

Ofsted Inspection Update – Autumn 2024

Ofsted's own updates

Ofsted's YouTube channel: [Ofstednews - YouTube](#)

Ofsted's webinar recording and overview of changes to inspection:

[School inspection update: Autumn 2024 | Ofsted webinar for schools \(youtube.com\)](#)

Briefing covers:

1. Ungraded inspections
2. Graded inspections
3. Strong foundations
4. Single central record guidance

1. Ofsted ungraded inspections September 2024

The purpose of an ungraded inspection remains to judge whether the school has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at previous inspection. No overall effectiveness grade provided.

Delay

Ungraded inspections will not begin until 7 October 2024

Lead inspector preparations:

The lead inspector will have done some preparation before contacting the school 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 (par 106).

Notification phone call

Ofsted will contact the school by telephone to announce a graded or ungraded inspection **after 9.30am on a Monday morning**.

Schools may be notified of an urgent or monitoring inspection on any day. Also, if a school has been notified of an inspection that is subsequently deferred, Ofsted can notify that school of the new inspection date on any day of the week. If a school is open in a week that includes a bank holiday, Ofsted may notify the school on the Tuesday of that week.

NB For schools notified on Monday, inspection activity will be on site Tuesday and Wednesday (just Tuesday for ungraded inspections in a small school, i.e. fewer than 150 pupils).

An extended phone conversation. Actively encourage headteachers to have the senior team with them to contribute to this conversation.

To discuss:

- school's context
- what the school does well
- what has improved since the last inspection
- anything that leaders still need to tackle.

Through this conversation, agree **three or four areas of focus for the inspection**:

- things that the inspector wants to look at
- things that are particularly important to the school – for example something the school has been working on, or something related to its particular context.

On site - the ungraded inspection

The areas of focus will influence what inspectors do when they're in school.

Quality of education (QE)

- two of these areas will be related to QE – but **not deep dives**
 - a group of subjects together (likely to look at **early English and early mathematics together as a group in a primary school or the core subjects in a secondary school**)
 - a group of subjects from the wider curriculum
- may focus on a specific aspect across these subjects (for example, perhaps a school has been working on improving assessment)
- may go with the headteacher or another senior leader to visit lessons in a group of subjects and discuss the impact of this new aspect.

Other areas of focus, one or two from aspects of behaviour and attitudes and /or personal development

Behaviour and attitudes (SIH para 334) – they will usually focus on:

- attendance
- high expectations for pupils' behaviour and conduct
- a positive environment in which bullying is not tolerated
- behaviour is managed well

Personal development (SIH para 357) – they will focus on:

- responsible, respectful and active citizens
- fundamental British values
- character
- physically healthy and to recognise risks to well-being
- healthy relationships
- next phase
- careers (in secondary schools)

Attendance – if not covered as a focus, inspectors will consider whether school staff are doing all they reasonably can to achieve the highest possible attendance.

Safeguarding – on ungraded inspections, inspectors will normally take the same approach to inspecting safeguarding as they use on a graded inspection.

Inspectors will also consider staff's well-being (including workload). They will be particularly alert to any evidence that the school may be gaming or off-rolling.

These will be decided during the initial phone conversation and will be tailored to the school.

How it should feel:

Ofsted's aim is that the framework puts a series of joined-up professional conversations about education at the heart of inspection. It uses a 3-part methodology to inspect schools on graded and ungraded inspections:

1. a **top-level view** – an initial understanding of the curriculum, the way teaching supports pupils to learn the curriculum, the standards pupils achieve, pupils' behaviour and attitudes, and the personal development of pupils
2. **collect and connect evidence** for each of the judgement areas throughout the on-site part of the inspection

3. towards the end of each day, inspectors will **bring all the evidence together** to draw the conclusions that will inform further inspection activity and/or inform their final judgements

Keeping in touch (KIT) meetings with leaders

A professional dialogue between inspectors and leaders and so the lead inspector will agree a process for keeping leaders informed of progress throughout the inspection.

Regular meetings with the headteacher and/or any other previously agreed school leader(s) (at a minimum, at the start, middle and end of each day).

Four areas:

- provide updates on emerging evidence
- allow the headteacher to raise any issues or concerns, or to seek clarification
- alert the headteacher to any serious concerns
- inform the headteacher if, by the end of day 1 or during day 2, there is emerging evidence that a key or provision judgement is likely to be graded as requires improvement or inadequate.

The lead inspector must emphasise that final judgements are not made until the final team meeting at the end of day 2

Headteachers and senior leaders felt out of the loop with deep dives. Focus more on a dialogue between headteachers and their senior leaders. Headteachers and senior leaders will be central to the new ungraded inspections.

Aiming to reduce the burden on subject leaders. Still may have conversations with subject leads, they won't be as intensive.

2. Ofsted graded inspections September 2024

Grading

The graded inspection will not give an overall effectiveness judgement but will still include a judgement against the areas QE, BA, PD, and LM, as well as EY and/or 6F if applicable.

If any grade is requires improvement, Ofsted may monitor the progress of the school and will direct the school to the monitoring handbook (SIH para 189).

If any grade is inadequate, Ofsted will place the school in a formal category of concern (SIH para 190 – 201). The categories are serious weaknesses or special measures (SIH 191-195)

The deep dive methodology remains.

