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Guidance
Schools and early education update: September 2021

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Message from the National Director, Education

Welcome to the latest edition of the schools and early education update. I hope those of you who have had a well-deserved break have enjoyed the start of the new term and for those of you who stayed closer to home, I hope you found time to recuperate after a particularly challenging 17 months.

As I formally take up my new post as National Director, Education, I would first like to take this opportunity to thank my predecessor, Sean Harford, for his immense contribution to Ofsted. I know I speak for many when I say I wish him the very best for the future he richly deserves.

I would also like to thank you for all your hard work and achievements over the past year. I know that it has been a challenging time for you, your staff and your pupils, and I want to pay a tribute and express my deep thanks for your hard work and dedication.

With restrictions in England having been lifted almost entirely, I hope you are adjusting to life without the constraints of the last year. We must all remain cautious, however, as we saw the number of COVID-19 (coronavirus) cases rise and fall nationally. As we return to our work, we need to be flexible and adapt our approaches to inspection and impact on staff, and focus on the support we can provide with through our work. We will continue to review and update our risk assessments to reflect the current situation. We will also continue to work closely with the sector and stakeholders to ensure we provide the support leading the inspection. I hope my newly colleagues who are return to your schools will also find this support helpful.

Our inspection handbooks, guidance and instruments have been updated in readiness for the start of the new academic year. I expect the training has taken place over the summer months and this month to ensure that you are all fully equipped and ready as we return to our routine inspection activities.

In this parent edition, we have a wide range of information and guidance for inspectors and providers, including information about:

- changes to the school inspection handbooks, guidance and inspection instruments from September 2021
- curriculum catch-up after the COVID-19 restrictions
- curriculum leaders
- curriculum monitoring and key stage 3
- mathematics deep dives in primary schools
- Ofsted's review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges
- early career framework
- reporting on off-rolling
- inspecting religious education and collective worship
- engagement model
- Ofsted inspections (ITIS) providing consultancy services
- sharing outcomes and evaluations of inspections
- publication of a school's inspection report and evaluation
- writing school inspection reports
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- Ofsted's inspections of Year 1 September 2021 and Year 2 September 2022 cohort updates - 'Development matters'
- inspection of early years providers
- inspections, interventions and modifications at 16-19 FTEs
- inspection frameworks and guidance

Changes to the school inspection handbooks, guidance and inspection instruments from September 2021

We have revised both the school inspection handbook and the school inspection handbook - section 8. The amendments include updates on:

- the COVID-19 transitional period
- inspection intervals following the pandemic
- harmful sexual behaviour
- the new curriculum focus
- the new EIF for inspectors
- careers information, advice and guidance

For section 8 only, we have revised guidance to reflect:

- how Ofsted will evaluate the use of funds
- that teachers assessed grades from 2020 and 2021 will not be used to assess curriculum impact
- the DfE's 'Independent providers oversight in 2021' guidance
- that Ofsted will take into account the impact of the pandemic when looking at a school's curriculum
- the DfE's new 'Statutory guide description for leadership and management and certificate of compliance' and that Ofsted will take into account the impact of the pandemic on quality of education and early years education in schools

For section 8 only, we have included an update on seeking the views of parents and staff during a separate inspection monitoring inspection.

We have set out the key changes to these handbooks in 'Summary of changes: section 8 inspection handbook' and 'Summary of changes: section 5 inspection handbook'.

Section 5 and section 8 inspection report templates, writing guidance and all other relevant internal and published guidance have been revised to reflect the changes from September.

Curriculum catch-up after the COVID-19 restrictions

Almost all providers have invested considerable amounts of schooling since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. They may have invested across important content or forgotten content, or have had to teach content at a less-challenging level. We know that it will need to help pupils get back to track or 'catch up'. In June 2021 the DfE published the "Teaching remote and prioritised curriculum for education recovery", now guidance for schools, colleges and providers.

