserve sufficient time to ensure that they make direct contact during the afternoon.
17. If the headteacher is unavailable, the lead inspector should ask to speak to the most senior member of staff available. Once the inspection has been confirmed the lead inspector will inform the Inspection Service Provider (ISP), who will send formal confirmation to the school by email.
18. **Requests for a deferral** will be handled in accordance with Ofsted's policy about the deferral of inspections⁷. Lead inspectors must immediately contact the helpdesk. The deferral policy makes clear that the absence of the headteacher is not normally a reason for deferring an inspection.
19. The purpose of the telephone call announcing the inspection is for the lead inspector to:
 - confirm the date of the monitoring inspection visit and remind the school that the monitoring letter will be published on Ofsted's website
 - explain that the monitoring inspection visit is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

⁶ Further guidance for education and social care inspectors on conducting integrated monitoring inspections is available in *Conducting additional inspections of independent schools* (090060) Ofsted, 2012; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090060.

⁷ <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/deferral-of-inspections-information-for-schools>

- confirm that the school is able to inform the governing body that the monitoring inspection visit is taking place
 - make sure that the headteacher understands the purpose and focus of the inspection and the judgements that will be made.
20. In outlining the inspection arrangements the HMI should:
- indicate the likely format of the inspection
 - ensure the school is aware of the specific requirement of the first monitoring inspection to meet with a representative of the governing body and local authority, proprietor or sponsor
 - explain that the principles for engagement with senior staff set out in the *School inspection handbook* will be applied where possible, but that the HMI has the discretion to manage this in the way s/he feels is most appropriate
 - agree with the headteacher the approach to feedback on lesson observations
 - ascertain whether there are particular reasons why any teachers should not be observed, for example if they are subject to informal or formal capability procedures where the use of observations by Ofsted may compromise those procedures
 - ensure that the headteacher is aware that Ofsted's evidence from lesson observations, whether joint or otherwise, should not be used as evidence in capability/disciplinary proceedings, or for the purposes of performance management.
21. At the second or subsequent monitoring inspections, HMI should also request, during the phone call, that the following information is made available at the start of the inspection:
- school timetable information, staff list and times for the school day
 - any information about the school's pre-planned interruption to normal routines
 - the single central register, that summarises the checks and vetting of all staff working with pupils
 - all logs that record exclusions, pupils taken off roll, incidents of poor behaviour, racist incidents and incidents of bullying
 - information about pupils placed in alternative provision
 - up-to-date attendance information
 - records of any routine monitoring of the quality of teaching
 - information about the findings and use made of performance management arrangements including information about the most recent performance management outcomes (all documentation should be anonymous)

- the current school improvement plan and any evaluation of the impact of actions taken to date
 - recent data on attainment and progress
 - evidence of the work of governors⁸ and their impact
 - reports of any external evaluation of the school
22. The telephone call should also provide the headteacher with an opportunity to highlight the progress that the school has made since the previous section 5 inspection or previous monitoring inspection, and to provide any new contextual information. Key points arising from the telephone call should be noted on an evidence form. Inspectors should be mindful that the headteacher will need to accommodate the inspection at short notice while still managing the day-to-day operation of the school.

During the inspection

23. Monitoring activities and inspections should focus on the most important areas for improvement identified in the section 5 inspection that deemed the school to have serious weaknesses. They will reflect the issues raised by the telephone discussion with the headteacher. The focus may shift as new evidence becomes available or other issues emerge.

The first monitoring inspection

24. The first monitoring inspection will last up to one day and will be conducted by the lead inspector. There will be no preparation requirement and a brief letter will be drafted at the end of the monitoring inspection. HMI should plan to arrive at the school no earlier than 09.00 on the day of the inspection, following the arrangements agreed with the school during the telephone conversation in which the inspection was announced.
25. The purpose of the inspection is to:
- gauge the school's initial response to being judged as having serious weaknesses and how well placed it is to secure rapid improvement
 - evaluate the extent to which the school's actions are rigorously focused on tackling the key areas for improvement identified in the section 5 inspection
 - evaluate how effectively the school is adapting its existing school development or improvement plans to meet the challenges of moving out of the serious weaknesses category
 - evaluate the statement of action

⁸ 'Governors' refers to those responsible for governance in the school. They may be part of the school's local board, committee or governing body

- evaluate the impact that governors at the school are having on bringing about the necessary improvements - inspectors will take account of the section 5 guidance on assessing and reporting on the effectiveness of governance at the school
- offer guidance to the school and the local authority, academy proprietor or academy sponsor to sharpen, if necessary, the effectiveness of their planning
- check the single central register if staffing has changed since a previous inspection.

