



Updates from Ofsted and the DFE September 2024

Please click on the links below to access documents.

Building a better Ofsted: the response to the Big Listen – GOV.UK

Published 3 September 2024– Ofsted

Ofsted has published a detailed response to its Big Listen consultation. It sets out how Ofsted will reset its relationship with the sectors it inspects.

The main changes include

A new inspection framework for schools, early years and further education, which will have greater focus on pupil outcomes to drive higher standards, alongside a range of measures to reduce anxiety for those being inspected. Consultation will begin in early 2025.

Increasing Ofsted's focus and scrutiny on how providers are meeting the needs of vulnerable or disadvantaged children and young people, by consulting on a specific focus on inclusion in report cards. The new measure comes at a time of widening outcome gaps between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils since the pandemic.

Pausing the publication of inspection reports when safeguarding concerns are identified in an otherwise high-performing school, until inspectors re-visit the school within 3 months. This will give schools time to remedy issues without intervention from the Department for Education. Parents will still be informed about the safeguarding issues in the meantime. This change will come into effect from this month.

Introducing a 'report card' in all areas Ofsted inspects, to provide a more nuanced and detailed assessment of providers' work. This follows the announcement by the Secretary of State for Education that the single-word overall effectiveness judgement will be removed from school inspections starting this month. Report cards will be introduced from September 2025.

Working with government to introduce new annual safeguarding, attendance and off-rolling reviews for schools, to consider how they are meeting their requirements to keep children safe. Ofsted will also consult on a new, stand-alone assessment of safeguarding in its reports.

Ofsted will announce all routine inspections on a Monday, with inspections taking place over the following 2 days. This means leaders will know by Monday afternoon if they are being inspected that week, helping to reduce the stress of waiting. This new approach will be piloted over the autumn term.

Changes to ungraded inspections - Ofsted blog

17 Jul 2024 – Ofsted

Ofsted will be publishing the new inspection handbooks in September this year and will produce some informative videos for schools that will expand on the information given in the link above.

The framework and inspection methodology are not changing this year.

How will a new ungraded inspection begin?

The day before the on-site inspection begins, Ofsted will have an extended phone conversation with you. This phone call is about working out what they need to do during the on-site inspection to get the evidence they need.

The lead inspector will have done some preparation before this call, and will have some questions to ask leaders. These might come from the data they've seen in the IDSR or from looking at the school's website and previous inspection report.

Through this conversation, the lead inspector will agree with the headteacher several areas of focus for the inspection. These will take account of things that the inspector wants to look at and things that are particularly important to the school – for example something the school has been working on, or something related to its particular context.

What will ungraded inspections look like when inspectors are in school?

The areas of focus will influence what inspectors do when they're in school. At least a couple of these areas will be related to the quality of education, as you might expect. But they won't focus on one subject and they won't be deep dives. Instead, inspectors will look at a group of subjects together. So, in a primary school, they're likely to look at early English and early mathematics together as a group so they can make sure that schools are getting these important basics right. Or they might look at a group of subjects from the wider curriculum. In a secondary school, there could be a focus on the core subjects and another focus on, for example, vocational subjects. We might focus on a specific aspect across these subjects. For example, perhaps a school has been working on improving assessment. We might then go with the headteacher or another senior leader to visit lessons in a group of subjects and discuss the impact of this new assessment work.

['Deep dives' removed from ungraded inspections](#)

Press release 4 May 2024

See also this [blog post](#) by Lee Owston (Ofsted National Director Education) explaining the changes further.

From September, inspectors will no longer conduct subject deep dives during ungraded inspections, which are designed to check on standards in schools that already carry a good or outstanding grade. Instead, school leaders will have the opportunity to discuss their school's strengths and areas for development with inspectors.

The inspection framework will remain unchanged, but in place of the deep dives, inspectors will typically use extended learning walks to consider the impact of the curriculum and pupils' personal development. Safeguarding arrangements, behaviour and attendance will continue to be evaluated in the same way.

