



## Ofsted's New Education Inspection Framework

### What do you need to know?

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## 1. Overview

In September 2019, the new Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF) comes into effect. This was the largest consultation in Ofsted's history (including a three-month consultation which prompted more than 15,000 responses) and was implemented to refine and improve the approach to Ofsted inspections and the criteria against which education settings are judged.

Reflecting on the consultation, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI), Amanda Spielman commented:

*"The new framework puts the real substance of education at the heart of inspection and supports leaders and teachers who act with integrity. We hope early years, schools and college leaders will no longer feel the need to generate and analyse masses of internal data for inspection. Instead, we want them to spend their time teaching and making a real difference to children's lives, which is why they entered the profession in the first place."*

Chief Inspector Spielman continued:

*"Our goal is really simple: to be a force for improvement through our inspections. We want to provide parents with the assurance they need, support teachers and leaders to excel – and help make sure all children and learners to get the education they deserve."*

The proposed EIF has been referred to as the "next iteration of education inspection" and is a body of research that was conducted over almost two years. The consultation process involved engagement with parents, unions, teachers and headteachers, and has been supported by reviews of existing research and by conducting new, independent research areas, including curriculum.

The four-point grading scale will continue to be implemented to make principal judgements. These include:

- Grade 1 – Outstanding
- Grade 2 – Good
- Grade 3 – Requires Improvement
- Grade 4 – Inadequate

As per the previous framework, the EIF continues to reflect relevant legislation for each setting and these will have their own inspection handbook. The EIF will be consistent across the different areas to ensure there is comparability when learners move from one setting to another, also ensuring consistency across the inspections of different remits.

Inspection frameworks are specific to:

- Early years
- Maintained schools and academies
- Non-association independent schools
- Further education and skills

## 2. How has it changed?

### a. Judgements

Specifically, there are two linked themes that run throughout the framework: the substance of education and integrity. Most of the individual criteria build upon the existing framework however, allowing room for change, the revised EIF includes nuanced changes to language for the judgements inspectors make across the board.

The rebalanced set of judgements will be assessed on:

- Quality of education
- Behaviour and attitudes
- Personal development
- Leadership and management

Outside the remit of pastoral care, one key change is how the provision and outcomes of learning will be judged. The 'Quality of education' judgement amalgamates the essential ingredients of education – the curriculum, the teaching, and the assessment methods and subsequent outcomes. This replaces the separate judgements of 'Quality of teaching, learning and assessment' and 'Outcomes for children and other learners'.

This is a shift to a more holistic inspection approach that is adopted throughout the new EIF. Continuing with these amends, key areas of change that impact safeguarding and pastoral care include efforts to help reduce workload, through both how inspections are conducted and teacher support; prioritising teacher wellbeing; and the provision of an inclusive education experience, particularly with reference to equality and diversity.

### b. A force for improvement

Importantly, and perhaps in response to key criticisms of the inspection process and subsequent criteria, the 2019 Ofsted framework also features a paradigm shift that positions Ofsted as a force for improvement. This is characterised in the revised language regarding Ofsted's purpose:

*"Ofsted exists to be a force for improvement through intelligent, responsibly and focused inspection and regulation. This is our guiding principal. The primary purpose of inspection under this framework is to bring about improvement in education provision.*

*"Through the use of evidence, research and inspector training, we ensure that our judgements are as valid and reliable as they can be. These judgements focus on key strengths, from which other providers can learn intelligently, and areas of weakness, from which the provider should seek to improve. Our inspections act as a trigger to others to take action."*

Defined in this way, the new EIF moves away from focusing on data and statistics, to assess education settings, learners and teachers in a more holistic manner – strengthening the education community through knowledge sharing and best practice, as well as prioritising welfare and wellbeing.