26. The structure of the day will usually be as follows:

- Meeting with the headteacher/deputy headteacher or other senior leader, the chair of the governing body and representatives from the local authority, academy proprietor or academy sponsor. This meeting should focus on actions taken so far to tackle the reasons the school is causing concern.
- Evaluation of the local authority's, proprietor's or sponsor's statement of action and any changes to the school's improvement/development plan.
- Separate meetings with representatives of the local authority, proprietor or sponsor; the chair of the governing body and the headteacher, deputy headteacher or other senior leader.
- Time to allow the lead inspector to reflect and draft points for feedback.
- Final meeting with key stakeholders including as many governors as possible

27. If the statement of action or the school's improvement plan are judged to be not fit for purpose, the local authority, proprietor or sponsor will be informed and will be asked to address the weaknesses urgently.

The second and third monitoring inspections

28. Second and third monitoring inspections of schools that have serious weaknesses will be scheduled and structured according to the school's need and rate of progress. Not all schools will receive a second or third monitoring inspection visit. These visits will depend on the HMI's evaluation of the quality of leadership and management and the school's rate of improvement towards becoming a good school.

29. Monitoring inspections will cover aspects of *The framework for school inspection*, but are selective and focused sharply on the **areas for improvement** identified by the section 5 inspection that deemed the school to have serious weaknesses.

Planning the inspection

30. Inspection activities during the second and third monitoring inspection visits will be shaped by the lead inspector's judgements about the progress made by the

school. The activities carried out during monitoring inspections are similar to those in section 5 inspections, although the emphasis will depend on the circumstances of the school and the priorities for improvement given at the time of its most recent inspection. When conducting inspection activities, such as lesson observations, work scrutiny, providing feedback, and recording evidence, inspectors will follow the principles set out in the *School inspection handbook*.

31. Inspection activities may involve: lesson observations; analysis of pupils' work; scrutiny of school records and documentation; discussions with staff, pupils, governors and, where appropriate, representatives of external strategic partners, such as the local authority, proprietor or sponsor.
32. The main focus of the inspection and the key issues the team will explore must always be shared with the headteacher during the initial meeting at the start of the inspection. The school should have opportunities to substantiate its views about the progress it has made since the previous section 5 inspection or monitoring inspection.

The start of the on-site inspection

33. The lead inspector should meet briefly with the headteacher and/or senior leadership team at the beginning of the inspection to:
 - introduce any team inspectors
 - make arrangements for a longer meeting at a convenient time with the headteacher to discuss the school's self-evaluation and other relevant matters
 - confirm arrangements for meetings with representatives of those responsible for the governance of the school and key staff
 - confirm arrangements for providing feedback after lesson observations
 - request information about staff absence and other practical issues
 - ascertain whether there are particular reasons why any teachers should not be observed, for example if they are subject to capability procedures
 - ensure that the headteacher is aware that Ofsted's evidence from lesson observations, whether joint or otherwise, should not be used as evidence in capability/disciplinary proceedings or for the purposes of performance management
 - ensure that the inspection activity starts promptly - inspectors must show their identity badges on arrival and ensure that the headteacher has been informed of their arrival.
34. Inspection activities during the second and subsequent monitoring visits will be shaped by the lead inspector's judgements about the progress made by the school. They are likely to cover some or all of the areas set out in paragraph

31, although the emphasis will depend on the circumstances of the school and its improvement priorities.

35. Inspectors should take account of the following during the monitoring period but not necessarily at every monitoring inspection.
- **Contextual matters** including any significant changes to staffing, the pupil population and the school's status, for example if the school becomes part of a hard federation.
 - **Achievement of pupils at the school:** taking account of attainment and the quality of learning and progress for all pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in line with the *School inspection handbook*, and the Subsidiary guidance, and how well the school is narrowing the attainment gap.
 - Inspectors should consider first-hand evidence, **which must include a sample of lesson observations** and school data for different groups of pupils and, where appropriate, recent test and examination results. Reference should be made to the challenge and impact of the school's targets.
 - Inspectors will need to place particular emphasis on current attainment and progress indicators, particularly when no new national data have been published since the previous monitoring inspection. However, it is important to avoid speculation on likely future test and examination results.
 - The school's success or otherwise in overcoming the causes of serious weakness, such as improving the quality of teaching, behaviour and safety and pupils' progress and attainment in lessons, will make a significant contribution to the judgement about whether achievement is improving and to what degree.
 - For schools where attainment falls below the government's current floor standard, inspectors should consider the appropriateness of specific strategies being used by the school to meet such targets, including the impact of any external support.
 - Inspectors should judge the accuracy and reliability of the school's own data and analyses, for example, assessments of pupils' attainment and progress, which should be considered alongside other evidence such as that gathered by talking to pupils and sampling their work.
 - **The quality of teaching** with particular emphasis on: how this promotes better learning and improved progress; the use of assessment; and the impact of teaching on pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.
 - **The behaviour and safety** of pupils with particular reference to: improvement in pupils' attitudes, conduct and behaviour; improved

management of behaviour; how well pupils adopt safe practices; and pupils' attendance and punctuality

