

# Towards the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) September 2019 - - Through a Curricular Lens

Manchester Governors' Conference

Helen O'Neill, Her Majesty's Inspector  
04 April 2019



# Objectives for the session

- For those in attendance to understand:
  - how research is supporting Ofsted's thinking about the curriculum
  - how a renewed focus on curriculum can provide additional impetus to address issues of social inequality
  - the key principles that are underpinning the development of the EIF
  - the role of governance

# The curriculum will be at the heart of the new framework – Ofsted's working definition of the curriculum



'A framework for setting out the aims of a programme of education, including the knowledge and understanding to be gained at each stage **(intent)**...

...for translating that framework over time into a *structure and narrative*, within an institutional context **(implementation)**...

...and for evaluating what knowledge and understanding pupils have gained against expectations **(impact)**.'

# The importance of the curriculum

*"Twelve years of education should give children a lot more than a disposition to learn and some ill-defined skills. Yet the evidence from the first stage of our research this year is that **the focus on substance, on the knowledge that we want young people to acquire, is often lost...***

*...If their entire school experience has been designed to push them through mark-scheme hoops, rather than developing **a deep body of knowledge, they will struggle in later study.**"*



# Findings from the curriculum research (phase 1)

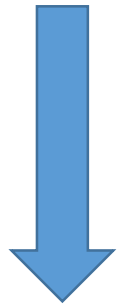


# Why the new focus on curriculum?

Lack of curriculum knowledge and expertise



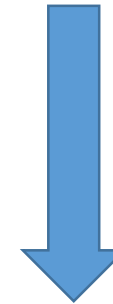
Curriculum being confused with assessment and qualifications



Curriculum narrowing



Teaching to the test



Social justice issues

# Findings from the curriculum research (phase 2)



# Across the schools we visited we found several factors that may be linked to curriculum quality



- Focus on subject disciplines even when topics are taught
- Considering depth and breadth of curriculum content
- Seeing the curriculum as the progression model
- Having a clear purpose for assessment
- Reviewing and evaluating curriculum design
- Clear curriculum leadership (often distributed) and ownership
- Considering local context and filling gaps from pupil backgrounds



# The next phase of curriculum research is informing the developing framework

- We recently published the second phase of the curriculum research.
- In this phase we tried to **learn lessons from schools** that are particularly invested in curriculum design, with a view to developing indicators around curriculum intent, implementation and impact.
- We aim to use this evidence to turn the **common curriculum factors** leaders told us about into quality indicators, which will inform the draft **evaluation criteria** for the framework.
- We are now **testing** these indicators in schools to refine them.

# Findings from phase 3



# Ofsted's working definition of curriculum

'A framework for setting out the aims of a programme of education, including the knowledge and understanding to be gained at each stage **(intent)**...

...for translating that framework over time into a *structure and narrative*, within an institutional context **(implementation)**...

...and for evaluating what knowledge and understanding pupils have gained against expectations **(impact)**.'

# Distinguishing curriculum from teaching and assessment

**Curriculum:**  
WHAT is taught

**Teaching activities:**  
HOW curriculum  
content is taught

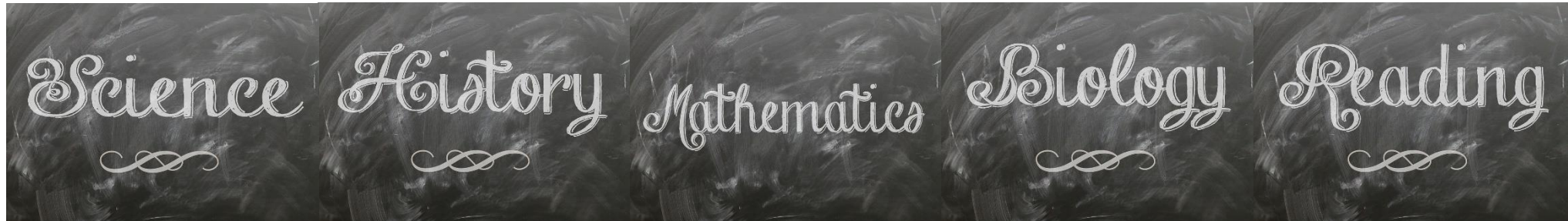
**Assessment**  
Desired high level outcomes  
and measures of those  
outcomes

