


# OFSTED Interim Visits Briefing



# Overview Part One

- Approximately 1200 schools to be visited across all grades **including all schools judged ‘inadequate’, 3x RI or joined a MAT with a judgement of inadequate**
  - Visit times 10am- 4pm (avoids staggered starts)
  - Phone call day before – **purpose, school context, RAs and practical arrangements** (Purpose of seeing RAs is so that HMI can follow the school’s risk assessment during the visit)
  - No documentary evidence (beyond schools’ existing documents), leaders **‘should not prepare a self evaluation or equivalent for the visit’**
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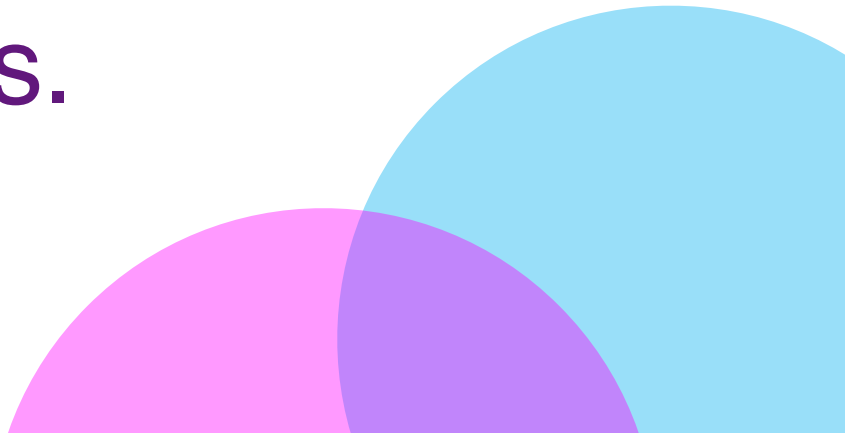
# Overview Part Two

- No lesson visits to gather evidence, no judgement of response in spring / summer, **no evaluation or graded judgement**, no questionnaires
- Methodology: Barriers faced / facing, resumption of learning & contingency planning, catch up funding, routines & behaviour, attendance, SEND, health & wellbeing, safeguarding
- **May talk to staff / pupils if agreed it is safe (but very unlikely)** – will not talk to governors / trust boards unless requested by school
- Inspectors will: Look at remote learning plans, plans to follow DFE guidance; be **alert to differences in how pupils are supported** (vulnerable / SEND / parental engagement)

# Additional Clarification (29/09/20)

## Change made

A small change to add a bullet point clarifying that these visits will not provide any evidence or lines of enquiry for later inspection events, once routine inspection resumes.



# Safeguarding

- Discussions with leaders during the visit will focus specifically on how leaders are managing safeguarding during the COVID-19 pandemic and in their local context.
- Inspectors will discuss with leaders how they:
  1. identify pupils who may need early help and those who are at risk of harm or have been harmed
  2. secure the help that pupils need, and, if required, refer pupils in a timely way to those who have the expertise to help
  3. manage safe recruitment and allegations about adults who may be a risk to children, pupils, students and vulnerable adults
- **If, on a visit, inspectors have significant concerns about the school's arrangements for safeguarding or about a breakdown in the school's leadership and management, they can arrange to treat the visit as a S8 NFD inspection**

# Resumption of statutory inspections

- Phased return is being talked about
- This could be a transitional phase
- While January is still mentioned, ‘the exact timing is under review’



# Some points to note -


- No discussion with **‘MAT boards or governing boards, LA’s or diocese’**.
- No additional paperwork from schools - only what schools have already, **‘if anything’**.
- Short letter to say what school is doing to help pupils - based on discussions with head teacher / limited number of senior leaders
- No inspection activity - not an inspection. **‘It won’t feel like an inspection’, ‘teachers may not be aware it is happening’**.
- The visit will be comprised of discussions and time to reflect. **‘Schools can identify senior leaders to participate’**.
- Opportunity to **‘stock-take and say what’s working and what’s tough’**.
- Two HMI likely to attend. Won’t move around school - **‘restricted to a single base’** - **‘Stay put unless advised otherwise by leaders’**.
- Visits (including pilot visits) used to publish national reports on the impact of COVID on education. First one due in a couple of weeks.