When we are inspecting, we need to consider whether leaders are using strategies that are having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Our research and experiences of inspections in the last academic year have shown that approaches to some of these effective strategies in classroom practice.

Leaders need to consider how they will identify, and then address, gaps in pupils' knowledge. A blanket approach to all subjects and phases is unlikely to be effective. In subjects such as phonics and mathematics, where content is hierarchical, pupils must secure the foundations of the curriculum before they can move on. In other subjects, content is so that they remaining on track, in other subjects, such as history or geography, where topics have been missed, leaders need to focus on emphasising the most important knowledge that pupils need to learn. In all cases, it will be helpful for leaders to consider how to adapting subsequent topics to include any content that pupils on these most important elements.

Making adjustments to the curriculum does not mean lowering expectations or ambitions. It means that teachers will need to be given opportunities to address the key content.

Time is not infinite and so, alongside identifying what content from missed topics should be prioritised, careful consideration must also be given to choices of teaching methods. Leaders need to be clear about how teaching will be organised to address the most crucial content to be learned. We know that discussions by teachers with pupils are generally not efficient when pupils first learn new content. We also know that it is important that pupils have the opportunity to think about what they have learned and the Egyptology enquiry from Year 6 could not remember the details of Egyptian religious beliefs, or the dog ate ate remember the actually?

Remember, if pupils are missing the taught curriculum, they are missing progress. These pupils will need to be taught the curriculum they have missed. Leaders need to make the key content in a specific topic to know who has learned what and how well. Using assessment to inform teaching will be important. Leaders will need to make adaptations in order to focus on the key content.

A specific issue that inspectors may come across is pupils being taken out of their usual lessons for tutoring sessions. Where this is happening, inspectors will need to look carefully at whether it is interfering with pupils' ability to access the full curriculum (for example, if pupils are being withdrawn from lessons in which new content is being taught?) Where this is the case, inspectors will want to look at how the school is addressing this issue and, if appropriate, while acknowledging that some clashes may be unavoidable, and the steps it is taking to ensure that those pupils catch up on missed lessons.

Curriculum leaders

As you will know, an important part of our methodology is meeting with curriculum leaders, a leader responsible for a head of department in a secondary school and understand the intended curriculum and what they expect inspectors will see in deep dives.

In some schools, these staff will also have a very full teaching schedule. Inspectors will want to understand how these leaders are managing their workload, and the operational while minimising any unnecessary disruption to the teaching of pupils in the school. Issues can often be addressed by scheduling activities carefully on the school calendar and in discussion with senior leaders in the pre-inspection telephone conversation.

Implications for inspectors

Inspectors should:

- be as flexible as possible in gathering the necessary evidence without causing undue disruption to the school day
- work with school leaders during inspections to understand what several meeting to be held with curriculum leaders, and how these can be scheduled to minimise disruption. For example if teachers are out of class
- understand that some schools, especially small schools, will not have a separate staff for each subject. In these cases, inspectors will need to be clear about how the curriculum is organised and delivered
- talk to staff members or groups of staff who can give as the insight we need to understand the curriculum. This may be a curriculum leader responsible for a number of subjects or a group of staff who more than one subject with the same curriculum lead
- ensure that curriculum leader who wants to be involved in curriculum discussions, particularly, but not exclusively, when subject coordinators/leaders are inexperienced in that role

It is also important to remind schools that no element of our inspection - including meetings with curriculum leaders - should be seen as a requirement for schools to prepare a particular document. We do not expect to see any pre-made individual subjects.

A Year 6 teacher could have prepared a presentation for inspection, for example, looking forward learning only to GCSE specification, stretching a 2 year course over 3. This would be a waste of time, and would not be in the pupils' best interest. The teacher would lose the chance to study what pupils need and what they have learned in the current year before they have to move on.

