



Hot Topics



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Department for Education (DfE) Consultation

SEND Funding - A Call for Evidence

In light of the Government's forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review, the Education Secretary has asked schools and colleges for their views on how to make funding arrangements for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities more effective.

Over a quarter of a million pupils with the most complex needs have personalised Education, Health and Care Plans. Of those students with EHCPs, almost 120,000 (just under half) are continuing their education in mainstream schools, while the number of pupils whose needs are being met in special schools has gone up from 94,000 in 2014 to over 112,00 in 2018.

Whilst the High Needs Budget has risen from £5Bn in 2013 to over £6Bn today, the Government wants to make sure that it understands what is driving the costs in the system and how funding can be more effectively targeted, hence the Education Secretary's call for evidence.

The consultation, which closes on the 31st July 2019, can be accessed [here](#)

Character and Resilience - A Call for Evidence

The Character Advisory Group is seeking views on the development of character and resilience in young people from school and college staff, governors/trustees, young people, parents, carers and more.

The call for evidence will directly inform the advisory group, and therefore we are encouraging all those governing to respond to the call for evidence to inform the department about the state of character and resilience in your school(s) settings.

A report from the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues, Character Education in UK Schools, sets out the findings from research exploring those issues.

The authors recommend that governors be "willing and able to explain and justify to Ofsted that character building matters as much for students' flourishing as their grades do". They highlight the importance of character education being led from the top, and governing boards have a role to play by incorporating the development of the 'whole child' into their vision for the school. This should become part of the strategy on which the school development plan is based.

The consultation, which closes on 5th July 2019, can be accessed [here](#)

DfE News

Keeping children safe in education

The DfE has published its draft 'Keeping children safe in education' (KCISE) guidance for 2019; however, the documents are for information purposes only.

Schools should continue to use KCSIE 2018 until the documents are withdrawn on 2 September 2019.

Several changes are included within the draft documents. A definition of upskirting has now been provided and the term has been added to the list of what peer-on-peer abuse may include.

Information on serious violent crime has also been added, which outlines the indicators that staff should be aware of with regards to identifying children who are at risk from, or are already involved with, such crime and measures that should be in place to manage risks.

Key additions also include:

- New safeguarding partners and child death review partner arrangements are to be in place by 29 September 2019. Governing boards and SLTs should make themselves aware of and follow their new arrangements.
- The legal duty to refer an existing member of staff to the DBS if they have harmed or pose a risk of harm to a child applies equally in circumstances where an individual is deployed to another area of work that is not regulated activity, or they are suspended.
- Section 128 checks should also be carried out on school governors, as individuals subject to the check are disqualified from being a governor.
- DBS checks are not mandatory for associate members appointed by the governing board.

[Read the draft document](#)

Relationships, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and Health Education.

Relationships education, RSE and health education will become compulsory from September 2020; however, the DfE is encouraging schools to start teaching the subjects from September 2019.

What schools must deliver

From September 2020:

- Relationships education will be compulsory in all primary schools.
- RSE will be compulsory in all secondary schools.
- Health education will be compulsory in all schools except independent schools (it will be statutory in academies and free schools).
- Primary schools may also choose to teach aspects of sex education; however, this is not a requirement.

Schools are free to determine how to deliver the content of these subjects as set out in the statutory guidance – all the issues that are covered should be delivered in an age-appropriate way.

Sixth-form colleges, 16-19 academies and FE colleges are not required to deliver these subjects; however, the DfE encourages these settings to offer them to support their pupils.

Relationships education content

Relationships education in primary school covers content including:

- Different kinds of relationships – including friendships, families and people pupils can go to for support.
- Characteristics of healthy relationships.
- How to take turns, and how to treat others with kindness, consideration and respect.
- The importance of honesty, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy.
- Personal space and boundaries, showing respect, and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate contact.
- Online safety and appropriate behaviour online.
- Developing personal attributes including honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice.
- Positive emotional and mental wellbeing, including how friendships can support mental wellbeing.
- How to recognise and report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse.

Sex education in primary schools

Although it is not a requirement, many primary schools already choose to teach some aspects of sex education and will continue to do so. To support pupils' transition from primary to secondary school, the DfE recommends that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and maturity of their pupils.

Sex education at primary level should ensure pupils are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and, drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the science curriculum, how a baby is conceived and born. Schools should consult parents about the detailed content of what may be taught.

RSE content

RSE in secondary schools should continue to build upon the knowledge from primary school and cover additional content including:

- What healthy friendships, working relationships, intimate relationships and other committed relationships look like.
- How healthy relationships can benefit mental wellbeing and self-respect.
- Developing resilience and character in pupils.
- How to identify when relationships are unhealthy.
- Contraception, developing intimate relationships, resisting, and not applying, pressure to have sex.
- What is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships.
- Safer sex and sexual health.
- Facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity.
- The law relating to sex, including the age of consent, what consent is and is not, the definitions and recognition of rape, sexual assault and harassment, and choices permitted by the law around pregnancy.
- Grooming, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse.
- FGM – including the physical and emotional damage it can cause, and how to access support.
- Rules and principles for keeping safe online.
- How data is generated, collected, shared and used online.