- **The quality of leadership in and management of the school** including: the growing impact of leaders and managers at all levels, including that of the governing body, on school improvement and the school's capacity for sustained improvement.
 - Inspectors should assess the rigour and accuracy of the school's self-evaluation, including its assessment about the quality of teaching and learning.
 - The work of the governing body or interim executive board should be evaluated with respect to the improving contribution that it makes to leadership and management, and its impact on the school's performance
 - if governance was not identified as an area for improvement at the section 5 inspection but the monitoring inspection raises concerns about governance, inspectors must include a recommendation in the monitoring letter that the school should commission an external review of governance
 - Inspectors should consider whether the school's leaders continue to demonstrate convincingly that the school's capacity to improve is strengthening. It is important that the school's leaders are having a significant impact on all of its areas of weakness and are capable of securing further improvement.
 - There should be clear evidence that leaders and managers are having an impact on accelerating learners' progress and thereby raising attainment, particularly in schools where attainment is low.
- **External support:** the quality and impact of the external support provided to the school, with particular reference to the local authority's, proprietor's or sponsor's statement of action (see paragraphs 26 and 27), and as appropriate, other partners who have provided support and challenge.
- **Specialist status:** this only needs to be referred to when it is having a significant impact on the overall effectiveness of the school in either a positive or negative way.
- **Safeguarding arrangements:** inspectors **must** check the single central register on any monitoring inspection if any staff changes have occurred.

36. Inspectors are expected to be flexible about how the inspection proceeds depending on the school's circumstances. Inspectors may wish to consider the following.

- In a small school (where the headteacher may have a teaching commitment), inspectors may start the inspection with a brief discussion with the headteacher, followed by lesson observations and further discussions with the headteacher at a convenient time.

- Discussions with the headteacher may also take place during a brief tour of the school, which will also enable inspectors to gain a better understanding of its context and ethos.
 - Where necessary, inspectors may conduct telephone interviews with governors, local authority personnel or the academy sponsor and parents if face-to-face meetings are not feasible.
 - Depending on the focus of the inspection, inspectors may wish to examine additional documentation, including, for example:
 - recent data on attainment and progress that the school may have gathered but had been unable to send electronically
 - reports or action plans from the local authority that were not available beforehand
 - reports from significant external partners
 - governing body minutes – particularly when, for example, a separate committee has been established to oversee progress on the areas for improvement
 - analysis of aspects of pupils’ work that are closely related to the areas for improvement, for example, evaluations of improvements in writing or the use of targets for pupils
 - behaviour records and policies that relate to these, including data on exclusions.
37. During the second and third monitoring inspections, inspectors are required to evaluate the school’s overall progress towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation. An overarching judgement will be made stating whether:
- *the school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation ; or*
 - *the school is not making enough progress towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation.*
38. While, generally, the judgement will be informed by the school’s progress in dealing with each of the areas for improvement identified by the section 5 inspection, other factors that arise during the 18-month monitoring period must not be ignored. From the second monitoring inspection, the lead inspector should consider whether the school is making sufficient progress for the serious weaknesses designation to be removed before the end of the 18-month period (see also paragraph 10).
39. The lead inspector should make the key judgement about the school’s overall progress towards the removal of serious weaknesses by considering the full range of evidence s/he has gathered and using their professional judgement.

The crucial factor is the anticipated timescale for the removal of serious weaknesses given the current rate of improvement. A school which is making continued reasonable progress is on course to have the serious weaknesses designation removed within 18 months. A school which is not making enough progress will be likely to continue to have serious weaknesses, or may require special measures, when the section 5 reinspection takes place.