However, 2 year key stage 3 does not necessarily mean a broad and rich curriculum. Our 2019 report 'Key stage 3: the wasted years?' found that, although quality of the curriculum was generally better than in previous years, 2 year key stage 3 was still too often a lesser organisation and leaders were not always guilty of the sins of secondary education.

In summary, the length of key stage 3 alone will not tell us whether the curriculum is broad or narrow.

Implications for inspectors

Inspectors should not assume that any pupils' length of key stage 3 is automatically a good or a bad thing. We should consider whether the curriculum offered at each stage, and for the school as a whole, is broad and ambitious and whether it is being taught in such a way that all pupils, including those with special needs, have the opportunity to study a range of subjects, at least in line with the ambition of the national curriculum. If schools do offer a 2 year key stage 3, inspectors will want to see that it is being taught with appropriate coverage, content, structure and sequencing, and delivering the curriculum effectively. Then we should judge their curriculum favourably.

Lead inspectors must, therefore, ask the duty leader if a maintained school does not seem to be offering the full set of national curriculum subjects.

Mathematics deep dives in primary schools

The 'carrying out deep dives' section of our 'Inspecting the curriculum' guidance states:

> In primary schools, inspectors will always carry out a deep dive in reading and deep dives in one or more foundation subjects, always including a foundation subject that includes a focus on the quality of pupils' writing. In secondary schools, lead inspectors will often carry out a deep dive in mathematics.[1]

The 'quality of education' section of the section 8 handbook states:

> In primary schools, [inspectors will] always consider how well reading and early mathematics are being taught and how well pupils are being prepared for the next stage of wide-ranging curriculum that primary children need for the next stage of their education. As in section 5 inspections, inspectors will always carry out a deep dive in reading, and will also carry out a deep dive in mathematics but this is of the lead inspector's discretion.[2]

Implications for inspectors

Inspectors are reminded that deep dives in mathematics in primary schools are at lead inspectors' discretion and are not compulsory.

Ofsted's review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges

We have outlined changes to the education inspection handbooks in response to the recommendations made in Ofsted's review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges, published on 10 June 2021. The changes also reflect the updated statutory guidance 'Keeping children safe in education', which comes into effect in September 2021.

The findings from our thematic review have revealed just how commonplace sexual harassment and online sexual abuse is in schools and colleges. Our review found that, in many instances, schools and colleges must assume that it is happening and must address it accordingly. Our updated handbooks are clear about how we will assess the extent to which schools and colleges are taking this issue seriously.

We will expect schools and colleges to have taken a robust approach to sexual harassment and sexual abuse and never tolerated. They will have established an environment where staff and pupils feel able to report any concerns about sexual behaviour and where pupils can be confident that they will be taken seriously.

Implications for inspectors

Inspectors will have already received training on the implications of the review.

Inspectors will review records about safeguarding, including those relating to sexual harassment and sexual and online sexual abuse.

They will speak to leaders and other staff about how they support pupils to raise concerns, and how they ensure that concerns are brought to their attention. Inspectors will explore whether the school's work in this area is reflected in its curriculum and that pupils are taught about how to recognise and report abuse, and how to deal with instances and issues of concern.

Inspectors will, as always, speak formally and informally to groups of pupils. Where they feel it is safe to do so, they will also speak informally to individual pupils. Inspectors will ask questions of pupils on age-appropriate topics, for example, how the school teaches them to have an understanding of healthy relationships.

Inspectors will not investigate individual allegations of harmful sexual behaviour or sexual abuse. However, such allegations are important to the approach to authority. If this has not already happened.

Early career framework

From September 2021, new teachers will be subject to early career teachers (ECTs). The induction of new teachers will be extended to the first 2 years of teaching, and new teachers will be required to undertake a structured programme of professional development based on the DfE's 'ECF and protocol for induction' intro to focus on their development. All state-funded schools offering statutory induction will receive additional funding to deliver an induction based on the ECF.