Physical health and mental wellbeing education

Teaching at primary level should focus on:

- The importance of daily exercise, good nutrition and sufficient sleep.
- The steps pupils can take to protect their own and others' health and wellbeing – this includes teaching simple self-care techniques, personal hygiene, how to prevent health and wellbeing problems, and basic first aid.
- The relationship between good physical health and good mental wellbeing – including the benefits exercise and spending time outdoors can have on mental wellbeing.
- The benefits of hobbies, interests and participation in communities.
- The benefits of rationing the time spent online and the risks of excessive use of electronic devices.
- Issues relating to isolation, loneliness, unhappiness and bullying, and the negative impact of poor health and wellbeing.

- Why social media, computer games and online gaming have age restrictions, and how to manage common online difficulties – this should be covered later in primary schools.

Teaching in secondary schools

- The impact of puberty on pupils' health and wellbeing.
- The steps pupils can take to support their own health and wellbeing.
- The benefits of sufficient sleep, good nutrition and strategies for building resilience.
- How outward facing activities, especially those with a service focus (e.g. volunteering), are beneficial for wellbeing.
- Signs of loneliness and isolation.
- Factual information about the prevalence and characteristics of more serious mental and physical health conditions, drugs and alcohol, and information about effective interventions.
- Eating disorders – qualified support should be sought if schools choose to cover this.
- The impact of time spent online, the positive aspects of online support and how to negotiate social media, online forums and gaming.
- How pupils can judge when they, or someone they know, needs support and when to seek help.

Puberty and menstruation should be covered at primary and secondary level – where possible, these subjects should be addressed before onset.

Policies

All primary schools **must** have a written policy for relationships education and secondaries must have an RSE policy. Where a maintained primary school chooses to teach aspects of sex education (which go beyond the national curriculum for science), the school must set this out in their policy and should consult with parents on what will be covered.

Schools should publish these policies on their websites and must provide a copy of the policies free of charge to anyone who requests them.

Religion and belief

All schools must consider the religious background of pupils when planning the teaching of these subjects. Faith perspectives may be taught by all schools. Schools with a religious character may teach the distinctive faith perspective on relationships, e.g. a school may wish to reflect on how their faith institutions may support people in matters of relationships and sex.

Equality

Relationships education, RSE and health education must be accessible for all pupils. When delivering these subjects, schools:

- Must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of any protected characteristics they possess under the Equality Act 2010.
- Should consider the needs of their own pupils and whether it is appropriate to put in place additional support for pupils with certain protected characteristics.
- Must make reasonable adjustments to alleviate any disadvantage faced by pupils with SEND.
- Should tailor subject content for pupils with SEND, where necessary.

- Should ensure assumptions are not made based on certain characteristics, e.g. boys should not be made to feel that inappropriate sexual behaviour, including sexual violence and harassment, is an inevitable part of being male.
- Should fully integrate teaching of LGBTQ+ issues into programmes of study, rather than delivering this content as standalone lessons.

Withdrawing pupils

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of the sex education aspect of RSE – any requests and the decisions made should be recorded.

Headteachers should first discuss the request with parents, to clarify the reasoning behind it and to explain the benefits of receiving this education and any detrimental effects withdrawal may have on the pupil.

After these discussions, schools should respect the parent's request to withdraw their child, up to, and until, three terms before the child turns 16 – after this point, schools should make arrangements for the pupil to receive sex education should the pupil want to.

Primary schools that choose to deliver sex education must automatically grant a request for withdrawal.

Find out more [here](#).

School exclusions – The Timpson Review

May 2019 saw the release of Edward Timpson's review on school exclusions; he was commissioned in March 2018 by the Education Secretary to review the practice of school exclusions, to explore how head teachers use exclusion in practice, and why some groups of pupils are more likely to be excluded. The full report, which has made 30 recommendations, can be accessed [here](#).

The Timpson Review found that:

- 78% of pupils who are permanently excluded have SEND, are classified as in need, or are eligible to receive free school meals; 11% of permanently excluded pupils meet all of these characteristics.
- Boys with social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH) but no statement were around 3.8 times more likely to be permanently excluded than a non-SEN child, while girls were around 3.0 times more likely after controlling for other factors.
- Disadvantage is strongly associated with exclusion, after controlling for other pupil characteristics. Children in receipt of Free School Meals were around 45% more likely to be excluded than other pupils.
- After accounting for other factors, Black Caribbean were around 1.7 times more likely, and Mixed White and Black Caribbean children were around 1.6 times more likely to be permanently excluded compared to White British children. Indian and Bangladeshi pupils are around half as likely to be permanently excluded.
- Controlling for other factors, children on a Children in Need Plan are around 4 times more likely to be permanently excluded compared to those with no social care classification.

