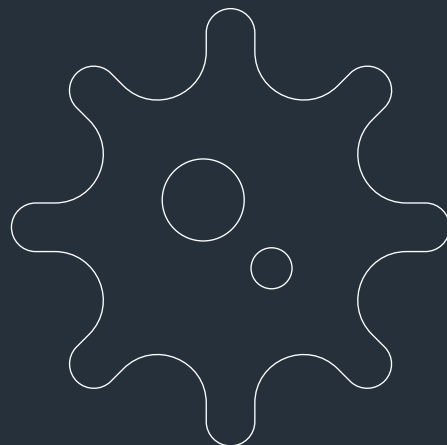


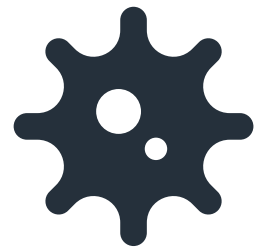
Coronavirus
guidance



**NEU guidance
on the Ofsted
interim
autumn visits**



Workload and the Ofsted autumn interim visits



Ofsted has suspended its normal inspections this term. Inspectors are making visits to a sample of schools and colleges including all schools graded as inadequate, with a focus on how the school is coping with Covid-19. According to Ofsted, one of the main purposes of the visits is to inform parents about what is happening to get children back on track with their education. The stated intention is not to make any graded judgement of a school or its measures during the Covid-19 pandemic, but to build a national picture of how education is getting back on track. The visits therefore provide no justification for in-school accountability measures. The measures that have been put in place during the Covid-19 pandemic inevitably create new workload pressures and school leaders should be working with their school staff to accommodate the new requirements for safety whilst minimising other workload pressures.

The visits will focus on curriculum, behaviour and attendance, safeguarding and particular pupil needs.

As part of the visits, Ofsted will:

- talk to the heads/leaders about any concerning incidents of poor behaviour, and will also discuss whether behaviour has deteriorated or improved;
- look at reading, curriculum routines and remote/blended learning, discussing how leaders are integrating remote learning into the wider curriculum, and the use of catch-up funding
- ask whether Covid-19 has affected pupils and staff well-being and what the school's main priorities are for the remainder of the academic year;
- look at how many staff are on roll and how many staff or students have been ill with Covid-19;
- have a conversation about attendance, any barriers in managing the return to full education for all pupils and actions to mitigate any situations that arise;
- look at how any issues related to special educational needs, disabilities, health, care, well-being issues for particular groups of pupils are being addressed
- discuss the school's safeguarding arrangements
- produce a letter describing the visit which the school can comment on.



Ofsted won't:

- give formal feedback, or provide a grade or progress judgement after the visit;
- require any pre-written planning or other documentation;
- require teachers to prepare any lesson plans or examples of assessment, or to put up any displays for the visit;
- tour the school, visit classrooms or observe teaching;
- require any additional monitoring by school leaders including learning walks or book looks;
- check the school website;
- expect leaders to prepare any documentary evidence, a self-evaluation form or any additional information specifically for a visit;
- have access to the school's inspection data summary report (IDSR)
- ask schools to circulate the usual links to parent, pupil or staff questionnaires, and there is no need to contact parents in advance of the visit

These visits have a very different remit to normal inspections, and will not require any accountability 'evidence'. **Normal in-school accountability processes should not be happening.**

These processes increase workload which is already unsustainable. School and college leaders should not be expecting:

Detailed lesson plans: teachers should plan in ways that are useful for their teaching. Ofsted will not want to see lesson plans. Leaders should expect well-planned lessons, but it is inappropriate and unnecessary to ask teachers to write separate plans for in-person and remote lessons for example.

Learning walks: These are not necessary for accountability purposes and Ofsted do not require them. They are also not part of the appraisal cycle and are a workload burden for leaders and staff. It is also not possible to carry these out in a Covid-secure way as they will involve crossing bubbles.

Displays: while these can be useful as ways to celebrate pupils' work, or as working walls, they should not be expected as a matter of course. Displays, where they are used, should be functional, and developed with the minimum of work.

Lesson observations: again, these involve crossing bubbles, are not necessary for accountability or appraisal purposes. Leaders should find supportive ways of encouraging staff to reflect on their teaching with their colleagues, and to share examples of good practices in order to help each other. The use of live or recorded lessons as part of a judgemental lesson observation process will add stress to an already difficult, time-consuming and technically demanding process, and should not be expected.





Book scrutiny: many schools are moving away from using workbooks and increasing the range of work submitted online; this means they are also finding creative ways for teachers to give feedback to individuals and whole classes. Book scrutiny involves different people handing pupils' work, increasing the risk of virus transmission. Schools should think creatively about new ways of monitoring pupil progress.

Data collection and analysis beyond that which is needed for good quality teaching: assessment and analysis of attainment is vital for teachers to understand pupils' learning needs. This should not mean an increase in the number of tests that pupils take, nor should it mean teachers taking large amounts of time to enter or analyse data. Ofsted will not be looking at a school's data. All assessment data must be useful for teachers.

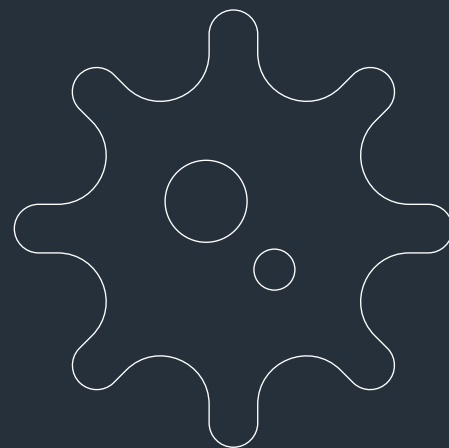
In person parents' meetings: the coming together of large groups of adults in schools must be postponed to a time when they can be accommodated safely. Otherwise, it is recommended that teleconference or video conference be used for parent-teacher meetings. When face-to-face meetings are required, the current public health advice on social distancing must be followed. Any alternative arrangements should not result in staff having to spend additional time in making appointments with parents.

In person staff meetings: to keep workload manageable, staff meetings should only be taking place when absolutely necessary. Staff meetings should not be held in person but organised using virtual technologies to prevent the potential spread of Covid-19.

The National Education Union's (NEU) support for you during this period in addressing workload problems arising from the above is set out on our [reps' advice page](#). Addressing workload is a key part of our [joint union safety checklist](#) as well. Any issues and problems with workload should be raised using the procedures set out on the reps' advice page which also contains advice on obtaining support from the NEU locally.



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