The ECF sets out what new teachers should learn about and be able to during their first 2 years of teaching. It is underpinned by the teachers' standards and is underpinned by an evidence base.

Schools are expected to arrange for an ECF-based induction to be delivered to their new teachers. They can either:

- sign up to a DfE-approved and funded provider
- use the DfE's materials and resources made available on GOV.UK to deliver the programme themselves
- design and deliver their own ECF-based induction

The approved and funded providers include:

- Ambition Institute
- Teach Practice Network
- Capita
- Education Development Trust
- Teach First
- UCL Institute of Education

For schools that deliver their own training, the DfE-approved materials and resources include:

- self-directed study materials
- mentor session guidance
- training session guidance

These materials are accredited by the DfE and quality-assured by the Education Endowment Foundation.

Teachers that started but did not complete induction before September 2021 should continue to refer to the DfE induction guidance for newly qualified teachers. For those starting from September, they should refer to the new early career framework.

Implications for inspectors

We have updated the language around new teachers in our inspection handbooks to reflect these changes. The term 'newly qualified teacher' and 'NQT' should no longer be used. The only exception to this is in reference to teachers who started their induction before September 2021 but have not yet completed it.

We have also strengthened the expectation that inspectors should meet with ECTs, their mentors and their induction tutors, if possible, during inspections.

We will also ask schools which appear to be delivering the ECF the school is following – the DfE's 'ECF and protocol for induction', one of the DfE-accredited materials or their own bespoke approach.

Reporting on off-rolling

There has been some concern about off-rolling, according to our definition, has been identified, and inspectors have not specifically mentioned the term 'off-rolling' in their reports. We have seen some instances where inspectors have not been able to inspect because Ofsted not our power, this. We do not want to leave any stone unturned because we is the interests of pupils and parents. Therefore, we are introducing a requirement for inspectors to report on off-rolling.

There is no legal definition of off-rolling. However, Ofsted defines it as:

> The practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion or by encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school roll when the removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the child, to improve the school's results or its Ofsted inspection. (Page 7, Research and review: section of the school inspection handbook)

Points to consider

Ofsted's view that off-rolling, according to our definition, is unacceptable. The definition is based because our research and inspection experience show so that the practice is not in the best interests of the pupil concerned. Ofsted's view is also supported by inappropriate managed moves, use of alternative provision, and exclusions (Inspection and off-rolling: section of the school inspection handbook).

It is not for inspectors to decide what is and is not in pupils' best interests – this will be a matter for the school, parents and, if it comes to it, the courts. However, inspectors' evidence and not controlling, and the evidence supports it, inspectors are likely to come to the conclusion that they have evidence of off-rolling.

When inspectors find evidence of off-rolling, they will need to report on it. Inspectors will also need to report on the school's approach to authority.

Implications for inspectors

It will not normally be appropriate for us to carry out a deep dive in RE in a school (with the exception of voluntary controlled schools that have been designated as having a religious character).

Inspectors will also need to ensure that they reference, in the information about this school' section of the inspection report:

- that the school has been designated as having a religious character
- when the most recent RE inspection was carried out (or equivalent inspection for non-maintained schools) and the date of the last section 48 inspection
- where relevant, that a section 48 inspection (or equivalent inspection of an academy) is due within the next 12 months (or equivalent)
- where relevant, whether the required consultation has taken place and the prescribed faith body (when a school has a prescribed faith body and elects not to use it, the inspection report should state that no consultation has taken place)
- where relevant, that the section 48 inspection (or equivalent inspection of an academy) is overdue and that, therefore, the school is failing in its statutory duty

Engagement model

The engagement model is the assessment (replacing 'P scales') for RE for pupils working towards the standard of national curriculum assessments and not engaged in subject-specific study of religion.

The engagement model is statutory from the 2021/22 academic year. Schools can no longer assess pupils against P scales. It is for schools to determine their own arrangements for assessing in state-funded schools.