# The curriculum **isn't...**

- ...just the subject or qualification offer
- ...the same as teaching activities: the curriculum is WHAT is taught and not how it is taught
- ...about devising extra or more elaborate or creative activities
- ...vague – it is a specific plan of what children need to know in total, and in each subject.

# Has the content of the curriculum been learned long term?

*'Learning is defined as an alteration in long-term memory.  
If nothing has altered in long-term memory nothing has  
been learned.'*



*Sweller, J., Ayres, P., & Kalyuga, S. (2011). Cognitive load theory (Vol. 1). Springer Science & Business Media.*

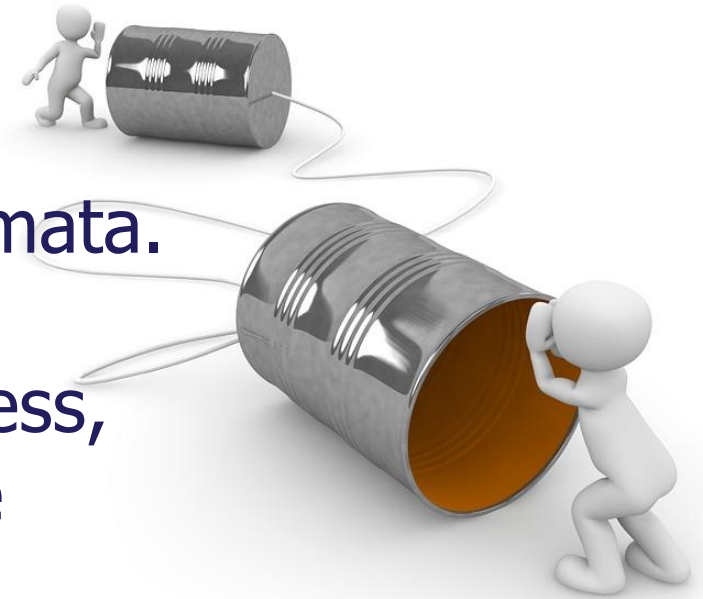






# Concepts that matter when discussing the curriculum

- Progress means knowing more and remembering more.
- Knowledge is generative (or 'sticky'), i.e. the more you know easily you can learn.
- Knowledge is connected in webs or schemata.
- Vocabulary size relates to academic success, and schooling is crucial for increasing the breadth of children's vocabulary.





# How a focus on curriculum can provide additional impetus to address issues of social inequality



# Curriculum and social justice

- Research evidence shows that subject choice has an economic impact on individuals that lasts longer than the effect of the school that you went to<sup>1</sup>
- The majority of pupils in this country don't study subjects like languages, history, geography, art and music at Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 3 is being reduced
- We found a number of schools who were excluding lower attaining pupils from the study of particular subjects, particularly languages – these pupils are disproportionately disadvantaged
- There are serious social justice implications for pupils whose last opportunity to study knowledge they are entitled to acquire is potentially at age 12

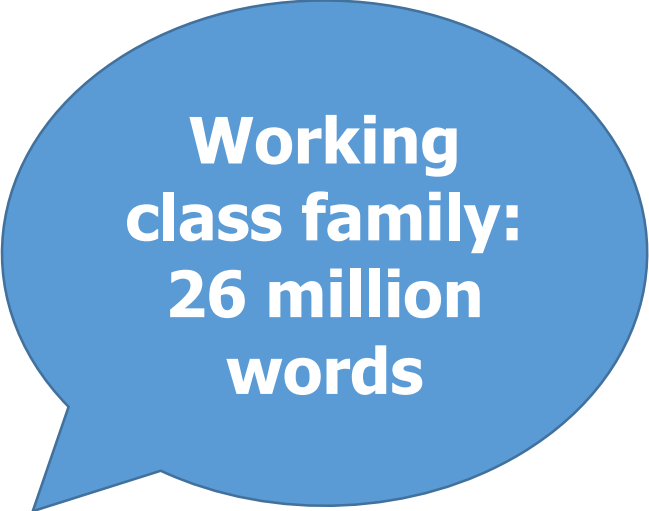
1. (Edinburgh University, British Journal of the Sociology of Education, 2013)