## c. Timeframes

### i. Notice period

The draft framework proposed a significant reduction in inspection notice timeframes however, following feedback from the consultation and consideration of the additional burden this would place on settings, Ofsted has proposed it will now contact the school by telephone to announce its inspection the day before it is due to take place. This is then followed by a 90-minute call between the lead inspector and headteacher (also on the day prior to the inspection). This preparatory call has two objectives:

- To provide an opportunity for a reflective and educationally focused conversation about the school's progress since its last inspection.
- To plan the practical and logistical aspects of the inspection.

Taking the feedback into consideration, Ofsted has stated that this call is intended to:

*"...provide the opportunity to start building that vital positive working relationship between inspector and school, for professional dialogue to begin about the education provided by the school, and to discuss logistical arrangements and the timetable for the inspection".*

No-notice inspections may also occur, with settings contacted 15 minutes prior to the lead inspector's arrival. In these instances, additional arrangements will be made once inspectors are on site. No-notice inspections will be considered when there are serious concerns about:

- The breadth and balance of the curriculum
- Rapidly declining standards
- Safeguarding
- A decline in standards of pupils' behaviour and the ability of staff to maintain discipline
- Standards of leadership or governance

### ii. Length of inspections

The length of inspections has also been revised in the EIF. Regulations now set the interval for two-day section 5 (full) inspections as 'within five school years from the end of the school year in which the last section 5 inspection took place', rather than within five school years of when either a section 5 or 8 (short) inspection was conducted. Schools that are exempt from section 5 inspections – 'Outstanding' schools, maintained primary and secondary schools and academies that were judged to be outstanding in their overall effectiveness at their most recent section 5 inspection – remain the exceptions.

Additionally, section 8 inspections will be increased from the current one day to two days, approximately every four years. This timeframe has been extended to accommodate the more in-depth assessment of curriculum and to provide inspectors with more time for in-depth conversations with staff, reflect on findings and results in more accurate judgements and reporting.

Ofsted are aware of settings' concerns for how this can impact workload and have subsequently established that 'Good' and non-exempt 'Outstanding' schools with 150 or fewer pupils on the roll will continue to receive one day inspections. This decision to extend the section 8 inspections to two days is also reflective of Ofsted's decision to not proceed with on-site preparation as proposed in the draft.

## 3. Judgements

### a. Quality of Education

The new EIF shifts to a more holistic approach for inspections that considers the:

*“...quality of education rather than artificially separating the leadership of the curriculum from teaching and separating teaching and the use of assessment from the impact this has on the outcomes that learners achieve”.*

Demonstrating this, inspectors will consider the intent, implementation and impact of education. Teachers and leaders will be required to evidence how they implement and use assessments, specifically with reference to how they help learners embed and use knowledge fluently. Leaders should also understand the limitations of assessment and avoid using it in a way that creates unnecessary burdens for staff or learners.

There is also an emphasis on providing for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or high needs, which is reflective of the push for greater inclusivity in education settings.

#### **Key judgements include:**

- Leaders take on or construct a curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give all learners, particularly the most disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or high needs, the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.
- Teachers check learners’ understanding systematically, identify misconceptions accurately and provide clear, direct feedback, and adapt their teaching as necessary.
- Teachers and leaders use assessment to help learners embed and use knowledge fluently or to check understanding and inform teaching – not in a way that creates unnecessary burdens for staff.
- Teachers create an environment that allows the learner to focus on learning.

### b. Personal development and behaviour and attitudes

The new EIF separates the judgements about learners’ personal development from judgements about learners’ behaviour and attitudes. This change recognises that education settings support pupils in development that extends beyond the academic, vocational or technical curriculum. Education settings play a crucial role in ensuring that learners of all ages are equipped with the knowledge and skills to improve their life chances and splitting these judgement areas acknowledges the role of education in developing the ‘whole’ child.

#### i. Behaviour and attitudes

The new behaviour and attitudes judgement will look at how well behaviour is managed to create a calm, orderly and safe environment that is a basic requirement for good learning. The new EIF also includes specific reference to the relationship between learners and staff with the goal of creating a positive and respectful culture that is free from bullying, peer-on-peer abuse and discrimination.

**Key judgements include:**

- The provider has high expectations for learners' behaviour and conduct and applies these expectations consistently and fairly.
- Learners have a positive attitude to education and training and are committed to their learning.
- Leaders, teachers and learners create an environment where bullying, peer-on-peer abuse or discrimination is not tolerated, and if they do occur, staff take swift and effective action.

## ii. Personal development

Educating the 'whole' child, the 'Personal development' judgement acknowledges the influence of education settings on young peoples' lives. Additionally, while language previously existed about respecting others, this has now been replaced with the need for learners to develop their understanding and appreciation for diversity – again, drawing attention to Ofsted's push for greater equality and diversity in education.

**Key judgements include:**

- The curriculum extends beyond the academic, technical or vocational.
- The curriculum and providers support learners to develop their character – including their resilience, confidence and independence – and help them know how to keep physically and mentally healthy.
- Each stage of education prepares learners for future success in their next steps.
- Developing an understanding and appreciation for diversity and celebrating commonalities and promoting respect for the difference protected characteristics as defined in law.

## c. Leadership and management

As well as assessing the provision of high-quality inclusive training and education, the new Ofsted framework introduces judgements that encourage greater proactivity to support teachers' wellbeing. These include a responsibility to demonstrate that staff are protected from bullying and harassment and that settings effectively management teachers' workloads.

Continuing to also ensure effective safeguarding measures for learners, the new EIF encourages greater engagement with the broader school community and has expanded the list of prominent threats to young people from radicalisation and extremism to include neglect, exploitation and grooming.

## Key judgements include:

- Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high-quality, inclusive education and training to all and support this through strong policies and practice.
- Leaders engage effectively with learners and others in their community, including parents, carers, employers and local services.
- Leaders engage with their staff and are aware, and take account, of the main pressures on them, particularly with reference to how workloads are managed.
- Leaders aim to ensure that all learners complete their programmes of study and provide support for staff to make this possible, and do not allow gaming or off-rolling.
- Leaders protect their staff from bullying and harassment.

## 4. Safeguarding

Protecting learners is a key consideration for Ofsted inspectors and although inspectors do not provide a separate numerical grade for safeguarding, a written judgement about the efficacy of safeguarding measures will always be included as part of the 'Leadership and management' review.

*"Those with responsibility for governance ensure that the provider fulfils its statutory duties, for example under the Equality Act 2010, and other duties, for example in relation to the 'Prevent' strategy and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of learners.*

*"The provider has a culture of safeguarding that supports effective arrangements to:*

- *Identify learners who may need early help or who are at risk of neglect, abuse, grooming or exploitation*
- *Help learners reduce their risk of harm by securing the support they need, or referring in a timely way to those who have the expertise to help*
- *Manage safe recruitment and allegations about adults who may be a risk to learners and vulnerable adults".*

Inspectors will assess whether there have been any safeguarding incidents or allegations since the last inspection, and whether they have been resolved or are ongoing. Safeguarding will be seen as ineffective when there are serious or widespread failures in the setting's safeguarding arrangements that give cause for concern because children are not protected, and statutory requirements are not being met. The same goes for when insufficient action is being taken to remedy weaknesses following a serious failure of safeguarding arrangements.

In settings that have effective safeguarding arrangements, learners are protected, feel safe, and can identify a trustworthy adult with whom they can communicate their concerns. There should be effective child protection policies in place and staff behaviour policies which are understood.

Staff should have a clear understanding of criminal exploitation, sexual exploitation, radicalisation or extremism. They should know and understand the indicators that may suggest a child or young person is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or harm and know how to take the appropriate and necessary action in accordance with local procedures and statutory guidance.