Teachers must use the engagement model to assess pupils working below the standard of the national curriculum assessments and not engaged in subject-specific study of religion. It is not for use in other subjects.

Inspecting religious education and collective worship

We may select religious education (RE) as a deep dive subject and inspect RE and collective worship in schools that are not designated as having a religious character.

However, Ofsted does not inspect the content of denominational education or collective worship in schools designated as having a religious character.

In voluntary controlled schools designated as having a religious character, Ofsted is responsible for inspecting the religious education (RE) and collective worship. We will not deep dive in RE in voluntary controlled schools.

In other schools designated as having a religious character, the inspection of RE and collective worship is the responsibility of the school's authority. The school's section 48 inspection, carried out by an independent inspector, will report on the school's authority. Authorities designated by a denominational religious character will have similar arrangements regarding their inspection.

Inspectors should be able to gather evidence from anywhere relevant to evaluate the quality of RE and collective worship (for example, from observations, discussions with leaders and attitudes to learning RE lessons and assemblies). We must be very careful to avoid any appearance that we are inspecting the curriculum of denominational education or the content of collective worship in these schools.

Implications for inspectors

It will not normally be appropriate for us to carry out a deep dive in RE in a school (with the exception of voluntary controlled schools that have been designated as having a religious character).

Inspectors will also need to ensure that they reference, in the information about this school' section of the inspection report:

- that the school has been designated as having a religious character
- when the most section 48 inspection was carried out (or equivalent inspection of an academy) and the date of the last section 48 inspection
- where relevant, that a section 48 inspection (or equivalent inspection of an academy) is due within the next 12 months (or equivalent)
- where relevant, whether the required consultation has taken place and the prescribed faith body (when a school has a prescribed faith body and elects not to use it, the inspection report should state that no consultation has taken place)
- where relevant, that the section 48 inspection (or equivalent inspection of an academy) is overdue and that, therefore, the school is failing in its statutory duty

Inspection of independent schools

Independent schools inspected by Ofsted are inspected against the independent school standards. We have updated our inspection handbook to reflect the changes to the independent school standards from September 2021.

Sharing outcomes and evaluations of inspections

We have updated our inspection handbook to reflect the changes to the sharing of the outcome of inspections, and the sharing of the school evaluation form.

Publication of a school's inspection report and evaluation

We have updated our inspection handbook to reflect the changes to the publication of a school's inspection report and evaluation.

Writing school inspection reports

We have updated our inspection handbook to reflect the changes to the writing of a school's inspection report.

Reporting the quality of education in inspections

We have updated our inspection handbook to reflect the changes to the reporting the quality of education in inspections.

DfE's non-statutory guidance on school inspections

We have updated our inspection handbook to reflect the changes to the DfE's non-statutory guidance on school inspections.

Training for schools on challenging sexual harassment

We have updated our inspection handbook to reflect the changes to the training for schools on challenging sexual harassment.

Ofsted's inspections of Year 1 September 2021 and Year 2 September 2022 cohort updates - 'Development matters'

We have updated our inspection handbook to reflect the changes to the Ofsted's inspections of Year 1 September 2021 and Year 2 September 2022 cohort updates - 'Development matters'.

Inspection of early years providers

We have updated our inspection handbook to reflect the changes to the inspection of early years providers.

Inspections, interventions and modifications at 16-19 FTEs

We have updated our inspection handbook to reflect the changes to the inspections, interventions and modifications at 16-19 FTEs.

Inspection frameworks and guidance

We have updated our inspection handbook to reflect the changes to the inspection frameworks and guidance.

- explanation
- realisation
- anticipation
- persistence
- initiation

These areas allow teachers to assess pupils' engagement in developing new skills, knowledge and concepts in the school's curriculum by demonstrating how pupils are achieving specific outcomes. The engagement model is not a curriculum.

Implications for inspectors

Inspectors should note that the engagement model should not replace existing planning or assessment systems and schools have autonomy over how it is implemented.