# Vocabulary size matters


Findings of the Hart and Risley landmark study:  
Over four years, researchers recorded the accumulated number of words an average child experienced.

A blue speech bubble with a white border, containing text about family welfare.

**Family  
receiving  
welfare:  
13m words**

A blue speech bubble with a white border, containing text about working class families.

**Working  
class family:  
26 million  
words**

A blue speech bubble with a white border, containing text about professional families.

**Professional  
family:  
45 million  
words**

*Hart, B., & Risley, T. R. (1995). Meaningful differences in the everyday experience of young American children. Paul H Brookes Publishing.*

What would it take for education to counter the 30 million word gap identified by Hart and Risley, already predicting the educational trajectory of some children when they are four years old?



# Vocabulary size relates to academic success

- The reason is clear: vocabulary size is a convenient proxy for a whole range of educational attainment and abilities — not just skill in reading, writing, listening, and speaking **but also general knowledge of science, history, and the arts.**
- If we want to reduce economic inequality, a good place to start is the subject classroom.



# Schooling is crucial for increasing the breadth of children's vocabulary

- Around 90% of vocabulary is only regularly encountered in writing and is not commonly used in speech.
- Teen fiction does not give access to the more academic vocabulary and syntax used for high-level GCSE, A level and beyond.
- Academic writing provides exposure to complex **vocabulary** and **ideas** that must be grasped for academic success.

*Stanovich, K. E. (1993). Does reading make you smarter? Literacy and the development of verbal intelligence. Advances in child development and behavior, 24, 133-180.*



When building an inclusive curriculum, a high-quality curriculum:

- is based on proactive thinking
- will be the product of clear consideration of the sequence of content necessary for children to make progress
- will provide children with the knowledge they need for subsequent learning – transferable knowledge
- builds deeper understanding and the capacity for skilful performance.

# Curriculum leadership





# The importance of the curriculum

*"There need be no tension between success on these exams and tests and a good curriculum. Quite the opposite. A good curriculum should lead to good results. However, good examination results in and of themselves don't always mean that the pupil received rich and full knowledge from the curriculum. In the worst cases, teaching to the test, rather than teaching the full curriculum, leaves a pupil with a hollowed out and flimsy understanding."*

HMCI's curriculum commentary, 11 October, 2017



# Whose knowledge?

In some subjects, like history, the selection of content can be controversial with heated debate over content choices. Are leaders choosing the curriculum content with thought and care?





# What happens when pupils don't learn the knowledge they need?

**Knowledge deficits** accumulate when layered on top of one another in a curriculum sequence. This accumulation of dysfluency (gaps) limits and may even prevent acquisition of complex skills that depends on their prior knowledge. This problem is called '**cumulative dysfluency**'

In summary, a high-quality curriculum:

- is based on proactive thinking
- will be the product of clear consideration of the sequence of content necessary for children to make progress
- will provide children with the knowledge they need for subsequent learning – transferable knowledge
- builds deeper understanding and the capacity for skilful performance.



# Key questions for leaders

- What is it important for your pupils to know, understand and be able to do by the time they leave (given the school's context)?
- How do you develop the curriculum within the context of national policy?
- How do you ensure that the curriculum alleviates the potential impact of disadvantage rather than perpetuates it?
- How do you ensure that staff share a common understanding of the school's curriculum?
- How do you structure the curriculum in each discipline to facilitate progress (knowing more and remembering more)?
- How do you structure the curriculum so learning in each discipline helps pupils to construct interconnected webs of knowledge (schema)?
- How do you evaluate the impact of the curriculum in light of your intentions?
- How do you develop the curriculum in light of your evaluations?
- How do you minimise the potential risks of any unintended consequences of your curriculum?

# What does this mean for governance?



# From our reports

## Governors:

- provide confident, strategic leadership
- hold leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
- oversee the financial performance of the school and the sensible use of additional government funding
- know their school well
- balance well the need for support and challenge
- are skilled and committed
- have a good understanding of the school's strengths and its priorities for development
- share leaders' aspirational vision for the school
- ensure that all statutory duties/functions are met.

# Report example:



- Governors have an excellent knowledge of the school and its work. They are active in their approach to finding out information, and leaders keep them well informed about the progress pupils make.
- Governors are absolutely committed to the work of the school and share the vision and aspirations of the trust and the principal. The governing body is highly skilled, with a wealth of experience within it, which helps governors to play a strategic role in self-evaluation and development planning.
- Governors challenge leaders very effectively. They recognise the quality of education within the school while appreciating that leaders still have things to work on, such as maintaining high levels of attendance and engaging with hard-to-reach parents.



# Recent reporting:

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors and the trustees are effective in holding leaders to account for the quality of education that the school provides. For example, they challenge leaders with determination about how well pupils are progressing in their learning.
- Governors and the trustees are highly involved in evaluating the effectiveness of the school and shaping school improvement plans. They each take an area of the plan to check that actions are completed in a timely and appropriate way. Governors and the trustees incorporate a series of questions and measurable milestones into each development plan to enable them to question leaders thoroughly.
- Governors and the trustees ask good-quality questions about the impact of professional development on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Governors and the trustees do not have a strong enough understanding of the rationale for the curriculum or how well it is being implemented.

# Questions to help consider curriculum quality



## **Intent**

- How far do school leaders consider the quality of the curriculum in each subject as a driver of progress?

## **Implementation**

- How effectively do school leaders/teachers consider the content and sequencing of the curriculum in each subject?

## **Impact**

- How well are pupils learning the content outlined in the curriculum?

Until the EIF is introduced, inspectors will continue to inspect using the current handbook



When judging the effectiveness of leadership and management, inspectors will consider:

- The design, implementation and evaluation of the curriculum, ensuring breadth and balance and its impact on pupils' outcomes and their personal development, behaviour, welfare
- How well the school supports the formal curriculum with extra-curricular opportunities for pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding and to improve their skills in a range of artistic, creative and sporting activities.

# Update on the development of the Education Inspection Framework - September 2019





"an evolution, not a  
revolution"

Amanda Spielman on the 2019 inspection  
framework (Wellington Festival of Education,  
2018)



# Towards a 2019 inspection framework – what aspects will we need to judge?

- We are clear that we need to take a rounded view of the **quality of education** offered by schools and providers.
- The **curriculum** will be at the core, recognising the close connection between curricular content and the way that this content is **taught** and **assessed** in order to support children to build their knowledge and to apply that knowledge.
- We remain very interested in children and learners' **wider development** including the attitudes and behaviours they bring to the classroom.
- Schools' and providers' **leadership and management** are likely to remain key areas of consideration.

# Reduce the duplication in the current CIF judgements

## Leadership & management

- Leadership
- Governance
- **Teaching**
- **Progress**
- Attitudes and ethos
- **Safeguarding**

## Teaching, learning & assessment

- **Teaching practice**
- **Behaviour**
- Homework
- Classroom and resource organisation
- **Reading**
- Information to parents

## Personal development, behaviour & welfare

- Pupil attitudes
- Careers guidance
- **Behaviour**
- Bullying
- **Preparation for next stage of learning, employment, or training**
- Attendance
- **Safeguarding**

