

Clarification for schools (from Inspection Handbook pp 12 – 15)

The information below confirms our requirements. This is to dispel myths about inspection that can result in unnecessary workload in schools. It is intended to highlight specific practices that we do not require.

Ofsted will:

- take a range of evidence, including that held in electronic form, into account when making judgements. This will include official national data, discussions with leaders, staff and pupils, questionnaire responses and work in pupils' books/folders/sketchbooks etc
- judge fairly schools that take radically different approaches to the curriculum. They will assess any school's curriculum favourably when leaders have built or adopted a curriculum with appropriate coverage, content, structure and sequencing and implemented it effectively
- report on any failure to comply with statutory arrangements when they form part of the inspection framework and evaluation schedule, including those relating to the workforce (see part 2 of this handbook)
- allow the school to invite as many governors or trustees as possible to meet inspectors during an inspection
- in academies, meet those directly responsible for management and governance, including the chief executive officer (CEO) or their delegate (or equivalent), the chair of the board of trustees and other trustees
- talk to the chair of governors/board of trustees by telephone if they are unable to attend a face-to-face meeting with the inspector in the school
- invite the headteacher (or equivalent) and, in academies, the CEO or their delegate, to observe the inspectors' final team meeting
- expect schools to maintain, as they are required to, the single central record detailing checks carried out. We expect multi-academy trusts (MATs) to maintain this in each of their academies and to ensure that the information is recorded in a way that allows for details of each individual academy to be provided separately and without delay.

Ofsted will not:

- grade individual lessons
- provide evidence from any lesson visit that could be used in capability/disciplinary proceedings or for the purposes of performance management
- create unnecessary workload for teachers through its recommendations
- routinely check personnel files, although it may look at a small sample
- advocate a particular method of planning (including lesson planning), teaching or assessment; it is up to schools to determine their practices and it is up to leadership teams to justify these on their own merits rather than by referring to this handbook.

Ofsted does not require schools to provide:

- evidence in any specific format, as long as it is easily accessible for inspectors
- curriculum planning in any specific format
- evidence for inspection beyond that set out in this handbook
- photographic evidence of pupils' work (although inspectors may request to take photographs themselves of pupils' work, which will be anonymised)
- any written record of teachers' oral feedback to pupils
- individual lesson plans
- previous lesson plans
- predictions of attainment and progress scores
- assessment or self-evaluation, other than that which is already part of the school's business processes
- performance and pupil-tracking information

- any specific document or plan in relation to the pupil premium other than its pupil premium strategy, and will not require any further school-generated data on the pupil premium, including information related to spending on individual students or to within-class or within-school gaps
- monitoring of teaching and learning and its link to teachers' professional development and the Teachers' standards,¹ other than that which is already part of the school's normal activity
- specific details of the pay grade of individual teachers who are observed during inspection
- evidence about each teacher from each of the bulleted sub-headings in the teachers' standards
- anonymised lists of teachers meeting or not meeting performance thresholds for pay progression
- processes for the performance management arrangements for school leaders and staff.

Ofsted **does not** require schools to:

- do additional work or to ask pupils to do work specifically for the inspection
- carry out a specified amount of lesson observation
- use the Ofsted evaluation schedule to grade teaching or individual lessons
- ensure a particular frequency or quantity of work in pupils' books or folders
- include targets relating to the proportion of good or better teaching in headteacher objectives
- set teachers' performance targets based on commercially produced predictions of pupil achievement, or any other data set, from which it would then hold teachers to account
- retrospectively apply for DBS and other pre-employment checks for staff appointed before and continuously employed since the introduction of the Disclosure and Barring Service requirements
- take any specific steps with regard to site security; in particular, inspectors do not have a view about the need for perimeter fences
- take any specific steps to identify or track pupils or the work of individual pupils who would be included within the calculation of government pupil premium funding, other than that required for their pupil premium strategy
- carry out assessment or record pupils' achievements in any subject, including foundation subjects in primary schools, in a specific way, format or time
- use any particular format for policies relating to staff behaviour or have a separate code of conduct document
- be at similar stages of English Baccalaureate (EBacc) implementation as other schools, or provide additional information outside of their normal curriculum planning
- produce a self-evaluation document or summary in a particular format. Any assessment that is provided should be part of the school's business processes and not be generated solely for inspection purposes.

Ofsted **does not** specify:

- how planning (including curriculum and lesson planning) should be set out, the length of time it should take or the amount of detail it should contain
- that tutor groups/form time must include literacy, numeracy or other learning sessions
- the frequency, type or volume of marking and feedback
- the content of, or approach to, headteacher and staff performance management
- the format in which staff records should be maintained, beyond existing legal requirements.

¹ 'Teachers' standards', Department for Education, 2011;
www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards.