

ORGANISATION: OFFICE FOR STANDARDS IN EDUCATION (OFSTED)

EDUCATION INSPECTION IN ENGLAND (OFSTED)

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ABSTRACT

Ofsted is a non-ministerial department of the UK government reporting to Parliament. Ofsted is responsible for inspecting a range of educational institutions, including state schools and some independent schools, in England. It also inspects childcare, adoption and fostering agencies and initial teacher training, and regulates a range of early years and children's social care services.

KEYWORDS: Ofsted, educatio,; inspection, inspection framework.

1. INTRODUCTION

Ofsted exists to be a force for improvement through intelligent, responsible and focused inspection and regulation. We inspect all state-funded and many independent education providers in England

The primary purpose of inspection 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.

Inspection provides independent, external evaluation and identifies what needs to improve in order for provision to be good or better.

It is based on gathering a range of evidence that is evaluated against an inspection framework and takes full account of our policies and relevant legislation in areas such as safeguarding, equality and diversity.

Inspection provides important information to parents, carers, learners and employers about the quality of education, training and care. These groups should be able to make informed choices based on the information published in inspection reports.

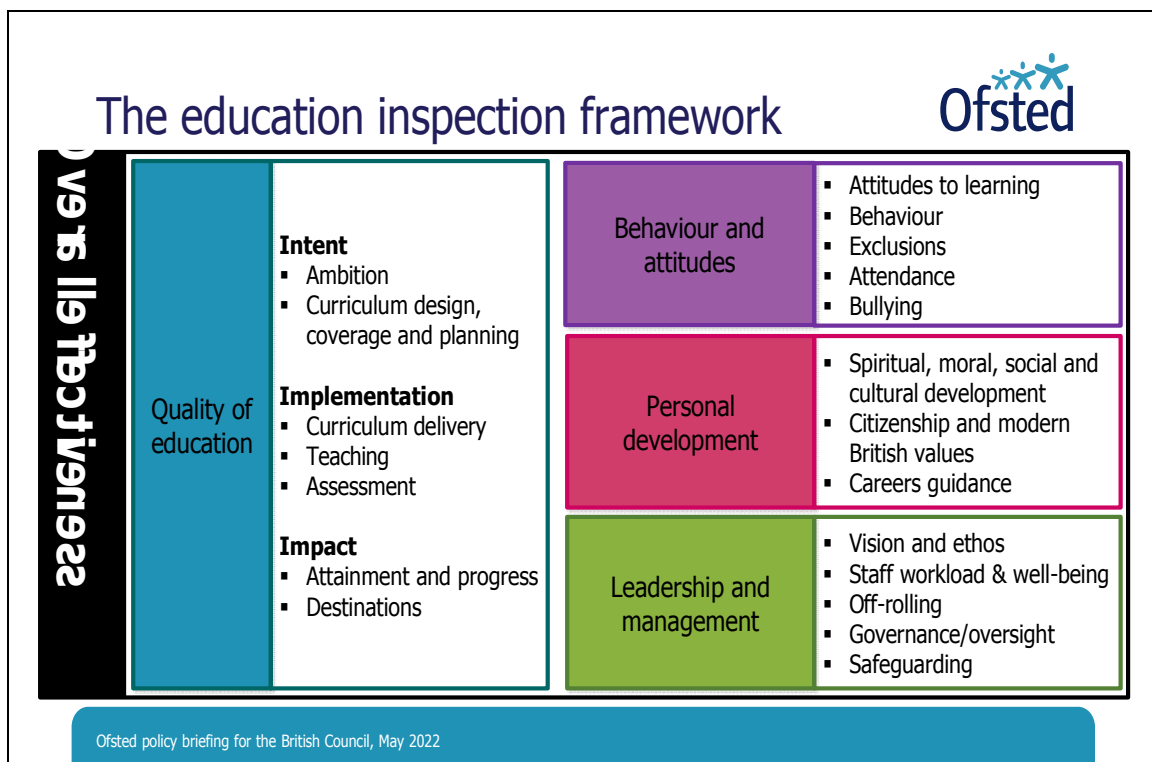
Inspection provides assurance to the public and to government that minimum standards of education, skills and childcare are being met; that – where relevant – public money is being spent well; and that arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

1. WHO WE INSPECT

We inspect:

- early education settings
- state-funded schools and pupil-referral units
- some independent schools
- further education colleges, sixth-form colleges and independent specialist colleges
- independent learning providers
- community learning and skills providers
- employers funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency to train their own employees
- higher education institutions providing further education and/or apprenticeships
- providers of learning in the judicial services
- initial teacher education
- local area provision for pupils with SEND

THE EDUCATION FRAMEWORK



2.

The framework sets out the judgements that apply to all education, skills and early years provision. These are underpinned by consistent, researched criteria for reaching those judgements. Inspectors will take comparable approaches to gathering evidence in different settings, although there may be some variation, for example depending on the age of learners and the type of provision.

The framework ensures that inspectors make a coherent set of judgements across the different education, skills and early years settings. The remit handbooks set out the methods inspectors use to gather evidence and the main criteria they use to make judgements. In most instances, these methods and criteria are common across the different remits, but there will inevitably be some variation.

Inspectors will use all the available evidence to evaluate what it is like to be a learner in the provision. In making the judgements about a provider's overall effectiveness, inspectors will consider whether the standard of education, training or care is good or outstanding. If it is not at least good, inspectors will consider whether it requires improvement or is inadequate.

3. OUR JUDGEMENT AREAS

Inspectors will make graded judgements on the following areas:

- The quality of education
- Behaviour and attitudes

- Personal development
- Leadership and management

Inspectors will always report on whether arrangements for safeguarding learners are effective.

4. EARLY EDUCATION

We inspect:

- schools with registered early years provision
- maintained nursery schools
- childminders
- childcare on non-domestic premises
- childcare on domestic premises
- out-of-school settings, such as holiday clubs, wrap-around care (if over 2 hours per day)

Schools that take children aged 2 years and over as part of their early years provision cannot normally register that provision with Ofsted. We will inspect the provision for these children under the school inspection arrangements.

5. INDEPENDENT AND UNREGISTERED SCHOOLS

We inspect:

- **Non association independent schools** (i.e., schools that are not members of the Independent Schools Association)
- **Unregistered schools** (i.e., organisations providing education but that are not registered as a school)
- Independent schools providing a full-time education to five or more children of compulsory school age, or one child with an education, health and care (EHC) plan or who is looked-after must be registered with the DfE. Operating an unregistered independent school is a criminal offence under Section 159 of the Education Act 2002, as amended. Ofsted has powers to inspect suspected unregistered independent schools.

6. FURTHER EDUCATION AND SKILLS

We inspect:

- general further education colleges (GFEC)
 - sixth form colleges (SFC) and 16-19 academies
 - college groups – where GFECs or SFCs have merged
 - higher education institutions as regards their delivering further education and/or apprenticeships (HEI)
 - independent learning providers (ILPs), including employer providers
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- community learning and skills providers.

We also contribute to inspections of prisons and other secure establishments.

We inspect armed forces training at the request of the Ministry of Defence

7. INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION.

We inspect initial teacher education (ITE) providers

A new inspection framework was published in June 2020, with a new cycle of inspections from September 2020. It is aligned with the EIF, with a renewed focus on the ITE curriculum.

There are two key judgements only:

- Quality of education and training
- Leadership and management

8. AREA SEND INSPECTIONS

Since 2016, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) jointly inspect local areas' arrangements for children and young people with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND), aged 0-25.

9. SOCIAL CARE

Ofsted also inspects the social care sector: local authority children's services and social care providers.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The government under Prime Minister John Major became concerned about variable local inspection regimes. It decided to introduce a national scheme of inspections through a reconstituted Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI,) which became known as the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted). Under the Education (Schools) Act 1992, HMI would supervise the inspection of each state-funded school in the country, and would publish its reports for the benefit of schools, parents, and government instead of reporting to the Secretary of State.

CONCLUSION

Ofsted aims is to raise standards of education and children's social care and improve lives. We do this through independent inspection and regulation of the many thousands of organisations providing education, training and care, from childminders to training providers, schools to children's home, as well as sharing what we find.

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