

# Restart: update on the interim visits

Plans for the autumn term 2020

Rob Hackfath, SHMI



@Rob\_Hackfath



# Temporary pause to inspections

## Routine inspection paused

Schools, further education and skills, early years, area SEND and social care.

## Urgent inspections carried out

Where specific concerns were raised.

## Social care

Regulatory work continued to help maintain social care provision for the most vulnerable children.

## Early years

- Regulatory work and registration of vital early years providers continued.



## Plans for the autumn

Our aim is to return in full to our regular inspection frameworks as soon as it is reasonable to do so. Circumstances may mean that this happens at different times across sectors.

### Routine inspection

Remains suspended.

### Visits

Phased return with an interim programme of visits to education and social care providers, and local areas' SEND arrangements.

### Reports

Briefings on the national picture published.

Full reports will follow when inspection restarts next year.



# Visits – a phased return



## Oversight, support and assurance

Proportionate, with the specific approach selected and shaped to match the particular context and circumstances of those we inspect and regulate.

---



## Information and assurance

Provide information and assurance to children and young people, commissioners, parents and the Department for Education (DfE) about individual providers and local areas' SEND arrangements.

---



## Tools we will use

Those available within existing frameworks whenever possible to keep things familiar and to ease the transition back to our full, normal frameworks.

# Ofsted has a crucial part to play

COVID-19 has caused an unprecedented period of disruption to every school in England. Ofsted has a crucial part to play in the rebuilding of education. The autumn visits will look at how schools ... are getting pupils back up to speed after so long at home.



# Why are we doing these visits?

- To gather information about what is happening at a school and national level.
- This will inform parents whose children attend an individual school about what is happening to get their children back on track with their education.
- By aggregating information from the visits we will form a national picture of how schools are getting pupils back on track with their education.

# School interim visits – overview

- We **will**:
  - visit a sample of schools, across all grades (including **all** schools currently judged inadequate)
  - give schools up to one day's notice
  - publish a short letter after each visit, summarising the discussions inspectors had with leaders
- We **will not**:
  - judge schools on their response to COVID-19 during the spring and summer terms 2020
  - provide any evaluation or graded judgements.



# Plans for schools

Interim visits will take place from 28 September 2020. They will usually last for one day.

We published an operational note in September with details about how we will carry out interim visits.

- We will:
  - **not** use the education inspection framework (EIF) and school inspection handbook on interim visits
  - carry out section 8 'no formal designation' inspections when required. These will be used only in response to significant concerns, such as safeguarding.

**Routine inspections remain suspended.** Ofsted intends to resume routine inspection activity in January 2021 but will keep the exact timing under review.

# School interim visits – further details

- These interim visits are not inspections. They **will not**:
  - require any pre-written planning or other documentation for the visit
  - ask schools for documents or records in a certain format
  - require teachers to prepare any lesson plans or examples of assessment, or to put up any displays for the visit
  - use lesson visits as a method of collecting evidence
  - involve a general review of a school's policies.
  - routinely include meetings with governors, trustees, multi-academy trust leaders or local authorities.



# School interim visits – focus and content

Inspectors will work collaboratively with leaders to understand:

## **The barriers**

in managing the return to full education for all pupils.

## **How pupils are settling back**

into expected routines and behaviour.



## **Safeguarding arrangements**

## **How learning is resumed**

in line with the DfE's guidance, including plans for the use of remote education.

## **SEND**

how specific issues related to special educational needs, disabilities, health and well-being are being addressed.

# Before the visit

- A brief telephone call to the headteacher by the lead at around 10am the day before the visit
- Purpose of the call:
  - Explain purpose of the visit
  - Discuss the context of the school, including current circumstances in light of COVID-19
  - Discuss social distancing measures in place in school and how we will work within these during the visit
  - Agree practical arrangements, such as who we will meet
  - Answer any questions the HT has about the visit
- School will receive a standard email to follow-up the call

# Structure of the visit

- Visit will start around 10am
- There will be a series of discussions around the foci of the visit, likely to be interspersed with reflection time
- Apart from the initial conversation about context, discussions can take place in any order
- There is no formal feedback at the end of the visit
- Visits will conclude by:
  - Agreeing the content of the letter with the school
  - Asking leaders for their feedback on the visit

# A consistent, structured approach

- The purpose of the visit is to gather essential national information. As a result, there will be a standardised approach to collecting it
- Therefore we will
  - Cover the same themes and ask the same basic questions of all schools, regardless of type or size
  - Use follow-up questions to find out more
  - Record the answers

# Outputs from the visit

- There will be two written outputs from the visit:
- A published, factual letter:
  - Over half is pre-populated
  - The rest of the text will be discussed with the headteacher during the visit
- A detailed summary that draws together the information gathered in an order to support national aggregation

# Remote education

Remote education may need to be an essential component in the delivery of the school curriculum for some pupils, alongside classroom teaching, or in the case of a local lockdown. All schools are therefore expected to plan to ensure any pupils educated at home for some of the time are given the support they need to master the curriculum and so make good progress.



Department  
for Education

# School interim visits - safeguarding

- The visits are not inspections and inspectors will not be judging leadership and management in the school generally.
- However, as with any Ofsted visit to a school, inspectors will want to discuss with leaders how they:
  - **identify** pupils who may need early help and those who are at risk of harm or have been harmed
  - secure the **help** that pupils need, and, if required, refer pupils in a timely way to those who have the expertise to help
  - **manage** safe recruitment and allegations about adults who may be a risk to children, pupils, students and vulnerable adults.

# School interim visits – after the visit

After the visit, there will be:

- a short letter to the school, to provide parents with information about what leaders are doing to help pupils back into full-time education
- a factual accuracy check (FAC)
- a range of briefings and reports published to share our findings on the picture across schools in England with the Secretary of State and the public.