## Outcomes

- **Progress**
- Attainment
- **Reading**
- **Preparation for next stage of learning, employment, or training**

# Judgement areas: our working hypothesis



Quality of education

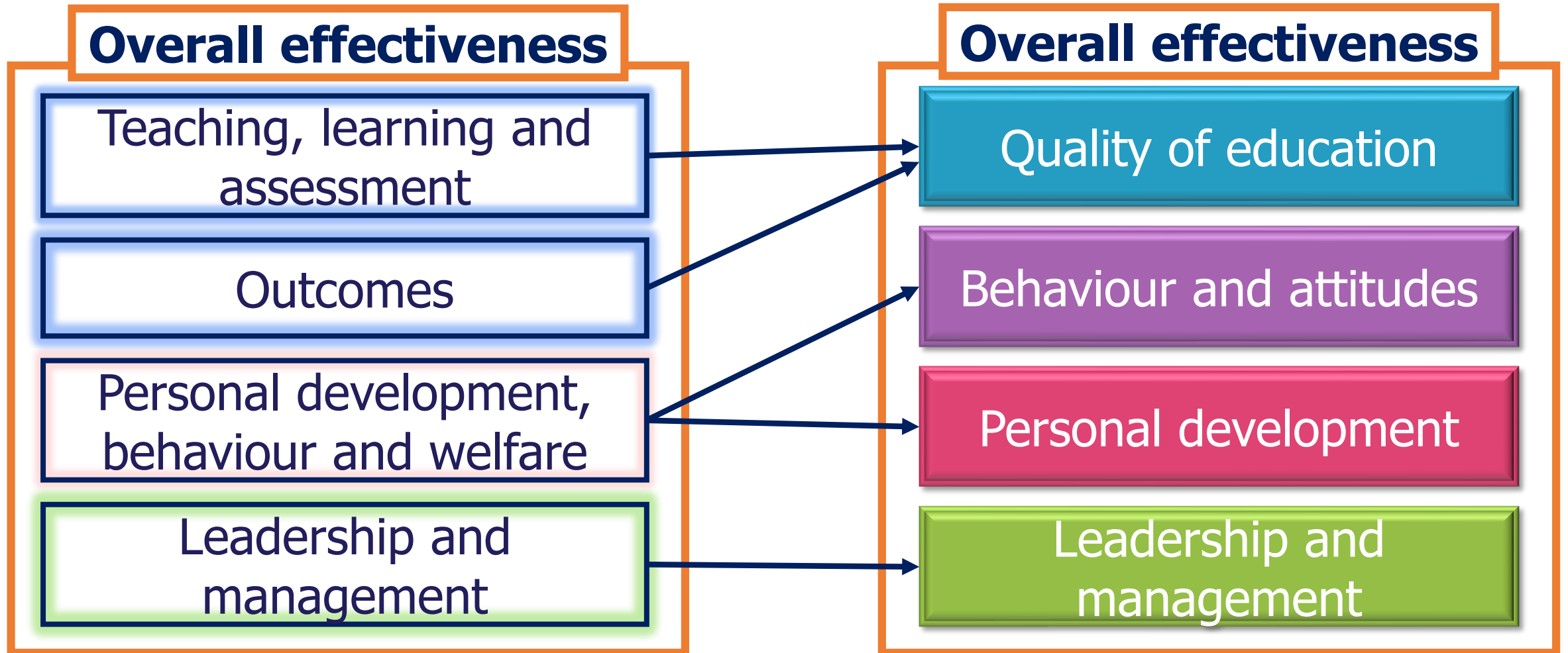
Behaviour and attitudes

Personal development

Leadership and  
management



# Judgement areas: evolution, not revolution



# Judgements: our working **hypothesis** in detail Ofsted

## Quality of education

### **Intent**

- Curriculum design, coverage and appropriateness

### **Implementation**

- Curriculum delivery
- Teaching (pedagogy)
- Assessment (formative and summative)

### **Impact**

- Attainment and progress (including national tests and assessments)
- Reading
- Destinations