## Examples of safeguarding failings include:

- Safeguarding allegations about staff members are not being handled appropriately.
- Pupils and staff do not feel safe in school.
- Pupils have little confidence that the school will address concerns about their safety, including risk of abuse.
- Pupils are frequently missing from school (including for part of the school day), but absences are not addressed appropriately by staff.
- Incidents of bullying or prejudiced and discriminatory behaviour are common amongst learners and staff.
- Staff struggle to maintain healthy workloads and are under consistent pressure.

## 5. What do settings need to do differently?

In her foreword, Amanda Spielman sought to reassure parents, unions, providers, and teachers, that the new EIF would not increase their workload saying:

*“There is no need for anyone to think they must develop a new curriculum, or design everything themselves from scratch, or put themselves through intellectual gymnastics. The early years foundation stage framework, the national curriculum and the specifications for GCSEs, A levels and other qualifications can carry much of the load. So, for example, a primary school that fulfils the spirit as well as the letter of the national curriculum, across the full range of subjects, is already in the right place with its curriculum.*

*“Similarly, there isn’t and won’t be an Ofsted curriculum, whether for nurseries, schools or post-16 providers. The curriculum research we have already published illustrates some of the very different models that we know are working effectively now in different places. We are as always being entirely open about our framework and handbooks, and have begun to share our inspector training materials too. There is no hidden agenda behind these.”*

However, despite this reassurance, checks and balances can still be put in place to support settings in response to the focus on teacher wellbeing, expansion of how quality education is defined and equality and diversity.

### a. 6 checks to assess if you are following the new framework

1. Ensure that robust policies and procedures to protect learners and staff from bullying and harassment are in place, and ensure all staff understand and know how to respond effectively.
2. Provide a strong induction process for staff.
3. Develop a mentoring programme for teachers and staff.
4. Provide opportunities for teacher-learner engagement that can foster mutual respect.
5. Ensure a strong provision of support for SEND learners.
6. Check for markers in the curriculum to ensure learning also builds softer skills such as confidence and resilience.

## 6. How should schools prepare for the new inspection framework?

Recognising the additional stress that Ofsted inspections have placed on education settings, the new EIF has taken steps to reduce the associated pressures for teachers, lecturers, practitioners and leaders. However, following best practice at all times, settings are encouraged to be prepared and should ask some important, reflective questions.

### a. 15 key questions you should ask

1. What is going well and what needs improvement?
2. Do leaders engage with staff realistically and constructively, and take account of the main pressures on them?
3. Are levels of staff sickness high?
4. What more can be done to support staff – both in terms of workloads and wellbeing?
5. Do we listen to learners?
6. Do learners feel safe and enjoy coming to school?
7. Is the broader community actively engaged with the setting?
8. What is being done to address poor behaviour by learners and staff?
9. Do we promote mutual respect (amongst and between learning and staff peers)?
10. Does the curriculum include academic, technical and vocational attainment as well as character development?
11. Do we provide an inclusive learning environment?
12. Do teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach?
13. Does the curriculum clearly demonstrate educational intent, implementation and impact?
14. Are staff up-to-date with current safeguarding practices?
15. Are stringent policies and practices in place that align with shared values?

## 7. How can EduCare help?

### a. Three ways we can help with Ofsted's new Education Inspection Framework

1. Help demonstrate that staff understand the multitude of issues that Ofsted raises. This can be achieved through our online learning service – [EduCare for Education](#) – that includes an extensive portfolio of high-quality courses that are kept up-to-date with changes in legislation such as: essential safeguarding knowledge, Child Neglect, Child Exploitation, Modern Slavery and Trafficking, Serious Youth Violence, Child-on-child Sexual Violence, Bullying, Equality & Diversity, Exclusions and Attendance (which is particularly relevant for off-rolling), Prevent duty, Mental Wellbeing and Resilience.
2. Help manage staff workload by offering [one online platform to prepare all training reports](#). A key part of the new framework is a focus on staff spending less time preparing reports, and with EduCare's online learning service, there is no need for staff to attend external training, or spend time drafting and sharing learning from courses with colleagues.