- Children who have a Child Protection Plan are around 3.5 times more likely to be permanently excluded, and children who are looked after are around 2.3 times as likely to be permanently excluded than children who have never been supported by social care.

The Timpson Review also identified four fundamental drivers of policies and practices around exclusions in schools, including:

- differences in leadership, standards of behaviour and culture in schools;
- lack of consistency around the management of poor behaviour;
- few incentives for schools to take responsibility for pupils at risk of being excluded; and
- a lack of safeguards to “protect children against informal exclusion and ... off-rolling”.

The Government has accepted, in principle, all 30 recommendations made in the Timpson Review and identified six specific actions that it will be taking:

- To make schools accountable for the outcomes of children who have been permanently excluded – **another consultation to look at how this can be delivered in practice will be launched in Autumn 2019.**
- Embed effective partnership working between LAs, schools, alternative provision settings and other providers so that schools are better equipped to intervene as early as possible with support for children at risk of permanent exclusion.
- The Government will work with sector experts to rewrite statutory guidance by Summer 2020, including guidance on exclusions, behaviour and discipline.
- The DfE will work with Ofsted to define and tackle the practice of off-rolling (children removed from school rolls without formal exclusion).
- Extend support for alternative provision – in Autumn 2019, the DfE will set out its plans to improve outcomes for children who leave mainstream education and attend Alternative Provision settings, recognising good practice in AP. Including support for APs to recruit and develop high-quality teachers.
- Calling on Directors of Children’s Services, Governing Boards and Academy Trusts to review and share information on the characteristics of children excluded from school, to look at how their school’s statistics compare to local trends and investigate variances. This will help improve practice and reduce disparities with particular reference to certain ethnic groups, those with SEND or those who have a social worker.

Off-Rolling

With off-rolling coming increasingly under the spotlight, with specific inclusion in the new Education Inspection Framework, a recent Ofsted blog considered how inspectors evaluate off-rolling during school inspections.

Acknowledging that different people have different definitions of what off-rolling is and that there is no legal definition of off-rolling, Ofsted’s definition is very simple: off-rolling is the practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without using a permanent exclusion, when the removal is primarily in the best interests of the school, rather than the best interests of the pupil. This includes pressuring a parent to remove their child from the school roll.

While it may not always be unlawful, Ofsted believes off-rolling is never acceptable.

What doesn’t constitute off-rolling

There are many reasons pupils leave school: move house, leave the country, or move to another, closer school when a place becomes available. None can be considered off-rolling. Other pupils may leave school to be home educated. Where this is a parent's clear choice, without pressure from the school, it is not off-rolling.

Dual-registering a pupil with another school, such as an alternative provider, is also not off-rolling; the pupil has not left the roll of their original school. The statutory guidance on alternative provision makes it clear that pupils should be dual-registered if they are attending alternative provision. If 'managed moves' from one school to another as an alternative to exclusion, are used in pupils' best interests, with the agreement of everyone involved within the statutory guidance framework, then this too is not off-rolling.

What are examples of off-rolling and how do Ofsted spot these?

Before an inspection, Ofsted's analysts will give the Lead Inspector information about whether or not a school has exceptional levels of pupils leaving the school in years 10 and 11. Whilst this doesn't always mean that off-rolling is happening, it will ensure that inspectors explore this possibility during the inspection.

Research highlights that disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND and pupils with low prior attainment are disproportionately removed from the school roll. Inspectors will ask leaders about who has left and why.

- Are there any patterns in the groups who leave?
- How does the school support pupils from these groups who are still in the school? If most of the pupils who left have SEND, how does the school cater for this group? Have they reviewed their provision and improved it if necessary?

If a school uses managed moves, inspectors may ask to see evidence of how these meet the statutory guidance. Again, if these moves are happening during years 10 and 11, inspectors will look closely at whether this decision is in the best interests of the pupils in question.

How does Ofsted play a part in tackling off-rolling?

Whenever Ofsted uncover off-rolling, this will be set this out in the published inspection report. Under the new Inspection Framework, due for implementation in September 2019, any schools that are off-rolling are likely to be judged inadequate for leadership and management.

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School Complaints Procedures

January 2019 saw the DfE publish its *Best Practice Advice for School Complaints Procedures 2019*. The guidance, which includes a model complaints procedure can be accessed in full [here](#), but key points include:

- This guidance is for maintained schools, including nurseries, only. That said, whilst the guidance is not directly applicable to academies and free schools, due to the differing governance layers, the guidance is still worth reading by academy and free school Boards to ascertain the key principles.
- The expectation is that schools should adopt the best practice recommendations, only applying alternative processes if they have a good reason to do so and can demonstrate this reason.
- Schools must have a complaints procedure, tailored to the specific school – a guidance document is not legally enough.
- The procedure that should be followed for complaints against the Head, Chair of Governors and the whole of the Governing Board.
- Whilst the school is free to choose how many stages are included in their complaint's procedure, the DfE recommends two, with the second being the Governor Review Panel.
- Legal representation is not recommended for either party although the DfE acknowledges that there may be instances where legal representation may be needed.
- Guidance is provided on the audio recording of proceedings, other than by the Clerk.