# Some interesting quotes!!


- We're listening, we're interested.
- No right or wrong answers. Tell them what it is really like.
- HMI do not routinely gather the views of parents during these visits (but schools do inform parents the visit is taking place).
- No judgements made whatsoever, therefore no feedback.
- So what's the point of the letter? A summary of what leaders have told us. To provide information for parents.
- Looking at information in advance? Absolutely not.
- Financial impact? 'Leaders are free to tell HMI anything that has had a particular impact'.
- Initial phone call. 'There will be an opportunity for leaders to talk about their school and its context'.



# The five areas of discussion

1. Barriers faced by the school - what's been overcome, what's still difficult
  2. Curriculum priorities / gaps in learning / Remote education plans / plans for catch up funding (HMI not expecting to see this is practice - just the school's / academy's plan)
  3. Pupils settling back in - routines and behaviour (not observed - just discussion, so to what extent will question be probing?)
  4. Any identified SEND issues / wellbeing issues and how these are being addressed by the school
  5. Safeguarding: What is in place now (and possibly discuss what was in place when lock-down began)
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# 1: Barriers faced by the school - what's been overcome, what's still difficult

- Numbers and primary needs of pupils?
  - Numbers of staff (FTE)?
  - Have all pupils and staff come back. Did anyone choose not to because of COVID?
  - Have any pupils who left between lockdown and now?
  - Discussion about staff welfare.
  - How has the school kept in touch with parents?
  - How did governance work and what is happening from now?
  - Did the school access any support from the federation / MAT etc?
  - Were the LA supportive? How?
  - How many pupils, other than usual transition year groups, have been removed from roll since 23rd March?
  - What are the school's priorities at the moment?
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## 2: Curriculum priorities / gaps in learning / Remote education plans / plans for catch up funding

- When is the school aiming to have the curriculum up and running – by September 2021?
- What does the curriculum look like in our school? Has the school altered the curriculum?
- How is the school identifying gaps? How does the school support once gaps are found?
- Is the curriculum impacted by the lack of external visits?
- What has the school done about remote learning? What plans are in place if lockdown occurs? Has the school used Oak academy resources?
- How is the school adapting curriculum areas eg, Food Tech, PE, Music, off site visits?
- Has the school found gaps between key stage transitions – curriculum content, skills and how has the school bridged the gap?
- Phonics – finding the gaps and filling them, what resources is the school using?
- Reading – how is the school addressing reading? Parental involvement in reading?

# 3: Pupils settling back in - routines and behaviour

- Discussion around percentage attendance and compared with last academic year.
- How is school managing the anxiety of pupils and parents?
- Has school altered the attendance policy re COVID?
- How did school share updates with parents?
- Discussion of any interventions put in place to enable attendance
- Is the school using the money from the catch up fund to enable attendance?
- Has school adapted the behaviour policy or systems? Any changes to sanctions?
- Is pupil behaviour better or worse?
- Are all the pupils back full time?
- How has school managed transition?
- Has school referred to / been supported by external agencies as usual?

## **4: Any identified SEND issues / wellbeing issues and how these are being addressed by the school**

## **5: Safeguarding: What is in place now (and possibly discuss what was in place when lock-down began**

- Has school updated the safeguarding policy, how has school told parents, pupils and staff?
- What changes have school seen in terms of safeguarding and vulnerable pupils?
- Discussion around vulnerable groups – have they come back more or less settled?
- Have school had external support? Has this been any more difficult?
- Were safeguarding processes the same during lockdown, are they the same now?
- Has school still got access to the LADO? Would the procedure for staff allegations be the same during lockdown?
- Discussion around SEND, particular groups, wellbeing and how the school is addressing any particular need.

# Deferrals

‘Hoping to come but happy to wait’

‘Children are always more pressing’

Leaders may ask for the deferral of a visit by making a request to the lead HMI during the notification call. We will not normally consider deferral requests if we receive them after 4.30pm on the day the school is notified.

On receipt of a request, the lead inspector must immediately contact the relevant regional duty desk. The regional director or their delegate will decide whether a deferral should be granted in accordance with our [deferral policy](#).

# The Letter

1. When school opened for all / more widely
  2. Attendance (but not data)
  3. Curriculum adaptation and changes
  4. Information about assessments and starting points
  5. Phonics (primary)
  6. Remote learning plans
- Safeguarding is not included in the letter
  - Up to 18 working days to write
  - 5 days for accuracy check
  - Published within 30 days of the visit