

School Improvement – Inspection update

SUMMARY

- 1.1 The framework for the inspection of local authority arrangements to support school improvement was originally published in May 2013; following a series of targeted reviews of schools within local authority areas. Derby City was the first of these in January 2013 and although there was no 'formal' judgement or narrative, a letter was sent to the Director of Children's Services, which included areas for improvement.
- 1.2 A revised framework for school improvement was published by Ofsted in November 2014
- 1.3 A summary of the changes to the inspection framework are set out in paragraph 4.2.
- 1.4 The criteria against which Ofsted will judge authority arrangements for school improvement is set out in paragraph 4.7.
- 1.5 Iain Peel and Christine Tarpey will attend the meeting to give a presentation on Derby's self-assessment and supporting improvement plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the changes to the inspection framework.
- 2.2 To note the criteria for the inspection of local authority arrangements for school improvement.
- 2.3 To receive the presentation at the meeting.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Although not all authorities will receive an inspection under this framework (it is risk based) it is essential that Members are aware of the requirements of the framework, the risk rating for Derby and how we perform against the key lines of enquiry that Ofsted will be challenging us against.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 The framework for the inspection of local authority arrangements to support school improvement was originally published in May 2013. A revised framework for school improvement was published by Ofsted in November 2014.
- 4.2 The new framework incorporates two key changes...
- A survey of schools will be completed as part of the inspection rather than as a 'stand-alone activity' and will therefore be used to inform the judgement narrative at the end of the inspection.
 - The previous overarching judgement of either 'effective / ineffective' has been replaced by a narrative judgement to take into account the complexities of local circumstances.
- 4.3 There are a number of elements of the framework which remain unchanged from 2013 including the fact that **not all** local authorities will receive an inspection under this framework. Inspections will instead be 'triggered' by any individual local authority meeting one or more of the eight 'selection criteria'...
- Where the proportion of children who attend a good or outstanding school, pupil referral unit and/or alternative provision is lower than that found nationally
 - Where there is a higher than average proportion of schools that have not been judged to be good or outstanding by Ofsted
 - Where there is a higher than average number of schools in an Ofsted formal category of concern and/or there are indicators that these schools are not improving rapidly enough
 - Where attainment levels across the local authority are lower than the national average and/or where the trend of improvement is weak
 - Where rates of progress, relative to starting points, are lower than the national average and/or where the trend of improvement is weak
 - Where pupils eligible for the pupil premium achieve less well than pupils not eligible for the pupil premium nationally
 - Where qualifying complaints to Ofsted about schools in a local authority are a matter of concern

- 4.4 There will usually be 5 working days' notice before inspectors arrive onsite at a local authority. This period will include a variety of 'pre-inspection' activity...
- The inspection of a number of individual schools within the local authority area and a telephone survey of schools (elements 1 and 2 below). Schools will be notified in the usual way and the Local Authority will only be notified of an inspection once all schools to be inspected have been informed.
 - As part of their preparations the Lead Inspector will consider a variety of information including; data from the local authority RAISEonline, previous inspection report (if applicable), issues raised about (or the findings from) the investigation of any qualifying complaints about schools within the local authority catchment area, information from Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) monitoring visits of schools that are in a formal Ofsted category of concern or those schools judged as requires improvement and information available on the local authority website.
- 4.5 Inspections will therefore take place over a two week period and consist of three elements...
1. Inspection of maintained schools within the local authority area as the 'starting point to gathering evidence of the quality and impact of the local authority's school improvement arrangements'. The selection of schools will be based on those due for a Section 5 inspection or a Section 8 monitoring visit under the Education Act 2005. These visits will take place during week one.
 2. A telephone survey of schools, which will also take place during week one. The sample will include a variety of schools to 'judge' the level of support provided by the local authority and impact this has had from; outstanding schools, to those which require improvement and any that have recently seen a change in their Ofsted rating.
 3. The findings of the first two activities will then be used to inform the detailed inspection of the local authority's arrangements (week two). Inspectors are usually 'onsite' with the local authority for five working days. Ofsted will be particularly looking for trends and patterns in relation to:
 - the information provided by the schools in response to inspectors' questions about the strengths, weaknesses and impact of the local authority's support
 - the areas for improvement identified by the school inspections
 - the responses given by schools through telephone survey.
- 4.6 The inspection team will consist of four inspectors although this can be altered according to local circumstances (in discussion with the local authority).

- 4.7 Ofsted will be aiming to make their judgement narrative based on nine key criteria (these are largely unchanged from the 2013 edition, with the only amendment being underlined below):
1. the effectiveness of corporate and strategic leadership of school improvement
 2. the clarity and transparency of policy and strategy for supporting school improvement and how clearly the local authority has defined its monitoring, challenge, support and intervention roles
 3. the extent to which the local authority knows schools and, where appropriate, other providers, their performance and the standards they achieve and how effectively support is focused on areas of greatest need
 4. the effectiveness of the local authority's identification of, and intervention in, underperforming maintained schools, including, where applicable, the use of formal powers available to the local authority
 5. the impact of local authority support and challenge over time and the rate at which schools and other providers are improving, including impact of the local authority strategy to narrow attainments gaps
 6. the extent to which the local authority brokers and/or commissions high quality support for maintained schools
 7. the effectiveness of strategies to support highly effective leadership and management in maintained schools and other providers
 8. support and challenge for school governance
 9. the way the local authority uses any available funding to effect improvement, including how it is focused on areas of greatest need.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 None

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer Financial officer Human Resources officer Estates/Property officer Service Director(s) Other(s)	Andrew Bunyan – Strategic Director Children and Young People’s Services Iain Peel – Service Director Learning and Inclusion Christine Tarpey - Head of Quality, Standards and Performance
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IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 Any financial implications pertaining to the inspection will be considered through the presentation.

Legal

- 2.1 The school improvement inspection framework is implemented using Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's (HMCI's) powers to carry out an inspection of the performance of a particular local authority function as set out in section 136(1) (b) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Specifically, HMCI can use this power to inspect how well the local authority is fulfilling its general duty to promote high standards and fulfilment by every child of their educational potential as set out in section 13A of the Education Act 1996.

Personnel

- 3.1 Workforce development issues are picked up through the evaluation frameworks for inspections. Specific issues for schools are picked up through individual school inspections.

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- 4.1 None

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 Equality and diversity issues are picked up through the evaluation framework for the inspection (judgement criteria 5 – closing the gaps) and are informed by the inspections of individual schools.

Health and Safety

- 6.1 None.

Environmental Sustainability

- 7.1 None.

Property and Asset Management

- 8.1 None.

Risk Management

- 9.1 Risks associated to the inspection are managed as part of the self-assessment process and on-going preparations.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 10.1 Performance of schools and the School Improvement Team directly supports the Council priority 'as a city we want people in Derby to have an inspiring start in life'.