Vocational Qualifications

The Education Secretary, Damien Hinds, has warned that action will be taken against schools that do not cooperate with colleges and employers promoting alternatives to A-levels and the university pathway.

The so-called “Baker clause”, an amendment to the Technical and Further Education Act 2017, made it a legal requirement from January 2018 to allow training providers to speak to students about technical qualifications and apprenticeships. It is reported that currently, almost two in three schools are ignoring the Baker-clause, the primary reason for this non-compliance being that schools wish to retain students for their own 16-19 programmes.

Governing boards need to ensure that schools are providing impartial careers advice and fulfilling their legal obligations to allow employers and colleges to talk about the range of possibilities open to students.

T Levels: what they are

T Levels are new courses coming in September 2020, which will follow GCSEs and will be equivalent to 3 A Levels. These 2-year courses have been developed in collaboration with employers and businesses so that the content meets the needs of industry and prepares students for work.

T Levels will offer students a mixture of classroom learning and ‘on-the-job’ experience during an industry placement of at least 315 hours (approximately 45 days). They will provide the knowledge and experience needed to open the door into skilled employment, further study or a higher apprenticeship. Find out more [here](#).

School responsibilities around school food

The letter from the DfE to all schools draws their attention to the report from the [Children’s Future Food Inquiry](#), which explored the food situation of disadvantaged children across the UK.

The letter highlights the following issues which were raised in the report, and encourages schools to consider whether they are doing all they can in these areas:

- a positive lunchtime experience
- avoiding stigma about entitlement to free school meals
- access to free drinking water

Download the letter [here](#).

Mental and physical wellbeing

New plans set out by the DfE confirm that, from September 2020, pupils of all ages will be taught the new subject – with a focus on promoting the positive link between physical and mental health.

This comes alongside the introduction of compulsory relationships education for primary-age pupils and relationships and sex education (RSE) for secondary-age pupils, to ensure children have all the knowledge they need to grow up healthy, happy and safe. Find out more [here](#).

Exploring flexible working practice in schools

This DfE report provides findings from a survey of teachers and senior leaders which explored flexible working practices in schools. Find out more [here](#).

Attainment of pupils with English as an additional language

The report provides information on the number of pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) and their level of attainment broken down by how long they have been in the English education system. Find out more [here](#).

PE and Sports Premium Funding

The DfE recently confirmed that the £320M PE and Sports Premium funding grant will continue in 2019/20, although precise allocations have yet to be published. In 2018/19, schools with 16 or less pupils received £1,000 per pupil, whereas schools with 17 or more pupils received a lump sum of £16,000 with an additional £10 per pupil. Find out more [here](#).

Updated guidance on pupil premium allocations, spending and monitoring. In an attempt to better align pupil premium spending with school improvement strategies, those governing and school leaders are now being encouraged to produce “multi-year” rather than annual pupil premium strategies, over a three-year period for instance. The strategy will still need to be set out in an annual pupil premium statement, as this is a requirement for all maintained schools and most academies.

Teacher Recruitment Website

The DfE has recently launched a free online service to advertise teaching vacancies and is encouraging schools to sign up to the service which it is hoped will cut down on the £75M spent by schools on advertising jobs. It is argued that with some agencies it can cost, on average, more than £1,000 per teaching job advert. The website will advertise full, part-time and job-share roles.

The revised guidance includes a useful set of frequently asked questions and outlines that the governing boards have a key role to play in “checking the school’s pupil premium planning and, where appropriate, challenging the senior leadership over its use. Governors should champion evidence-based practice and consider the rationale in all pupil premium-related decisions.

Find out more [here](#).

Checklist on indicators of potential fraud

The third core function of school governing boards is to oversee financial performance of the organisation and to make sure money is well spent. To support schools in ensuring effective financial performance, the Department for Education (DfE) have compiled a list of indicators and risk factors associated with potential fraud.

The indicators have been categorised into the following areas: personal motives for fraud, organisational motives for fraud, weaknesses in internal controls, transactional indicators, the methods used to commit or conceal fraud and record keeping/banking/other.

Some of the risk factors relating to the remit of the governing board include:

- related party transactions;
- conflicts of interest;
- lack of an appropriate organisational and governance structure with defined lines of authority and reporting responsibilities;
- management demonstrates lack of attention to ethical values;
- lack of personnel policies and recruitment practices;
- accounting systems are inadequate;

- no mechanism exists to inform management, directors, trustees or and governors of possible fraud.

Due to the nature of fraud, risk factors may not be exclusive to just one area and the guidance outlines that “the document is not exhaustive and is a guide only but may be helpful for use as a checklist where concerns exist that fraudulent activity may be taking place”. Find out more [here](#)

What sources of information do parents/carers use when choosing their child's secondary school?

