

Guidance for inspectors: observing teaching in pilot schools

This guidance is for inspectors to use during the pilot of a new approach to the recording of evidence about the quality of teaching during some school inspections.

Age group: All

Published: June 2014

Reference no: 140103



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 and 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.

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/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140103.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our website for news, information and updates at www.ofsted.gov.uk/user.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

No. 140103

© Crown copyright 2014



From 9 June 2014, Ofsted is piloting a new approach to the recording of evidence about the quality of teaching during some school inspections. You can find further information about the pilot here: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140101.

In these pilot inspections, inspectors will **not** enter a grade for teaching on each lesson observation form. Instead, each inspector will use the evidence gathered throughout all of their observation and other relevant inspection activities to produce a summary evidence form about the quality of teaching. These summary evidence forms can then be considered by the team inspectors to arrive at the overall judgment about the quality of teaching.

When in lessons, inspectors may wish to use a variety of strategies to gather evidence. For example, they may spend a longer period of time in some lessons and combine direct observation with work scrutiny, analysis of progress data for that class and talking to pupils about their learning and typical behaviour over time. Inspectors may wish to follow that with an in-depth discussion with the teacher. As now, inspectors will visit a sample of lessons that reflects the teaching in the school and enables evidence to be gathered about particular aspects of the school's work.

Whatever the observation strategy, inspectors must gather a broad range of evidence about the impact of teaching over time. This may include discussion about the school's own records, the quality of the pupils' work and test and examination results, discussion with pupils and staff, the views of parents and carers and so on. When discussing the school's own view of teaching, inspectors should consider how it was arrived at.

Inspectors should not expect to see any particular approach to teaching. Nor should 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 so that pupils gain the relevant knowledge, skills and understanding.

Inspectors should offer teachers the chance to talk about what they have observed. This gives a useful opportunity for dialogue on strengths and areas to improve in teaching. However, it is not a requirement for teachers to attend feedback discussions.

Inspectors may wish to discuss with the school alternative arrangements for feedback – for example feeding back to groups of staff, such as subject faculties in secondary schools or key stages in primary schools, instead of to individuals.

Lead inspectors should discuss with the school and other inspectors the strategy being used to gather evidence about the quality of teaching.

Full detail of our general approach to inspection can be found in the *School inspection handbook*: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120101.