[Single headline Ofsted grades scrapped in landmark school reform](#)

Published 2 September 2024– DFE Press release

Government pushes ahead with reform agenda by scrapping single headline Ofsted judgements for schools with immediate effect

[Maintained schools governance guide - Guidance](#)

Published 7 March 2024– DFE

[Academy trust governance guide - Guidance](#)

Published 7 March 2024– DFE

The Department for Education (DfE) has published 2 new governance guides, to replace the governance handbook:

- [Maintained schools governance guide\(link is external\)](#)
- [Academy trust governance guide\(link is external\)](#)

There are no new requirements for governors or trustees, so your board does not need to do anything right now, except to:

- make sure everyone on your board is aware of, and can access, the right guide for your school type
- remove any copies of, or reference to, the previous governance handbook in your board's files and documents including induction materials.

Statutory policies for maintained schools

Information for governing bodies and governance professionals (clerks) on the policies and documents they must have

Statutory policies for trusts

Information for trust boards and governance professionals on the policies and documents they must have

Reminder – boards remain accountable for these documents, and the policies and procedures contained within them. It is recommended that governing bodies review statutory policies annually. This is with the exception of the equality objectives policy which can be reviewed every 4 years.

Keeping children safe in education

Updated 3 September 2024– DfE

Updates for KCSIE 2024 include:

- amending the definition of ‘safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children’ in line with Working together to safeguard children 2023²
- additional information around when children may require early help, in accordance with the guidance in Working together
- a recommendation for school staff, governors and trustees to use the DfE Data Protection guidance for schools to understand data protection
- clarification that schools continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of pupils they place with an alternative provision provider.

Early years inspection handbook

Updated 9 September 2024– Ofsted

Changes from September 2024

Throughout: we have clarified references to funded places and what should be considered on inspection.

Paragraphs: 50, 174, 203 and footnote 10: wording amended to reflect how the inspector will consider the context of the setting, including where relevant the ongoing impact of COVID-19.

Paragraphs 78, 130, 217 and 247: wording updated to align with part 2 and part 3 of the inspection handbook.

Good grade descriptor for Quality of Education: amendments to bullet 3 regarding an ambitious curriculum for all children.

Inadequate grade descriptor for Quality of Education: amendments to bullet 4 regarding disadvantaged children.

Plan technology for your school

Published 11 September 2024- DFE

This service shows how your school can plan and use digital technology to:

- improve pupils' outcomes
- save money
- reduce workload

How it works

You will answer questions about areas of technology and leadership.

We will tell you what information you need, and who from, before you answer each set of questions.

Your answers will save as you go along. You can leave and return at any time.

You will then get recommendations to support your school.

Join the risk protection arrangement (RPA) for schools

Updated 29 August 2024- DFE

How public sector schools can join the risk protection arrangement (RPA), an alternative to commercial insurance, which may save time and money.

Data protection policies and procedures

Updated 23 August 2024-DFE

How to comply and document compliance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

The National Education Nature Park: how to get involved

Launched in October 2023 with the Natural History Museum and the Royal Horticultural Society, the National Education Nature Park offers children and young people the opportunity to take hands-on action to improve biodiversity and tackle climate change.

[Schools](#), colleges and nurseries that sign up will have access to a range of resources including digital tools, classroom activities, and an interactive map displaying the growing Nature Park across the school estate.

SIAMS 2024 Documents & Resources

SIAMS Documents are included below for reference by schools, dioceses, and inspectors for use from September 2024:

- SIAMS Framework – September 2024
- 2024 SIAMS Ongoing Self Evaluation Template

- 2024 SIAMS Summary Self Evaluation Template
- 2024 SIAMS Inspection Deferral Policy
- 2024 SIAMS Complaints Policy for Schools
- 2024 SIAMS Information for Schools