DfE findings from questions around school measures, including which sources of academic information parents/carers used when choosing their child's secondary school, whether parents/carers found the information their child's school gives them about their child's progress and attainment clear or useful, and whether parents/carers knew about destination measures published by the government. [Read the full report](#)

Academy Updates

ESFA updates at 3 July 2019 Find out more [here](#).

The ESFA has released the latest Academies Financial Handbook, which will come into effect on 1 September 2019.

Changes to the handbook include:

- New measures requiring trusts to submit an annual report to the ESFA showing how they have checked that their internal control systems are effective and compliant.
- Additional guidance explaining how governing boards should make sure pay and other benefits of senior staff reflect their responsibilities.
- More detail on executive pay to include commercial interests.
- Strengthened guidance on whistleblowing.
- Guidance on the Secretary of State's powers in cases of mismanagement in trusts, such as removing trustees.

Find out more [here](#)

Letters to Academy Trust Auditors

Lord Agnew has recently written to auditors, highlighting the ways they can assist Trust Boards to ensure there is effective financial management and governance within their academy trusts. Key points made include:

- The DfE is increasingly using Trusts' Management Letters to help inform its assessment of the quality of governance and control frameworks within Trusts. Lord Agnew highlights that auditors' expertise in identifying management letter issues is vitally important for getting to grips with issues early. He also clarifies that If serious issues develop in a Trust that are linked to previous audits, but they were not flagged in management letters, then the DfE will take any appropriate action open to it.
- Of concern to the DfE are issues raised on the management letter in one year that remain unresolved in the following year.
- Lord Agnew highlights the benefits of mid-year audit reviews which gives management teams the time to resolve any issues before the accounts have to be signed, stating that the benefits of a mid-year review outweigh the costs involved.

- Good governance underpins the regular and proper use of money. The work auditors perform on regularity is particularly important as through it, the DfE gains assurance that Trusts have spent their money in accordance with the conditions that have been set as well as giving the DfE the basis to act if they have not.
- As a result, the DfE has made some changes in the 2018/19 Academies Accounts Direction to bring a sharper focus on governance, including:
 - extending the suggested regularity tests for auditors in the area of governance as these are deemed to provide the evidence needed, both by Trust Boards and by the DfE, to improve compliance. These tests can be found in Section 4.14 of Annex B of the Academies Account Direction and include tests such as the number of times the Board meets, whether there is a written scheme of delegation of the Board's financial powers that maintains robust internal controls, that there is Board oversight of capital expenditure and funding, ensuring it is used appropriately for capital purposes and the audit committee or equivalent has received reports on the effectiveness of internal control;
 - explaining that auditors' conclusions in the regularity report should reflect any findings about Trusts' compliance with the DfE's governance requirements; and
 - clarifying that the auditors' opinion on Trusts' financial statements, under ISAs 700 and 720, should state explicitly that the auditors have reviewed the Trust's governance statement and whether it is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or knowledge obtained during the audit.

Academy Chart of Accounts

Mid May 2019 saw the DfE launch a new academies chart of accounts, a first step towards automated financial reporting within the academy sector.

The new chart of accounts is the DfE's standard for recording financial data which underpins both the budget forecast returns and the academies accounts returns to be submitted to the ESFA.

Although adoption of these chart of accounts is currently voluntary, Trusts that choose to follow this standard will benefit from the potential automated data transfer from their finance systems directly to the ESFA for financial returns relating to the 2019/20 financial year. Furthermore, by providing a consistent way of recording financial data for all Academy Trusts, the DfE argues that it will be able to provide richer and more accurate financial benchmarking information, allowing academies to compare their finances with other similar academies with greater confidence on a more timely basis.

The Chart of Accounts can be reviewed [here](#)



New Education Inspection Framework

Following a three-month consultation with over 15,000 responses, May 2019 saw Ofsted publish its finalised Education Inspection Framework (EIF) which will be formally implemented from September 2019 onwards. Whilst the EIF and the detailed Inspection Handbooks can be accessed in full via [here](#), key points include:

- Ofsted will proceed with its headline proposal for a new 'Quality of Education' judgement, after it received strong support from three-quarters of respondents.
- More than three-quarters of respondents also supported plans to introduce two new key judgements, 'Behaviour and Attitudes' and 'Personal Development'. 'Leadership and Management' makes up the fourth area for inspection assessment.
- All inspection judgements will continue to be awarded under the current four-point grading scale: outstanding; good; requires improvement; and inadequate. Final inspection reports will be redesigned and shortened.
- The Quality of Education judgement will focus on the 3I's (intent, implementation and impact) which have been considered in detail in previous newsletter/update editions. The finalisation of the EIF highlights the three-tiered method that Inspectors will take when considering the curriculum and quality of education provision within settings:
- **Top-level** view: inspectors and leaders start with a top-level view of the school's curriculum, exploring what is on offer, to whom and when, leaders' understanding of curriculum intent and sequencing, and why these choices were made.
- **Deep dive**: then, a 'deep dive', which involves gathering evidence on the curriculum intent, implementation and impact over a sample of subjects, topics or aspects. This is done in collaboration with leaders, teachers and pupils. The intent of the deep dive is to seek to interrogate and establish a coherent evidence base on the quality of education provided.
- **Bringing it together**: inspectors will bring the evidence together to widen coverage and to test whether any issues identified during the deep dives are systemic. This will usually lead to school leaders bringing forward further evidence and inspectors gathering additional evidence. Further evidence-gathering will test the emerging conclusions from this work. This is likely to include follow-up conversations with leaders, members of staff, those responsible for governance and pupils. It will usually also involve sampling of other areas of education within the school to probe questions that have emerged as a result of the deep-dive work.

