



The Future of Education Inspection

Understanding the changes

June 2015



Foreword



If education is the key to unlocking the well-being and prosperity of our nation, then our future success rests in the hands of great leaders. Such leaders know how to use increased freedoms to bring about the transformation that children and learners need.

Great leadership is at the heart of the three major reforms Ofsted is making to inspection from September 2015.

Using the new common inspection framework, inspectors will look at leaders' vision and ambition for all children and learners. They will want to see how leaders set the culture of their school or provider and how they ensure

that all learners – particularly the most disadvantaged – make strong progress from their different starting points.

New short inspections for good schools and further education and skills providers are designed to focus on the quality of leadership and the capacity of leaders to drive improvement. Throughout short inspections, there will be honest, challenging, professional dialogue between leaders and Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI), starting from leaders' own evaluation of strengths and weaknesses. Leaders will be recognised for accurately identifying weaknesses and having a firm grip on strategies to address them.

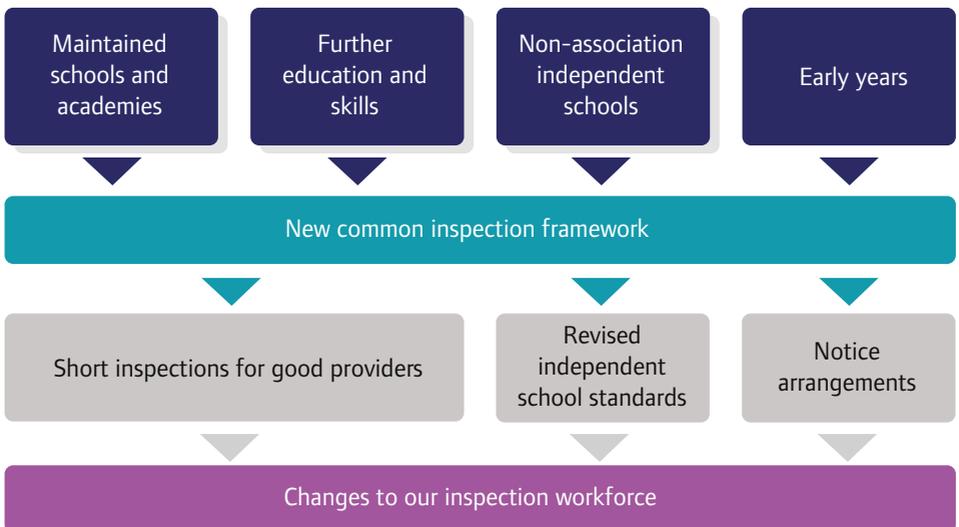
In short inspections, HMI will always begin from the assumption that the school or provider is still good. It will be up to leaders to provide evidence so that HMI can validate this assumption. If, by the end of the short inspection, HMI have not gathered enough evidence to confirm that the provision remains good, they will quickly bring in a full team to complete a full inspection. This may either change the inspection grade or confirm that the provider remains good.

Finally, from September, hundreds of serving leaders will join forces with HMI to deliver new inspections. Seven in 10 of our Ofsted Inspectors will be current practitioners leading good or outstanding institutions. These proven leaders will help to improve the quality and consistency of inspection and will be able to use the experience they gain from inspection to continue to build capacity in their sectors.

These reforms reflect our determination to work much more closely with the sectors we inspect. We will always maintain the highest standards and expectations in order to ensure that children and learners receive the education they deserve. As we do this, we will listen to professionals,

reduce the burden of inspection on good schools and providers, and continually improve the way we carry out inspection.

Sir Michael Wilshaw
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector



The common inspection framework

The common inspection framework (CIF) aligns inspection across all of the different education remits we inspect. It applies to registered early years settings, maintained schools and academies, non-association independent schools and further education and skills providers.

The CIF provides consistency and comparability in Ofsted's inspection of all education provision, which was previously inspected under several different frameworks. Inspectors will write the judgements in the same language and will mean the same things.

However, the CIF does not mean 'one size fits all'. A handbook for each remit applies the principles of the framework to the needs and expectations of different phases of education and training. Inspections will continue to be carried out by inspectors who have the relevant experience and expertise.

Inspectors will make judgements on the following areas for all remits:

- Effectiveness of leadership and management
- Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

- Personal development, behaviour and welfare
- Outcomes for children and learners.

Inspectors will always make a judgement on the effectiveness of safeguarding.

Many aspects of inspection under the CIF will feel similar to previous frameworks, but there are also some changes.

Inspection under the CIF will focus on ensuring that all learners have the best education and opportunities possible and that students and parents are able to make informed choices.



Short inspections

From September, schools and further education and skills providers that were judged good at their most recent inspection will receive a short inspection approximately every three years.

The vast majority of good schools and providers maintain this standard at their next inspection. We are making this change in order to reduce the burden of full inspections on good schools and providers.

Short inspections will start from the assumption that the school or provider remains good. Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) will test this through their inspection activities and through constructive and challenging professional dialogue with leaders and governors. It will be for leaders to provide evidence so that HMI can validate this assumption. Inspectors will examine leaders' and managers' capacity to drive ongoing improvement.

Short inspections will be led by an HMI. HMI will be on site for a maximum of one day in schools and two days in further education and skills providers.

HMI will only make judgements on whether the school or provider remains good and safeguarding is effective. They will not make a full set of graded judgements and will not change the overall effectiveness of the school or provider.