3. Increase engagement with your community. EduCare provides customers who use EduCare for Education with access to EduSafe, a bank of online resources for both young people and parents and carers which helps “leaders engage effectively with learners and others, including – where relevant – parents, carers, employers and local services”, as outlined in the new EIF. Additionally, [EduCare for Education](#) allows settings unlimited access to all online training courses including teachers, support staff, governors and all volunteers.

## Speak with one of our advisors today

We’re experts in helping schools deliver knowledge to all teachers, support staff, governors and volunteers, quickly and easily, with content that is high-quality and easy to use.

Our service enables your staff to have access to up-to-date training that will help you demonstrate compliance.

Our courses are always updated with the latest Statutory Guidance, providing assurance that staff meet the key training requirements of the new inspection framework.

Call now to schedule your free appointment on 01926 436212 or [click here to enquire online](#).

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## Appendix - EduCare for Education

EduCare for Education contains over thirty essential online training courses and a robust reporting suite that together provides the knowledge and tools needed to evidence compliance to inspectors and demonstrates a broader and deeper commitment to staff and learner welfare.

Courses contained within the service include:



### [Preventing Bullying, in partnership with Kidscape](#)

Bullying is a key theme in the new framework with particular reference to protecting staff and learners.



### [Equality and Diversity](#)

A key theme for inspectors when assessing how prejudiced and discriminatory behaviour is addressed. Providers also need to ensure that they have addressed their statutory duties with regards to the Equality Act 2010.



### [Safer Recruitment in Education](#)

Demonstrates that a setting effectively manages safe recruitment.

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EduCare<sup>®</sup>

The Prevent Duty



## [The Prevent Duty](#)

Helps providers fulfil their statutory duties regarding developing an understanding of extremism and radicalisation and the necessary steps to take should concerns arise.

EduCare<sup>®</sup>

Safeguarding Young People  
EduCare<sup>®</sup>  
Child Protection



## [Safeguarding Young People](#) and [Child Protection](#)

Help promote a culture of safeguarding to identify learners who may need early help and reduce their risk of harm by securing the support they need in a timely manner. These courses also include guidance on how to manage allegations about staff members.

EduCare<sup>®</sup>

Child Neglect



## [Child Neglect](#)

Helps identify those who are at risk of neglect.

EduCare<sup>®</sup>

Child Exploitation



## [Child Exploitation, in partnership with NWG](#)

Helps raise awareness of concerns about the risks associated with grooming or exploitation and characteristics of those vulnerable.

EduCare<sup>®</sup>

YOUNGMINDS  
Mental Wellbeing in Children and Young People



## [Mental Wellbeing, in partnership with YoungMinds](#)

Helps ensure learners develop resilience to challenges and setbacks.

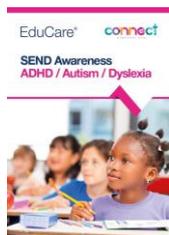
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## EduSafe

EduCare for Education customers can access a resource bank written specifically for parents and carers enabling them to engage effectively with learners and others in their community.

## Additional courses

Other courses in EduCare's extensive portfolio that can be purchased in an addition to EduCare for Education include:



### [SEND Awareness, in partnership with Connect](#)

Practical classroom advice for learners with Autism, ADHD and Dyslexia.



### [Exclusions, written in partnership with ACE Education](#)

Guidance on following required procedure and demonstrating that settings are not gaming or 'off-rolling'.



### [Attendance, written in partnership with ACE Education](#)

Helps understand what is required to measure attendance and punctuality.

## Further information

To view the complete range of safeguarding training courses, [click here](#).

To request a tailored quote, get in touch today with your pupil roll numbers, [click here](#).

Prices for unlimited access are based on pupil roll numbers, rather than the number of learners who require training. This allows settings to offer access to the broader community.