A key feature of the process will be the 'deep dive' stage which will include the following elements:

- evaluation of senior leaders' intent for the curriculum in this subject or area, and their understanding of its implementation and impact;
- evaluation of curriculum leaders' long- and medium-term thinking and planning, including the rationale for content choices and curriculum sequencing;
- visits to a deliberately and explicitly connected sample of lessons;

- work scrutiny of books or other kinds of work produced by pupils who are part of classes that have also been (or will also be) observed by inspectors;
- discussion with teachers to understand how the curriculum informs their choices about content and sequencing to support effective learning; and
- discussions with a group of pupils from the lessons observed.

Ofsted have confirmed that there will be a 'grace period' until September 2020 as schools grapple with the shift in focus from outcomes to a "broad and rich learning experience". During this time, schools which have a plan in place to review their curriculum and can demonstrate genuine action to do so will not be downgraded.

The nine governance specific criteria within the Leadership and Management judgement under the current Inspection Framework have been removed under the new EIF and replaced with the following references to governance:

- those responsible for governance understand their role and carry this out effectively. They ensure that the provider has a clear vision and strategy and that resources are managed well. They hold leaders to account for the quality of education or training (simply mirroring the three core governance functions highlighted in the Governance Handbook); and
- 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.

Schools where negative practices, such as 'off-rolling', are identified are likely to find their 'Leadership and Management' judged inadequate under the new framework.

Extract from Amanda Spielman's speech at the National Governance Association-8th June

The role of governance

Getting to the heart of it, this new framework is about 2 things: substance and integrity. It puts the real substance of education, the curriculum, back at the centre of inspection and supports leaders and teachers who act with integrity. To put it another way, we want to help people put as much time as possible into the things that make the most difference for children.

And we want governors and trustees to be able to support their schools well, and to be able to ask the right kind of strategic, big-picture questions without getting dragged down into the weeds.

What do we mean, exactly, by governance and the roles of governors and trustees?

The governance landscape has evolved in recent years. It isn't the neatly defined thing it once was when every school stood alone and had its own board of governors. We have many different structures now, with academies and community schools and voluntary-aided schools and sprinklings of many other types. The split between the roles of the executive and the non-executives can be different in different structures. What's a management task in some schools or groups is part of governance in others. We've bent our minds to this evolving landscape and what it means for inspection.

Coming from a MAT background myself, I know how frustrating it can be when the rest of the education system doesn't recognise where responsibilities actually sit. So, it mattered to me to

make sure we really captured this in the new handbooks. Accountability mechanisms like inspection should match the world as it operates, not an idealised world that's neat and convenient but doesn't reflect the way things work on the ground.

In the new framework, governance is still considered in the leadership and management judgement. Inspectors will still explore how governors carry out their responsibilities, and the contribution you make to the oversight and direction of schools.

You already know the purposes that DfE sets out in its [governance handbook](#). There are 3 of them:

- *Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.*
- *Hold executive leaders to account for educational performance and staff performance management.*
- *Oversee financial performance and make sure that money is well spent.*

And, of course, you have to check compliance with statutory and contractual requirements.

But I'd like you to think about that first, really important purpose – ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.

Read the full speech [here](#).

Free webinar on the New Inspection Framework (17th July at 6.30pm)

Join the discussion and hear first-hand about:

- the recent consultation and the findings
- the changes Ofsted are making and why
- what the changes mean for schools

[Click here to register](#)

Inspection of outstanding schools

Ofsted's annual parents' survey highlighted that almost three quarters of those parents who responded (72%) believed that schools judged as outstanding should be inspected as regularly as those schools judged as good. Additionally, it was revealed that a significant eight in ten parents were unaware that schools judged as outstanding were exempt from future inspections.

Perhaps in response to these results, an Ofsted HMI, has written a blog on the inspection of outstanding schools which can be accessed [here](#). This blog highlights that:

- Ofsted believes that the exemption for outstanding schools has "had its day" and that the DfE should review its current policy. The DfE's current stance is that at least 10% of outstanding schools should be inspected rather than dropping the exemption entirely.
- Ofsted's concern is that in some outstanding schools, standards have stayed the same, or even declined. This potentially means that other schools, with a lower grading, have improved at a faster rate and are offering a better standard of education for their pupils.
- Ofsted currently has no legal basis to include outstanding schools in its cycle of routine inspections. However, to make sure these schools are doing well for their pupils, Ofsted will regularly risk assess them. Ofsted will take into account the length of time it has been since a school was last inspected as part of its risk assessment.