## Behaviour and attitudes

- Attitudes to learning
- Behaviour
- Exclusions
- Attendance
- Bullying

## Personal development

- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Fundamental British values
- Careers guidance
- Healthy living
- Citizenship
- Equality and diversity
- Preparation for next stage

## Leadership and management

- Vision and ethos
- Staff development
- Staff workload and well-being
- Off-rolling
- Governance/oversight
- Safeguarding

# Judgements: Leadership and management



## Leadership and management

- Vision, ethos and ethics
- Staff development
- Staff workload and well-being
- Off-rolling
- Governance/oversight
- Safeguarding

# An **evolution**, not a revolution

The new framework draws on the **knowledge built up through our inspection history** as well as **wider research**.

There is **continuity**, but also **a sharper focus** on:

- **Quality of education** rather than on data
- **Workload for teachers and leaders**
- **Off-rolling**



# Keep our focus on safeguarding, reflecting Ofsted's latest thinking



Our inspection of safeguarding will continue to be built around three core areas:

- **Identify:** are leaders and other staff identifying the right children and how do they do that?
- **Help:** what timely action do staff within the provider take, and how well do they work with other agencies?
- **Manage:** how do responsible bodies and staff manage their statutory responsibilities, and in particular, how do they respond to allegations about staff and other adults?

# More focus on education; less focus on data



*"In the new framework, we're thinking about how we can take the inspection conversation **even further** on education itself and **less** on data."*

*"We want to know **how** schools are achieving a good education, not just what the results are."*

HMCI, Education Policy Institute conference,  
3 July 2018





# The outstanding grade

- We have said that we will **retain** the **outstanding grade** in the new framework, reflecting parents' wishes.
- Currently the **law** states that schools judged as **outstanding** are currently **exempt from routine inspection**.
- To ensure public confidence in the grading, we'd like to see the **removal of the outstanding exemption**.
- This will be subject to agreement with the **Department for Education** on funding and the **will of parliament**.

# In summary: main principles as we develop new judgement areas and criteria



Criteria will be based on the evidence relating to educational effectiveness. We will:

- continue to make a single, overall judgement about a provider.
- continue to emphasise safeguarding appropriately
- reduce the focus on data – putting more focus on how schools are achieving results and less pressure to produce assessment information
- retain the current four-point grading scale
- wherever possible, reduce workload for teachers, leaders and inspectors.

## What next?

- We are undertaking testing and piloting as we look towards the new **education inspection framework 2019**.
- **This term**, we are beginning to share the developing thinking with partners across the sectors we inspect and invite their thoughts and views – this shapes and influences what we produce.
- **Research** continues on the curriculum, lesson observation, work scrutiny and a wide range of other topics. The findings are feeding directly into the draft framework.
- We will consult on the substance and detail of the new framework (not just high level principles) over **spring term 2019**.
- The final framework will be published in **summer 2019** and will go live from **1 September 2019**.

Until the EIF is introduced, inspectors will continue to inspect using the current handbook



From the L&M outstanding descriptor:

'The broad and balanced curriculum inspires pupils to learn. The range of subjects and courses helps pupils acquire knowledge, understanding and skills in all aspects of their education, including humanities and linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technical, social, physical and artistic learning.'

# Clarification statements

Current handbook, in the clarification for schools section:

“Inspectors **will** discuss with school leaders their curriculum vision and ambitions for their pupils, including consideration of Ebacc subjects as part of their curriculum offer.”

“There is no benchmark or single route to the successful implementation of a curriculum with the Ebacc at its core, although inspectors will evaluate how a school’s curriculum plans contribute to the government’s ambition.”



Getting the basics of English and mathematics right is clearly important for young people entering the world of work...the two subjects with the most impact on employability.

#OfstedAR18





Literacy is the key  
to success in a  
rounded, academic  
and vocational  
education.

#OfstedAR18

# What could this look like for school governance under EIF 2019?



# Any questions?

