



Ofsted Updates December 2019

Since September 2019, inspection outcomes published in Essex For primary Schools have been as follows:

1 category 4 school became a category 3 school
1 category 4 school became a category 2 school
1 category 3 school became a category 2 school
1 category 2 school became a category 1 school

11 category 2 schools remained as category 2 schools
1 category 4 school remained a category 4 school

2 category 1 schools became category 2 schools

This means that of the 18 schools identified, 4 schools improved their Ofsted grading, 12 remained the same and 2 declined.

Please click on the links below to access documents, video clips or power point presentations.

During the lead up to the election Ofsted has said that they will be publishing less content. They will delay planned publication of research reports until after the election, along with the texts of speeches, press notices and news stories.

[School inspection handbook](#)

Updated November 2019

Updated with minor changes following the launch of the education inspection framework (EIF).

[Section 8 school inspection handbook](#)

Updated November 2019

Updated with minor changes following the launch of the EIF.

[School inspection update: academic year 2019 to 2020](#) –

November 2019 - Sean Harford- Ofsted Director of Education

A summary of the changes to the EIF is included in the school inspection update link above.

Section 8 inspections in primary schools

[School inspection update: academic year 2019 to 2020 - Gov.uk](#)

[https://www.gov.uk > government > publications > school-inspection-upda...](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-upda...)

November 2019 - Sean Harford- Ofsted Director of Education

The following is an excerpt from the November school inspection update.

When we are inspecting smaller schools, either:

- one inspector is on-site for two days
- two inspectors are on-site for one day.

Some schools have said they are concerned about subject/curriculum leads having to spend extended time out of class, when those curriculum leaders oversee multiple subject areas – as can often be the case in small schools – and are also teaching.

We are therefore asking lead inspectors to be sensitive in selecting deep dives **in these schools**. When inspectors choose the set of three to five deep dives with school leaders, please can you ensure that no subject/curriculum lead has to cover more than one deep dive with you/your team inspector.

This is the approach that several lead inspectors have already taken and is proving constructive and useful.

In rare cases, there may be a pressing educational or logistical reason that means this approach is not possible, and lead inspectors will need to use their judgement. But in most cases, this approach will be possible and should be used.

Deep Dives- information for inspectors

[School inspection update: academic year 2019 to 2020 - Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

<https://www.gov.uk> › [government](#) › [publications](#) › [school-inspection-upda...](#)

November 2019 - Sean Harford- Ofsted Director of Education

The following is an excerpt from the November school inspection update.

We have heard some concerns about 'deep dives'. Inspectors use deep dives to explore the quality of the curriculum, not the quality of teaching or the subject in isolation. Inspectors do not judge individual lessons, but connect evidence through lesson visits, scrutinising work and conversations with curriculum leaders, pupils and teachers. A deep dive does not lead to a judgement about that particular subject. Rather, the evidence from four to six deep dives enables inspectors to form hypotheses about which factors are systemic – that is, relate to the quality of education provided by the school as a whole. Inspectors have had extensive curriculum training over the last two years, including on how to manage curriculum discussions while being conscious of the pressures that inspection can put on school leaders and teachers. Drawing on this, inspectors are well equipped to make judgements about the quality of the curriculum without specialist knowledge of every subject.

[Early reading and the education inspection ... - Ofsted blog](https://educationinspection.blog.gov.uk)

<https://educationinspection.blog.gov.uk> › [2019/11/04](#) › [early-reading-and-...](#)

4 Nov 2019 - Gill Jones - Deputy Director for Early Education

Gill Jones sets out how Ofsted look at early reading and phonics teaching as part of their new inspections. The following are excerpts from this document

If you're reading this and work in a primary, junior, infant or lower middle school, you should be aware that the new EIF includes a reading deep dive. The reading deep dive is a mandatory part of the new inspections in these schools. Inspectors will look at 7 aspects of early reading, as set out in paragraph 298 of the [school inspection handbook](#). (see below)

If you've not looked at this section of the handbook yet, then do; it sets out what inspectors will be considering when they look at how well the school teaches children to read from the beginning of Reception.

We've made the early reading deep dive mandatory because it's so important that children learn to read fluently as quickly as possible. Inevitably, fluent readers will learn more, because they can read and gain knowledge for themselves.