Evaluating external support

40. The judgement made by HMI about the quality of the statement of action and the school's improvement plan (see paragraph 6) and an evaluation of the impact of these must be reported in the first monitoring inspection letter. On subsequent inspections, inspectors also judge the impact of the local authority's, proprietor's or sponsor's support for the school.
41. If the statement of action or the school's improvement plan are judged to be not fit for purpose, the local authority, proprietor, or sponsor will be informed and will be asked to address the weaknesses urgently and have the revised version ready for the second monitoring inspection. In this case, the lead inspector will re-evaluate and report on the revised statement of action and/or the school's improvement plan at the second monitoring inspection.

Registered provision for birth to three-year-olds

42. Ofsted inspects and reports on any registered provision managed by the governing body separately from the section 5 inspection, although in some cases the inspections may take place at the same time. If the registered provision is judged to be inadequate, it will be monitored and reinspected in line with the requirements for inspections of registered early years provision.

The views of pupils, parents and other stakeholders

43. Inspectors may talk with pupils during lessons and during break and lunchtimes and, where appropriate, meet with pupils to discuss issues relating to the school's areas for improvement.
44. There is no requirement for schools to inform parents about monitoring inspections. However, headteachers should be encouraged to let parents know about these inspections and their outcomes. Monitoring letters and reports will be published on Ofsted's website. It is the duty of the governing body, proprietor or sponsor to keep parents informed about the progress the school is making.
45. Parents' comments received by Ofsted will be made available to inspectors. At an appropriate point during the monitoring inspection the lead inspector may consult parents on their views about the school by, for example, meeting a representative group of parents. Inspectors may also take account of the views of parents gathered by the school as part of its own evaluation of its work, and refer to those views in the monitoring letter.

Removal of the serious weaknesses designation

46. Where the lead inspector is satisfied that the school is making enough progress for the likely removal of the serious weaknesses designation, s/he will make a recommendation in the inspection report that the next inspection be a full section 5 reinspection.
47. When at the section 5 reinspection the serious weaknesses designation is removed, the lead inspector **must notify the schools causing concern duty HMI at the helpdesk** in Manchester on the last day of the inspection to log the necessary details. Calls should be made to the helpline on 0300 123 4234 and lead inspectors should ask to be transferred to the schools causing concern Duty HMI.
48. Where the section 5 inspection team has reached the judgement that the school no longer has serious weaknesses, the oral feedback and written report should include the formal statement that:
- ‘In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.’
49. The introduction to the report should explain why the school was inspected. For example:
- ‘When XXXX school was inspected in XX 200X, it was judged to have serious weaknesses. Subsequently, the school was inspected on xxx occasions. At the last monitoring inspection the school was judged to be making reasonable/to not be making enough progress.’

After the inspection

Oral feedback at the end of the monitoring inspection

50. The school will receive oral feedback at the end of each monitoring inspection. At the end of the first monitoring inspection, the inspector will give oral feedback on the fitness for purpose of the statement of action and the school’s improvement plan. Oral feedback at the end of the subsequent monitoring inspections must:
- report the range of evidence gathered
 - include the judgement made about progress towards the removal of serious weaknesses, describing the progress made against areas for improvement identified during the section 5 inspection which deemed the school to have serious weaknesses
 - comment on the impact of external support on school improvement

- cover any specific issues identified by the lead inspector in the pre-inspection preparation
 - make clear that the text of the letter or report may differ slightly from the oral feedback, but that the judgements will not change.
51. Inspectors should identify additional priorities **only where they are essential** to the school's further development. Progress against these priorities has to be evaluated at the next monitoring inspection and reported in the monitoring letter. They are not to be added to the list of judgements to be made as set out in the annex to the covering letter. The priorities should help the school focus on what needs to be done next to improve the quality of education.
52. The feedback should normally be attended by:
- the headteacher
 - the chair of the governing body or equivalent (and all governors for the first monitoring inspection)
 - a representative from the local authority, or representative of the academy proprietor or sponsor
 - a representative from the diocese, where appropriate
 - key external partners

The monitoring inspection letter and report

53. For the first monitoring inspection, the school will receive a brief letter containing the judgements relating to the fitness for purpose of the statement of action and of the school's improvement plan. If the single central register has been reviewed the letter will also state if it meets statutory requirements. Monitoring inspection visit letters following the first monitoring inspection visit will not be published.
54. For the second and subsequent inspections, the school will receive a brief covering letter with the judgements included and a monitoring report, which will be published on the Ofsted website.
55. Before writing the letter the lead inspector should note the guidance in paragraphs 57 to 63 and also take account of the specific guidance provided in the template and the Ofsted style guide.
56. The arrangements for publication are as follows.
- The lead inspector will complete the letter and report towards the end of the monitoring inspection day. This will be sent to the appropriate inspection service provider within one working day of the end of the monitoring inspection.