- Using this information, either the Chief Inspector or the Education Secretary can ask Ofsted to inspect a school, but only if they have concerns about their performance.

Safeguarding children and young people in education from knife crime

This report looks specifically at school leaders' experiences of knife crime in London, as well as the views of children and some parents of both victims and perpetrators. It makes recommendations for school and college leaders, local authorities, the police and other pan-London agencies about how to work better together to help keep children safe.

The research looked at 3 broad questions:

- What are schools, colleges and PRUs in London doing to safeguard children and learners from knife crime while on school premises?
- How are schools, colleges and PRUs in London giving children the knowledge and skills to stay safer in their local communities?
- How are exclusions being used when children bring knives to school?

Recommendation 1:

Local community safety partnerships should fully involve schools, colleges and PRUs in developing and implementing local strategies that aim to address knife crime and serious youth violence. Exclusions and managed moves

Recommendation 2:

All schools and academies in London should ensure that their exclusion policy reflects the practice set out in the DfE's statutory guidance. Local authorities should have a strategic response to permanent exclusions. They should also, in conjunction with regional schools' commissioners, challenge schools and multi-academy trusts if exclusions do not appear to be in line with statutory guidance.

Recommendation 3:

The Department for Education should collect data from schools about managed moves in the same way in which it collects information on permanent and fixed-term exclusions. Early help and prevention.

Recommendation 4:

Safeguarding partners should involve school leaders at a strategic level in assessing the needs of children and young people in their area, and in planning and delivering early help services in response to those needs. Schools need to participate actively in local arrangements as required under 'Keeping children safe in education' statutory guidance.

Recommendation 5:

Local safeguarding partnerships should facilitate all agencies including schools and colleges in challenging each other's practice if they believe any agency is failing to contribute to the local strategy to protect pupils from knife crime. Improving information-sharing.

Recommendation 6:

Schools and colleges should share full information with one another when pupils and learners move schools, PRUs or alternative provision or move to further education, to safeguard them and other pupils and learners.

Recommendation 7:

Pan-London safeguarding partners should provide challenge to schools and colleges and, when necessary, drive improvement in how well schools and colleges share information with others to promote children's safety when those children move schools or begin further education, including via a managed move or when they are permanently excluded.

Recommendation 8:

The Metropolitan Police Service needs to establish a clear and consistent protocol and memorandums of understanding with schools that ensure that it and schools routinely share information about children for the purposes of safeguarding. Teaching the curriculum

Recommendation 9:

School leaders should consider how their personal, social, health and economic education (PHSE) curriculum reflects local safeguarding issues and trends, including knife crime.

Recommendation 10:

Pan-London bodies should consider ways in which they can support schools in ensuring that external organisations that are delivering anti-knife crime and gang affiliation sessions can provide a high-quality and impactful contribution to the school PHSE curriculum.

Recommendation 11:

Safeguarding partnerships and school leaders should raise awareness of the dangers of grooming and criminal exploitation among both parents and children.

[Download the report](#)

***Improving behaviour in schools***

The Education Endowment Foundation has published new guidance on improving behaviour in schools, responding to a clear need for schools to have consistent and clear policies that promote positive behaviour in lessons.

The report, based on extensive research and consultancy, is built around six recommendations for preventing and responding to misbehaviour. These are categorised as either ‘proactive’ (strategies to prevent bad behaviour from happening), ‘reactive’ (how to deal with bad behaviour when it happens), or as relating to ‘implementation’ (focusing on the need for consistency and coherence in behaviour policies).

The reports should be read alongside the Timpson review of school exclusion. When making important decisions about behaviour management, the governing board should consider this report. [Download the report](#)

Supporting staff wellbeing in schools

Teaching can be immensely rewarding but also physically and emotionally draining. If we want our school staff to do what is asked of them, then governing boards need to make sure that mental health and wellbeing is effectively supported. Find out more [here](#).

Guide to becoming an Evidence -Informed School Governor & Trustee

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) guide offers practical next steps and tips for further reading framed around three key questions for governors to ask:

- How well are pupils achieving in your school?
- How effectively is your school spending its money?
- How does your school support effective teaching and learning?