To prevent myths being created, I've set out here what inspectors will be looking at during deep dives into early reading. They will consider the extent to which:

- direct, focused phonics is taught every day in Reception and key stage 1

- children read from books with the sounds they know, while they are learning to read
- teachers and teaching assistants provide extra practice through the day for the children who make the slowest progress (the lowest 20%)
- all children in Year 3 and above can read age-appropriate books
- teachers instil in children a love of literature: the best stories and poems

However, we do not expect to see phonics in 'continuous provision' activities. This is a time to develop children's talk, play and wider curriculum experiences. A 'language-rich' environment is just about talking with children, not building displays, or sticking on Post-it Notes.

Applying the EIF to the teaching of early reading in infant, junior, primary and lower-middle schools

7 aspects of early reading (see Gill Jones blog above)

Paragraph 298 of the school inspection handbook;

In reaching an evaluation against the 'quality of education' judgement, inspectors will consider whether:

- the school is determined that every pupil will learn to read, regardless of their background, needs or abilities. All pupils, including the weakest readers, make sufficient progress to meet or exceed age-related expectations
- stories, poems, rhymes and non-fiction are chosen for reading to develop pupils' vocabulary, language comprehension and love of reading. Pupils are familiar with and enjoy listening to a wide range of stories, poems, rhymes and non-fiction
- the school's phonics programme matches or exceeds the expectations of the national curriculum and the early learning goals. The school has clear expectations of pupils' phonics progress term-by-term, from Reception to Year 2
- the sequence of reading books shows a cumulative progression in phonics knowledge that is matched closely to the school's phonics programme. Teachers give pupils sufficient practice in reading and re-reading books that match the grapheme-phoneme correspondences they know, both at school and at home
- reading, including the teaching of systematic, synthetic phonics, is taught from the beginning of Reception

Wherever possible, inspectors should listen to children read in a classroom or in an open area with which pupils are familiar. The length of time a pupil has attended the school should be taken into consideration.

- the ongoing assessment of pupils' phonics progress is sufficiently frequent and detailed to identify any pupil who is falling behind the programme's pace. If they do fall behind, targeted support is given immediately
- the school has developed sufficient expertise in the teaching of phonics and reading.

Applying the EIF to the teaching of mathematics

Paragraph 299 of the school inspection handbook;

When inspectors look at mathematics, they will evaluate the quality of a school's mathematics education through lesson visits, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their work, reviewing

curriculum plans, discussions with curriculum leaders, and examining any published data.

Inspectors will consider what steps the school has taken to ensure that:

- pupils understand and remember the mathematical knowledge, concepts and procedures appropriate for their starting points, including knowledge of efficient algorithms. This should also ensure that pupils are ready for the next stage, whether that is the next lesson, unit of work, year or key stage, including post-16 mathematics
- the school's curriculum planning for mathematics carefully sequences knowledge, concepts and procedures to build mathematical knowledge and skills systematically and, over time, the curriculum draws connections across different ways of looking at mathematical ideas
- the curriculum divides new material into manageable steps lesson by lesson
- the school's curriculum identifies opportunities when mathematical reasoning and solving problems will allow pupils to make useful connections between identified mathematical ideas or to anticipate practical problems they are likely to encounter in adult life. Pupils have sufficient understanding of, and unconscious competence in, prerequisite mathematical knowledge, concepts and procedures that are necessary to succeed in the specific tasks set
- within the curriculum, there are sufficient opportunities planned to revisit previously learned knowledge, concepts and procedures; this is to ensure that, once learned, mathematical knowledge becomes deeply embedded in pupils' memories. This then allows rapid and accurate recall and frees pupils' attention so they can work with increasing independence, apply their mathematical knowledge to more complex concepts and procedures, and gain enjoyment through a growing self-confidence in their ability
- there is flexibility in curriculum planning so that the school can address identified gaps in pupils' mathematical knowledge that hinder their capacity to learn and apply new content. Those pupils behind age-related expectations are provided with the opportunities to learn the mathematical knowledge and skills necessary to catch up with their peers
- there are objective assessments that can identify when all pupils have gained the intended understanding and unconscious competence in knowledge, concepts and procedures necessary before they move on to new or more complex content
- teaching models new procedures and uses resources and approaches that enable pupils to understand the mathematics they are learning
- all teachers of mathematics, including non-specialist teachers of mathematics, have sufficient mathematical and teaching content knowledge to deliver topics effectively
- pupils' mathematical knowledge is developed and used, where appropriate, across the curriculum.