A new 'report card' is being developed. We believe it will focus on how well a school provides for children who face barriers to education such as poverty or SEND.

Delay

Graded inspections will not begin until 23 September 2024.

Notification phone call

Ofsted will contact the school by telephone to announce a graded or ungraded inspection **after 9.30am on a Monday morning**.

NB For schools notified on Monday, inspection activity will be on site Tuesday and Wednesday.

3. Strong foundations

Ofsted have reiterated the importance of a good start and good Foundational knowledge. They looked at identifying barriers created by a poor start.

Ofsted emphasise the importance of:

- Executive function
- Early English
- Early maths

They expect inspections to explore how well school deliver in these areas. And whether leaders identify barriers, tracking back to the early years if necessary, and address the issues.

Executive function

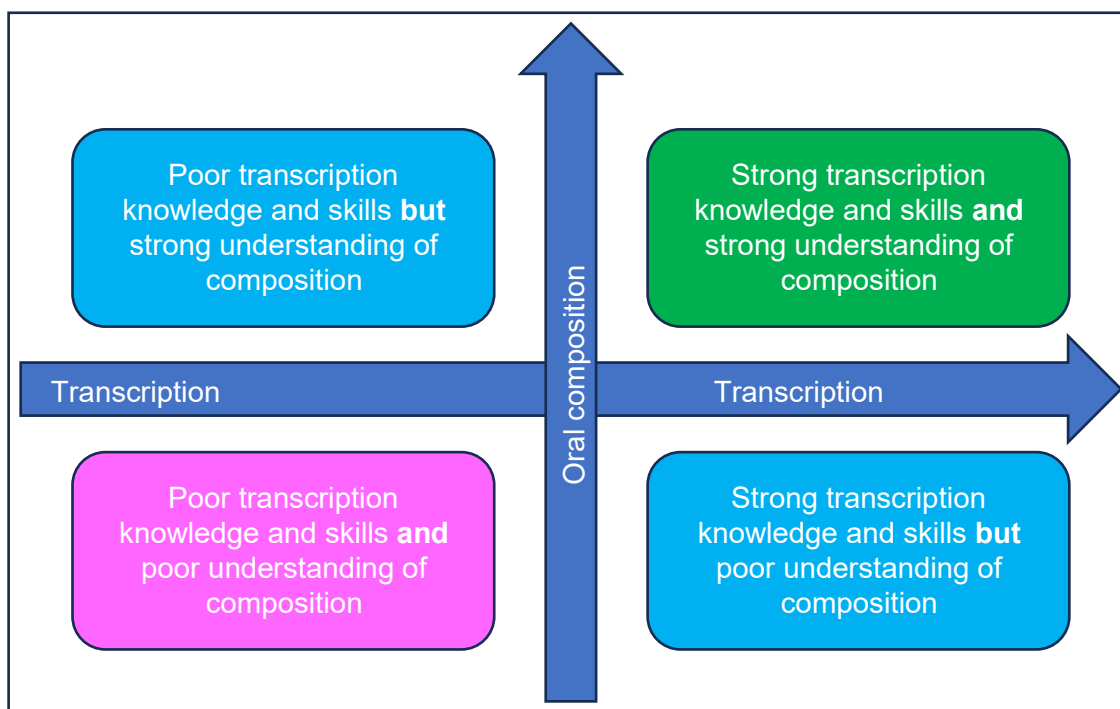
Three elements:

1. Focusing attention
2. Working memory
3. Mental flexibility

In the early years, teachers are expected to plan development of these elements and to not leave it to chance.

Early English

A recap of Gough and Tunmer's simple view of reading:
And a similar approach into early writing:



With transcription replacing the axis for word reading (phonics) and oral composition replacing the axis for language comprehension.

Inspectors are alert to considering these models when identifying barriers if outcomes in reading and/or writing are poor.

4. Single central record (SCR)

Guidance for inspectors (and schools) on what should be in the SCR is provided in para 395: 395. The requirements in relation to the SCR are set out in 'Part 3: Safer recruitment' of ['Keeping children safe in education: statutory guidance for schools and colleges'](#). Inspectors must refer to the latest version of 'Keeping children safe in education' when completing their checks. On all graded and ungraded inspections, inspectors must check that:

- the SCR covers all staff, even if they only work for one day – for academies and free schools, this includes the members and trustees of the academy trust
- for agency and third-party staff, the SCR records:
 - whether the school has received written confirmation that the employment business supplying the member of staff has carried out the relevant checks and obtained the appropriate certificates
 - the date the school this confirmation was provided
 - whether details of any enhanced DBS certificate have been provided in respect of the member of staff
- for all remaining staff (including teacher trainees on salaried routes), the SCR must record whether the following checks have been carried out (or certificates obtained). These include:
 - an identity check
 - a standalone children's barred list check
 - an enhanced DBS check (with children's barred list check) requested/certificate provided
 - a prohibition from teaching check
 - further checks on people who have lived or worked outside the UK
 - a check of professional qualifications, where required
 - a check to establish the person's right to work in the UK
 - for academies and free schools, if the section 128 checks have been carried out for those in management positions
- the SCR indicates the date when each check listed above was completed (or certificate obtained)

Schools are free to record any additional information they deem relevant, but we do not require this for the purposes of inspection.