The model encourages schools to measure each pupil's progress independently, according to their specific need profile. Schools may use the engagement model as a baseline tool to support ongoing progress.

Inspectors should not expect to see an 'engagement curriculum'.

The engagement model is not mandatory for non-maintained or independent schools.

OIs providing consultancy services

Ofsted does not believe that schools need to do anything, beyond being familiar with the handbooks, to prepare for inspections. It is, therefore, our policy that we do not carry out or endorse mock inspections (sometimes called 'mockshets') or 'mock deep dives' to prepare schools for Ofsted inspections.

These mock inspections would not have the checks and balances or quality assurance of our actual inspections, and so we could not be sure that they would provide schools with consistent and reliable messages. Further, they could lead schools to believe that they will get a specific grade if specific action is taken, which could unduly fetter the discretion of the inspection team when the actual inspection comes around.

In short, they offer little reliable benefit to schools, while creating unnecessary risk for Ofsted.

For this reason, it is important that any Ofsted Inspector (OI) is not perceived to be using the knowledge gained through their work with us to carry out mock Ofsted inspections, mock deep dives or train providers in how to 'pass' inspections. Not only would this be a conflict of interest within the terms of our OI contract, but it would also be a breach of their terms and conditions in respect of representing themselves as an OI for commercial gain.

Implications for inspectors

Inspectors are only permitted to refer to themselves as an Ofsted Inspector/OI when carrying out an Ofsted inspection.

Inspectors cannot provide 'mockshets' /type consultancy and continue in their role as an OI.

It is, of course, reasonable for an OI to talk about their experience and knowledge. But it is not acceptable for any OI to:

- carry out an Ofsted-style inspection, except when contracted to do so by Ofsted
- refer to themselves as an 'Ofsted Inspector' or 'OI' when providing commercial services
- purport to speak on behalf of Ofsted in giving advice to schools, except when explicitly asked to do so by Ofsted
- give schools a judgement, estimate/forecast or contingent judgement in respect of any part of the Ofsted framework, except when this is part of a contracted Ofsted inspection

OIs are also reminded that they must follow the guidance set out in Ofsted's 'conflicts of interest' policy and procedure when considering carrying out any activity that may conflict, or could be perceived to conflict, with Ofsted's values and their role as an OI. All conflicts and potential conflicts of interest, whether actual or perceived, must be disclosed immediately and updated on a regular basis. If an OI is in any doubt or requires further advice, they must speak to their regional support team for schools before carrying out any activity that could be affected by the potential conflict of interest.

Conflicts in inspection activity that must be declared (including those of household members and close friends) are the following:

- any previous employment with providers that Ofsted inspects and regulates, including chains, groups and multi-academy trusts
- any other work, professional contact, voluntary work or advisory work with a provider in the last 5 years
- all providers attended as an employee, service user or pupil/learner
- previous job applications to providers inspected and/or regulated by Ofsted and to any multi-academy trust

Sharing provisional inadequate judgements with local authorities

Ofsted provides early notification to the DfE of provisional inadequate judgements (pending moderation) of the inspections of maintained schools and academies.

Historically, the local authority has also been copied into this notification, but this will no longer apply. The local authority will instead continue to receive notification of the inadequate outcome only when the final moderated judgement has been made.

There may be some cases where the relevant Ofsted region decides that the local authority should be notified of safeguarding concerns promptly after (or even during) an inspection because the local authority has ownership responsibility for safeguarding arrangements for children and all children in the particular school, regardless of the types of educational settings they attend. In these cases, the region should follow the relevant internal guidance on handling safeguarding concerns about children and vulnerable adults.

Publication of a section 5 report after a school closes

In the July 2019 edition of school inspection update, we set out our policy on publishing a section 5 inspection report after a school closes.