- The ISP will edit and send the letter to the school normally within five working days of the end of the inspection.
 - The school has 24 hours to check and report any factual inaccuracies to the inspection service provider.
 - The ISP will prepare a final version of the letter which will be sent to the:
 - headteacher
 - Secretary of State for Education
 - chair of the governing body or interim executive board or proprietor as appropriate
 - local authority, or academy proprietor or sponsor
 - diocese, for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools
 - Education Funding Agency (EFA), for secondary schools with a sixth form
 - Department for Education Academies Advisers Unit, for academies
 - person or body responsible for appointing foundation governors if the school has a foundation
 - lead inspector.
57. In the monitoring letter, lead inspectors should make professional judgements about the extent of the detail needed to explain clearly the progress made by the school, depending on the complexity of circumstances. The content must be clear, concise and securely based on evidence. If necessary, judgements should be written to provide sufficient detail to enable the school to understand clearly what should be done next.
58. When a monitoring inspection focuses on only one or two aspects of provision, this should be clearly explained in the evidence section.
59. The monitoring letter for the first monitoring inspection must include a judgement on the fitness for purpose of the statement of action and of the school's improvement planning.
60. The monitoring letter for the subsequent inspections must include:
- a summary of the evidence gathered by inspectors
 - a brief summary of any significant changes to the context of the school
 - a judgement about progress towards the removal of serious weaknesses
 - brief bullet points evaluating the progress made by the school in tackling the key areas for improvement
 - reference to the impact that governors are having in helping the school to improve

- reference to the quality and impact of external support – there should be specific reference to the statement of action in the first monitoring inspection letter.
61. It is quite likely that areas for improvement from the section 5 inspection will consist of a main stem followed by one or more subsidiary bullet points. Inspectors should write about each main area for improvement and the related bullet points as appropriate.
 62. Progress made on priorities for further improvement identified in previous monitoring inspections should be reported in the text of the subsequent monitoring letter. They should not be added as bullet points in the annex alongside the original areas for improvement.
 63. Completed letters and reports should be sent as one document and given the following file name: D school name, visit number (1 = first visit, 2= second...) SW: (that is, D Schoolname 2 SW) and emailed to the ISP within one working day of the end of the inspection.

Record of the inspection: the evidence base

64. The record of evidence does not include the joining instructions.
65. Lead inspectors may retain copies of inspection evidence until the school no longer has serious weaknesses, but must do so in line with Ofsted's information assurance policy and procedures. Evidence forms should be sent to the ISP as soon as possible after the end of each monitoring inspection. ISPs will retain and/or destroy evidence in accordance with Ofsted's policy.

Annex A. Quality assurance

Editing monitoring inspection letters and reports

66. All monitoring letters must be returned to the relevant ISP for editing. Ofsted quality assures a sample of the letters - the ISP provides Ofsted with copies of those selected.
67. The lead inspector will receive an electronic copy of the edited letter.
68. The ISP will send the letter to school within five working days of the end of the inspection for the school to carry out a factual accuracy check. These letters should be given the file name: F school name, inspection number SW (that is D school name 2 SW). The letter is addressed to the appropriate authority via the headteacher.
69. The school will be asked to check and report any factual inaccuracies to the ISP within 24 hours of receipt of the letter.
70. The ISP will send the final letter to the school within ten days of the end of the inspection. The letter will also be copied by the ISP to appropriate recipients as noted on the post-visit letter template.
71. The ISP will forward the letter to Ofsted for uploading onto the Ofsted website. The letter should be available on the website within 15 working days of the end of the inspection. Monitoring inspection visit letters following the first monitoring inspection visit will not be published.
72. The full timeline for writing, editing, quality assuring and publishing monitoring letters is as follows:

Day after the inspection	Activity
Day 1	Lead Inspector writes letter.
Day 2	Lead Inspector submits the letter to ISP by 9am.
Day 3	ISP quality assurance.
Day 4	ISP quality assurance.

Day 5	Letter to school for factual accuracy check by day 5 at the latest. This might happen earlier. If so, the school still has one working day to check factual accuracy and will, therefore, return the letter to the ISP earlier.
Day 6	Letter returned to ISP ISP sends letter to Ofsted by 5pm.
Day 7	Ofsted quality assurance 20% sample.
Day 8	Ofsted quality assurance returned to ISP by 5pm.
Day 9	ISP prepares to send the letter to the school.
Day 10	ISP sends final copy of the letter to school.
Day 15	Letter to be published on the Ofsted website by day 15 but this may happen earlier.