If HMI are unable to gather sufficient evidence that the school or provider remains good, or they have concerns, they will quickly convert the inspection into a full inspection that will make the full range of judgements. If they see evidence of rapid improvement and consider that the school or provider may already be outstanding, they will also quickly trigger a full inspection.

Through short inspections, we will be able to recognise and acknowledge earlier where schools and providers have improved. It also means that schools and providers that are in decline will be identified earlier and supported faster.

Short inspections will allow Ofsted to provide more up-to-date and relevant information to parents, to the broader community and to schools and providers themselves.

Maintained schools and academies

The common inspection framework builds closely on the changes made in the school inspection framework over the past few years. However, there will be greater emphasis on some areas, including:

- the impact of leaders' work in developing and sustaining an ambitious culture and vision in the school
- a broad and balanced curriculum
- safeguarding, which will be central to every inspection
- pupils' outcomes, where inspectors will give most weight to the progress of pupils currently in the school rather than attainment and nationally published data.

There will be a new judgement on personal development, behaviour and welfare. This will include a focus on pupils' confidence and self-assurance as learners and their pride in achievement, the impact behaviour has on outcomes and the choices pupils make about their next stage.

The judgements on the effectiveness of early years provision and 16 to 19 study programmes are now exactly in line with the early years and further

education and skills handbooks so that pupils and parents can make informed choices.

All schools that were judged good at their most recent inspection will receive a short inspection approximately every three years.

All short inspections of schools will last for one day. In secondary schools and the largest primary schools, the inspection will be conducted by two HMI. In most primary schools, one HMI will be on site for one day.

“All schools that were judged good at their most recent inspection will receive a short inspection.”

Following the short inspection, the HMI will write a report in the form of a letter that will confirm that the school remains good and that safeguarding is effective. The letter will address progress since the school's last inspection, what inspectors have seen during their visit and next steps the school needs to take.

Non-association independent schools

For non-association independent schools, the common inspection framework is a natural progression from the current framework, which introduced the same judgements as those made in maintained schools and academies.

In addition to the new CIF, the Department for Education introduced revised independent school standards in January 2015. These standards are more challenging and all non-association independent schools must meet them. Therefore, between September 2015 and July 2018, all non-association independent schools will be inspected under the CIF regardless of how they were judged at their last inspection. These inspections will include checks to ensure that schools are meeting the revised independent school standards.

Short inspections will not apply to non-association independent schools during this period.

Following our recent consultation, all non-association independent schools judged to require improvement or deemed inadequate will be inspected within two years, rather than three as at present.

All our changes are aimed specifically at improving the quality of our inspections, making them more timely and relevant and providing the most up-to-date information so that we can have the maximum possible impact on children and learners.

“These standards are more challenging and all non-association independent schools must meet them.”



Further education and skills

The new common inspection framework builds on the long-standing common framework used in further education and skills inspection. It extends the principles of consistency and commonality across all education and skills remits.

In judging the effectiveness of leadership and management, we are increasing the emphasis on safeguarding and the extent to which the range of provision is relevant to the priorities of employers and the local community.

The new judgement on personal development, behaviour and welfare will include a focus on the extent to which learners are equipped to progress to their next step, be it further or higher education, employment or a more independent role in their everyday lives.

Sector subject areas will no longer be graded. Instead, inspections will typically result in a grade and summary for each of the main types of provision offered:

- 16 to 19 study programmes
- adult learning programmes

- apprenticeships
- traineeships
- provision for learners with high needs
- provision for full-time 14–16-year-olds.

Inspections will continue to be carried out by inspectors with experience and expertise in further education and skills and specialist knowledge where appropriate.

All 16 to 19 provision, whether in a school, academy, university technical college, sixth form college, FE college or training provider, will be judged against the same evaluation criteria and reported on consistently.

Most providers that were judged good at their latest inspection will receive a short inspection approximately every three years. However, some good providers will receive full inspection based on risk assessment.

Early years

Many aspects of early years inspection under the common inspection framework will feel the same as before. We have kept what was working and built on previous improvements.

The way we inspect and the type of evidence that inspectors look for will not change significantly. Inspections will still be carried out by inspectors with experience and expertise in early years.

The judgement on outcomes for children is new for early years providers. Inspectors will focus on children's progress from their different starting points. Alongside the continuing focus on teaching (reported under the new teaching, learning and assessment judgement), this emphasis on progress will ensure that inspectors check that children are given the best possible start to their learning and development.

All early years provision, including in schools, will now be judged against the same evaluation criteria and reported on using the same language in the same way. This means that parents will find it easier to make comparisons between different providers.

Most providers will be given half a day's notice of their inspection. This will give inspectors the opportunity to gather the information needed to help the inspection run smoothly. Current arrangements for notifying childminders of inspection will not change.

“ Inspections will still be carried out by inspectors with experience and expertise in early years. ”



Changes to our inspector workforce

We are making significant changes to our inspection workforce.

From September 2015, we will contract directly with inspectors for maintained schools, academies, non-association independent schools and further education and skills. These inspectors will be called Ofsted Inspectors. Inspection for these remits will no longer be outsourced. This will mean that we can train all our inspectors directly and enhance the links between HMI and Ofsted Inspectors as they train and inspect together.

The vast majority of Ofsted Inspectors are serving practitioners. Ofsted will benefit from having the expertise and first-hand insight of these current leaders of good and outstanding providers on our inspection teams. The providers we inspect will also benefit. In turn, Ofsted Inspectors will gain inspection experience that they can use to build capacity in the institutions they lead and across the education and skills sectors more widely.

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