In summary, when a school has been inspected under section 5 but closed before we have published the report, we will still publish the report against the unique reference number (URN) of the school as it existed at the time of inspection. This is in keeping with our 3-fold duty under section 5 to inspect and to 'make a report of the inspection in writing'. So, a section 5 inspection is not complete until a report has been produced. We have no power to void an inspection.

Inspectors should also make this policy clear to school leaders if they are told that the school may close before the inspection report has been published.

Writing about fundamental British values

We are aware of requests for clarification on when to use the phrase 'fundamental British values'. Ofsted's house style glossary (internal only) was updated in December 2019 to clarify that this phrase must only be used when referring to the legally defined fundamental British values of democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law and mutual respect and tolerance.

Implications for inspectors

Inspectors must use the full phrase at first use. After that, it is fine to say British values, but it must be clear that they are the same thing.

Please use capital B, lower case f and v, and no quotation marks.

Further information on fundamental British values can be found in the DfE's guidance on promoting British values in schools.

Reporting the governance of academies in inspection reports

Inspectors should make sure that they properly reflect the legal governance of academies in the school report.

Implications for inspectors

This means:

- in the 'school details' section of the report, the appropriate authority will always be the board of trustees
- the chair of the trust should always be named in the next field, not the chair of any local governing body; the chair of the trust is the legal head of governance, irrespective of any delegation – the trust board may delegate but it remains accountable and responsible for all decisions made
- if a local governing body has delegated powers from the board of trustees, this should be made clear in the 'information about this school' section of the inspection report; the inspector may also name the chair of that body, but this should not appear in the 'school details' section

DfE's non-statutory guidance on character education

Inspectors will be aware that 'character education' forms part of what we look at under the personal development judgement. We define character as 'a set of positive personal traits, dispositions and virtues that informs [pupils'] motivation and guides their conduct so that they reflect wisely, learn eagerly, behave with integrity and cooperate consistently well with others. This gives pupils the qualities they need to flourish in our society'.

In November 2019, the DfE produced non-statutory guidance for schools on character education. This provides 6 benchmarks for schools to consider in planning their character education. These benchmarks, and the guidance, are entirely consistent with our understanding of character, and so inspectors will not need to change their practice. You may, however, find it useful to read the guidance.

Training for schools on challenging sexism

The organisation UK Feminista supports schools and teachers to challenge sexism in the classroom. It provides training and resources to enable schools to adopt a whole-school approach to dealing with sexism, including gender-stereotyping, sexual harassment and sexist language.

UK Feminista's free online resource hub provides comprehensive guidance and support, including details of online training, to enable schools to take effective action against sexism.

Revisions to the EYFS from 1 September 2021 and accompanying non-statutory guidance, 'Development matters'

In October 2019, the DfE launched a public consultation seeking views on changes to the statutory framework for the EYFS. The consultation included proposed changes to the educational programmes, the early learning goals and the EYFS profile assessment.

All registered nurseries, childminders, schools and pre-schools in England must follow the revised and final EYFS framework from 1 September 2021. Changes have been made to improve outcomes at age 5, particularly in early language and literacy and especially for disadvantaged children, and to reduce workload and unnecessary paperwork for providers.

'Development matters', the DfE's non-statutory curriculum guidance to support the delivery of the revised EYFS statutory framework, is also being updated for use from 1 September. It offers a top-level view of how children develop and learn. While it provides guidance for providers, it does not replace professional judgement.

Implications for inspectors

We will continue to inspect in line with the principles and requirements of the EYFS – there is no change to inspection policy. As 'Development matters' is non-statutory guidance, as is the case now, it does not form part of our inspection policy or methodology.

Our new 'Ofsted EIF inspections and the EYFS' page on GOV.UK has answers to the most frequently asked questions on inspection practice and the EYFS. This is to help all registered early years providers and schools with what they need to know for the start of the revised EYFS framework on 1 September 2021. While this is primarily an external facing page for registered early years providers and schools, we encourage all inspectors to familiarise themselves with its contents and to let providers know it is there.

