

Key messages and changes for the Handbook for inspecting schools in England under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The DfE announced this was an

‘Changes to the Outcomes for pupils section reflecting changes to GCSE grades and data reports (a new IDSR); updates to Clarification for schools section and mythbuster document around myths and misunderstandings; clarification of arrangements for meeting relevant members of the governance structure and inclusion of chief executives or equivalents in inspections of academies in multi-academy trusts; and new content explaining what happens to schools that receive the ‘requires improvement’ and ‘inadequate’ judgements.’

Key changes:

- New rules for school judged to require improvement or inadequate.
- There is information about small cohorts and how the data from these should be regarded by inspectors, including the most able disadvantaged pupils. The language is now of ‘small groups’, rather than ‘very small groups.’ There is no numerical indication of what this means.
- Inclusion of the language of ‘diminishing the difference’ in Early Years provision, though still talking about ‘closing the gap’ in 16-19 study.
- Governance and involvement of Multi Academy Trusts in inspections
- Changes to rules about re-inspections
- Single Central Records in Multi Academy Trusts. MAT not need CSR for all staff, only those not assigned to an individual academy.
- OFSTED will not check personal files, unless there are concerns about suitability of employees.
- Removal of reference to performance managed with a focus on the use of professional development.

Details of changes page by page

There are number of places where Raise Online is update to ASP and changes to language about GCSE results.

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10	Risk assessment means ‘ <i>Some good schools will automatically receive a full section 5 inspection instead of a section 8 short inspection. This will affect approximately a fifth of good schools, and will occur when Ofsted’s risk assessment process indicates that the quality of provision may have deteriorated significantly.</i> ’ This page contains further details of this.

12	<i>'Ofsted does not expect tutor groups/form time to include literacy, numeracy or other learning sessions. Schools can use form time as they wish.'</i>
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ofsted does not expect to see photographic evidence of pupil's work. Ofsted is very aware of teachers' workload and inspectors are happy to speak to pupils during an inspection about what they have learned.</i> • <i>Ofsted does not require schools to predict their progress scores. It is impossible to predict progress as test results are compared nationally and this cannot be done until after the tests.</i> • <i>Ofsted does not require schools to hold onto books and other examples of pupils' work for pupils who left school the previous year.</i> • <i>Inspectors are not required to routinely check personnel files, but may do so in specific cases as part of looking at schools' procedures for checking the suitability of employees to work with children.</i>
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>There is no requirement for multi-academy trusts to maintain single central records for all staff. Each academy school should maintain a single central record. Where the multi-academy trust employs staff who are not assigned to an individual academy, these employees must be recorded on the single central record for the multi-academy trust, along with all others employed by the multi-academy trust and trustees.</i>
14	New section on Leadership and Governance clarifying the role of MAT CEOs and the requirements on Governors to engage with and meet with Inspectors.
22	Confirms arrangements for a meeting with the chief executive officer (CEO)/their delegate, or equivalent if the school is part of the multi-academy trust.
23	There is a change of wording so that it does not say 'specific groups' though lists groups of pupils that might be considered during the inspection, explaining that: <i>'The pupil groups focused on will depend on the areas for investigation during the inspection.'</i>
26	Raises issues with small cohort saying <i>'but only where groups are large enough for valid inferences to be drawn, as we might otherwise form unfair judgements about a provider. Under-performance by a sub-group may indicate specific problems with one or more children, or equally may reflect deficiencies in the provider's main curriculum provision.'</i>
28	The lead inspector show invite CEO/ Executive head to final meeting at the end of day 2
30	New rules for schools in a category appointing NQTs
30	New rules and timings for re-inspection of school graded as Requiring Improvement
31	Changes in 'inadequate judgement'. Previously if was specified that if Leadership and Management was graded at 3 or above this could be seen as evidence of capacity to secure improvement. This has been removed.

45	<p>Descriptor of Outstanding Leadership and Management: The reference to performance management has been removed and there is a change focus to use of professional development. <i>'Leaders and governors use high quality professional development to encourage, challenge and support teachers' improvement. Teaching is highly effective across the school.'</i></p>
51	<p>Change from <i>'impact of mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills across the curriculum'</i> to <i>'how well pupils develop and/or use their mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills across the curriculum.'</i></p>
58	<p>Data for small groups of children must be treated with caution. It was previously should be treated with caution. It is also interesting that the word very to describe the groups is removed, so this is now 'small groups' not 'very small groups'. This is explained by <i>'Whilst inspectors will analyse all pupil-level and group-level data, there will be some groups that are too small for group-level reporting to be meaningful. Only if groups are large enough will inspectors be able to draw valid inferences from group-level performance. This is to avoid forming unfair judgements about a school.'</i></p>
59	<p>Talking about disadvantaged pupils there is are some interesting word removals. Inspectors are no longer to consider the most able disadvantaged pupils or <i>'the extent to which any differences in this progress, and consequently in attainment, are diminishing.'</i> But <i>'must review carefully what data is meaningful and avoid focusing on the performance of small groups where assessment information is less reliable.'</i></p> <p>The handbook indicates that inspector should look at more than data saying: <i>'Where performance information is limited due to small group size, inspectors should gather a wide range of other evidence to ensure the school is providing effectively for disadvantaged pupils, including reviewing pupils' work, and talking to pupils and teachers.'</i></p> <p>There is then a new paragraph talking about teaching, behaviour and curriculum and asking inspectors to consider if the shortfalls in attainment or progress for groups is evidence of issues with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core provision • SEND identification • Additional provision for disadvantaged pupils <p>The handbook then picks up on issues with small cohorts for more able and low attaining pupils and the need to review pupils work and talk to pupils and teachers.</p>
61	<p>Descriptor for outstanding outcomes for pupils: Inspectors are now looking for <i>'From different starting points, the progress in English and in mathematics is high compared with national figures'</i>. Previously it was <i>'matches or is improving towards that of other pupils nationally.'</i></p>
61	<p>Descriptor for good outcomes for pupils: Change in emphasis to progress from starting point.</p>

66	<p>Descriptor for Outstanding Early Years Provision:</p> <p><i>'Almost all children, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged children and the most able, are making substantial and sustained progress in relation to their starting points. They are extremely well prepared academically, socially and emotionally for the next stage of their education.'</i></p>
66	<p>Descriptor for Good Early Years Provision:</p> <p><i>'Children, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make consistently strong progress from their starting points.'</i></p> <p>This is largely a reordering of words, but it removes the most able from the descriptor and places an emphasis on consistently strong progress.</p>
67	<p>Descriptor for Good Early Years Provision:</p> <p>Change of phrase from closing gaps to diminishing differences which bring this part of the handbook in line with wording for schools</p>
67	<p>Descriptor for Inadequate Early Years Provision</p> <p><i>'Low attainment of any group of children shows little sign of improvement. Wide differences between groups of children show little sign of diminishing or may be widening.'</i></p>
16-19 Study programme	<p>Changes to reflect change in GSCE gradings</p>