It also includes key questions to ask before schools think about buying in a programme plus 4 tips on making the most of your Pupil Premium

- ✓ **Know your school's attainment gaps.** Find out which groups of pupils in your school the data suggest need support. Ask your school for its gap data from Analyse School Performance (ASP), formerly RAISE online, used by Ofsted inspectors. Check your school has an action plan to improve overall attainment while also closing its gaps – and make sure the governing board is monitoring progress.
- ✓ **Benchmark your school against other, similar schools.** The EEF's Families of Schools database can provide you with a useful picture of how well your school is performing compared with a 'family' of 50 schools with pupils with similar characteristics. Request an item on the agenda of your board's meeting for the head to talk through your school's profile.
- ✓ **Understand the evidence of 'what works' to improve teaching and learning.** Evidence can help schools spend smarter, learn from the experiences of others, and focus efforts on things which are likely to have the greatest impact. The EEF's Teaching and Learning Toolkit offers an accessible overview of the international evidence on teaching 5-16 year-olds. Ask your school's senior leaders if/how they are using it to inform the School Improvement Plan and Pupil Premium Strategy.
- ✓ **Make closing the attainment gap a key part of your overall School Improvement Plan.** The Pupil Premium will represent a relatively small part of your school's overall budget. It is crucial, therefore, that if your school wants both to raise attainment for all and to close the gap for disadvantaged pupils it focuses its resources (not just the Pupil Premium) on well-evidenced ways of improving teaching. EEF guidance reports, which offer clear and actionable recommendations on a range of key issues based on the best available evidence, are a good starting point.
- ✓ **Take the lead in signing off your school's Pupil Premium strategy.** Support – and challenge – your senior leadership team to ensure your school's Pupil Premium funding is being spent in evidence-informed ways. We recommend that the largest proportion of spending is focused on improving the quality of teaching, followed by targeted support (including for high-attaining Pupil Premium-eligible students) and whole-school strategies which support learning (e.g., to improve pupil attendance and behaviour). Make sure you are taking strategic responsibility for monitoring the impact of Pupil Premium spending on pupil progress, including agreeing measures of success at the outset.
- ✓ **Invest first in the quality of teaching at your school.** High-quality teaching is a powerful driver of educational equity. Governing boards have a key role to play. Ask for a discussion of your school's recruitment and retention success: are you getting – and keeping – the teachers you need to improve pupil learning? Ask to see your school's programme for professional development: is it clearly linked to the School Improvement Plan with the purpose of improving pupil learning?
- ✓ **Then think hard about what additional targeted support is needed.** While high-quality teaching is the priority, there undoubtedly remains a place for targeted support, particularly for those pupils who are struggling. Ensure your senior leadership team carefully monitors the impact of new programmes or approaches put in place, whether developed internally or bought externally, to check what impact they are having.
- ✓ **Before you buy in a programme, read this!** Schools are right to think hard before spending their limited funds buying in programmes which make great claims about their impact on pupil outcomes. In our experience, most programmes are no better than what

schools are already doing: around 1-in-4 EEF trials show enough promise for us to re-invest in. Check our list of [Promising Projects](#).

Think carefully about what your school should stop doing. It is tempting when you identify an area for school improvement to think only about what new initiative is needed to solve the problem. However, it is important to make space for additional programmes by considering very carefully what you should stop doing. Otherwise you risk spending money and effort unnecessarily, adding to your budget and workload worries. [Download a copy here](#)

Taking the next step – considering joining or forming a group of schools

The national context for schools in England continues to change. As more schools convert to academy status, the role that local authorities play in providing school improvement and other services is decreasing, and schools are increasingly looking to each other for support and challenge. At the same time, many MATs are looking to grow in order to provide more services and support to their schools. Governing boards and their senior leaders are therefore experiencing a period where not only are maintained schools joining MATs to provide stability and support, but single academy trusts and MATs are also actively seeking to merge with other similar organisations. The guidance produced by ASCL, NGA and Browne Jacobson explore school collaboration, federation and academisation. Find out more [here](#).

The SEND Governance Review Guide

The guide, drawing upon the six features of effective governance, sets out a framework for how to ensure that learners with SEND access high-quality provision.

Every board is responsible for holding leaders to account for the education of learners with SEND. This guide has been developed to allow boards to effectively deliver on this responsibility. An effective review of SEND governance should not become a simplistic box-ticking exercise. Its free to register for the download [here](#).

Performance management of the headteacher/senior executive leader

The performance management and development of the headteacher/chief executive, including effective appraisal, is fundamental to school and trust improvement. These annual appraisal meetings should take place as soon as possible after the start of the autumn term. This is so that the objectives for the executive leader can feed into other senior leaders and staff performance objectives; also, it gives a full three terms to meet the objectives set. This means that governing boards should be planning for this now.

Book a place on our course on Wednesday 10th July [here](#).

National Professional Qualification for Executive Leadership (NPQEL)

The National Professional Qualification for Executive Leadership (NPQEL) is an opportunity to achieve a nationally recognised, executive leadership qualification, working with colleagues and leading educationalists from across the country, and utilising local expertise and knowledge which fits your regional context.

Specifically designed for those currently leading more than one school or college, or those interested in taking on such a role, either as an executive headteacher or as chief executive of a trust or federation in any phase of education, our executive leadership programme offers you an

exceptional opportunity to prepare for the challenges of running a group of schools/colleges, enhance your leadership skills, hone your practice and achieve formal recognition. Find out more [here](#).

Notes