We hope in time this will become the 'one-stop-shop' for all queries related to early years education inspection framework inspections, allowing us to dispel unhelpful 'inspection' rumours within the sector quickly and efficiently. Content will be refreshed in line with handbook updates, or sooner, should there be a need.

Disapplications to, and modifications of, the EYFS

The period in which EYFS disapplications and/or modifications can be used ended on 31 August 2021. The early years, schools and independent schools inspection handbooks have been updated to reflect this and other relevant changes associated with the EYFS.

The disapplications and/or modifications originally came into force in April 2020 to support early years providers and schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. This allowed them to use temporary disapplications and modifications for certain elements of the EYFS where government-imposed national and local restrictions impacted on a provider's ability to meet the EYFS in full. The temporary disapplications and modifications covered the learning and development requirements, the progress check at age 2, the EYFS assessment profile, staff qualifications and ratios, and paediatric first aid. All schools and providers were expected to use 'reasonable' or 'best' endeavours to continue to meet the EYFS requirements as far as possible.

Implications for inspectors

We will continue to inspect in line with the principles and requirements of the EYFS. There is no change to inspection policy.

On inspection, we will want to know if a provider or a school has previously relied on the disapplications, so that we are able to understand any potential impact on children's experiences. We will not judge providers or schools on what they were doing previously, even if they were disapplying or relying on modifications. We will look at whether any previous reliance on the disapplications or modifications is having an impact on the provision and on the children who attend the school/provider. We will look at what the provider or school is doing to get back on track, and how it is addressing any gaps in learning and ensuring that the children are ready for the next stage of education.

We do not expect to see any paperwork or 'evidence' about why or how providers or schools relied on the disapplications.

More information on the disapplications to, and modifications of, the EYFS, changes to the EYFS from 1 September 2021 and how these relate to inspection practice can be found on our new 'Ofsted EIF inspections and the EYFS' page on GOV.UK.

Reception baseline assessment

Following a national voluntary pilot, the Reception baseline assessment will be statutory in schools from September 2021.

The Reception baseline assessment provides the basis for a new way of measuring the progress primary schools make with their pupils. Unlike the current progress measure, this will give schools credit for the important work they do with their pupils between Reception and Year 2.

It is a short, inclusive, age-appropriate assessment designed to capture the wide range of attainment in mathematics and literacy, communication and language seen in Reception classes at the start of the year.

While there are clear links to the learning and development requirements of the EYFS, the baseline is different to the EYFS profile as it is completed at the start of the Reception Year (within the first 6 weeks of pupils joining Reception), rather than at the end of the academic year, and serves a different purpose.

More information on the Reception baseline assessments can be found on GOV.UK.

Implications for inspectors

Inspectors should be mindful that Reception baseline assessments may be taking place when they are inspecting in the autumn term.

The data from the baseline assessment will only be used by the DfE when children reach Year 6, for the purpose of calculating new primary school progress measures. It will not be shared with the school or parents and will not be published externally.

Although scores are not shared with schools, they will be provided with a series of 'reporting' measures, which will provide schools with a breakdown of how the different content domains presented in the assessment, and that these can be used to inform teaching during Reception, alongside other evidence available to the school. Since introducing the education inspection framework, our focus has been on the quality of education in helping pupils learn and develop. While assessments can give an indication of how well children are progressing, our inspection looks beyond that and examines the rounded education that pupils receive. Inspectors should continue to be mindful of paragraph 330 in the school inspection handbook:

> " Inspectors will look at the children's achievements at the end of Reception over time, by the proportions reaching a good level of development. However, inspectors need to get beyond the data as quickly as possible to ascertain how well the curriculum is meeting children's needs. This will be evident in how well children know and remember more. Inspectors need to make careful inferences about children's current progress by drawing together evidence from a range of sources. "

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