

Handy Guide to...

Ofsted's Inspection Framework

Part 2: Leadership and Management



Introduction



In this, the next in our series of guides to the new Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF) we take a closer look at the 'Leadership and Management' category. Analysing the findings in over 100 Ofsted inspection reports, this handy guide attempts to distill what is meant by 'leadership and management' and what the characteristics of 'Outstanding', 'Good' and 'Requiring Improvement' leadership and management are.

Quick links

- ▶ The full text of the new [Education Inspection Framework](#)
- ▶ The [handbook](#) that Ofsted inspectors will use to guide their inspection
- ▶ The Department for Education's [Governance Handbook](#)
- ▶ Ofsted's [overview of research](#) used to inform its development of the EIF
- ▶ One school's [account](#) of their experience of piloting the new inspection framework
- ▶ Ofsted's [School Inspection Update](#) (September 2019).



What and who is meant by ‘Leadership and Management’?



Looking across the various Ofsted policy documents and feedback from the first wave of inspections, it is striking that the ‘leadership and management’ of a school reaches across a number of levels.

‘The leadership and management judgement is about how leaders, managers and those responsible for governance ensure that the education that the school provides has a positive impact on all its pupils’

Ofsted School Inspection Handbook

A MAT leaders

Where a school is part of a multi-academy trust, Ofsted are clear that trust leaders have a responsibility for the quality of education in all of the schools encompassed by the trust and in setting the vision and strategy for their schools. As such, Ofsted may seek to speak to MAT leaders during the inspection.

B Senior leaders

Most obviously, the senior leadership team - particularly the head - will come under scrutiny in terms of how effective they are in setting, implementing and monitoring a vision, strategy and culture that sees pupils making progress in a safe and happy learning environment.

C Middle leaders

Middle leaders - particularly people with responsibility for subject areas and the shape of the curriculum in that area - will come under scrutiny in terms of how well they have led that subject, implemented curriculum plans and reviewed the impact of those plans.

D Governors

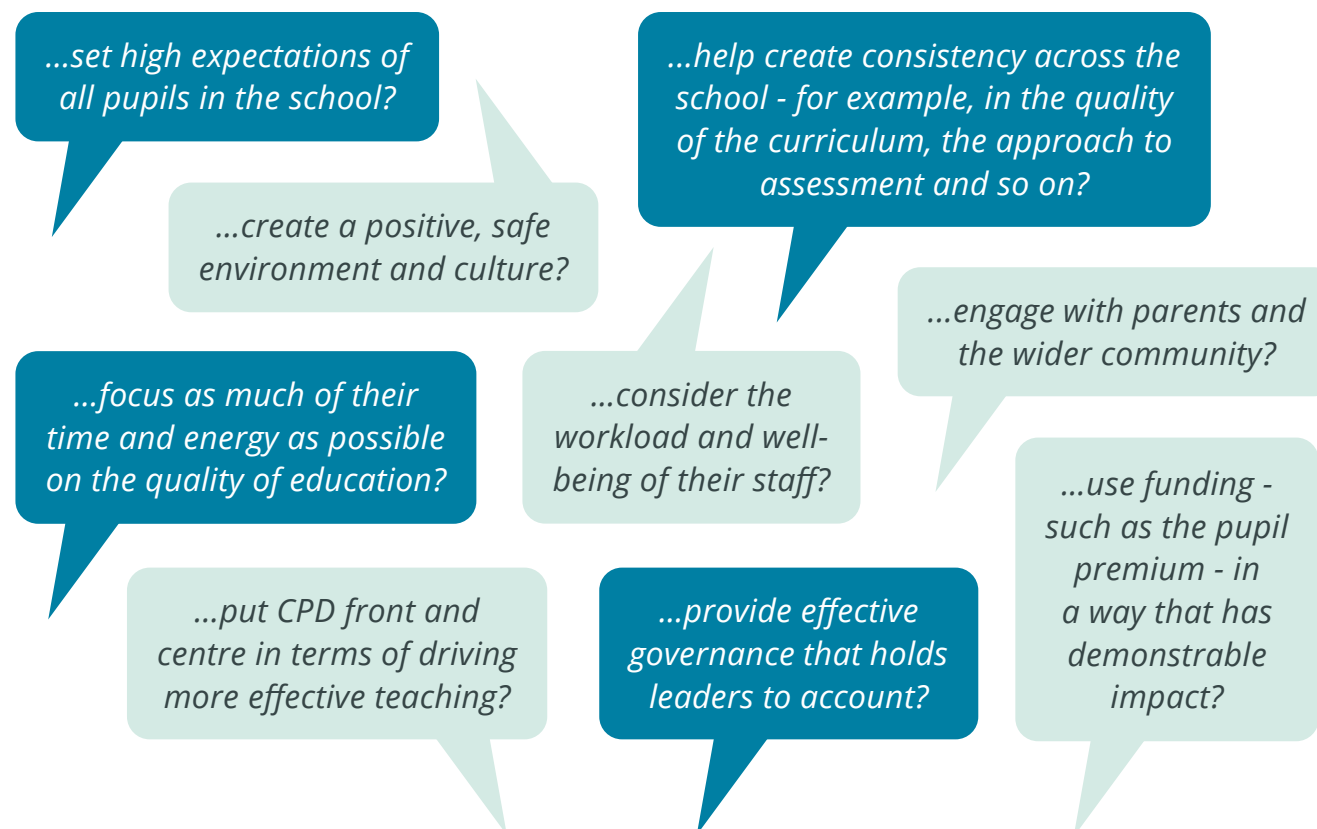
The new Ofsted framework will specifically look at and report on the skill and effectiveness of governors and trustees in holding the school and its leaders to account for the vision, strategy and quality of education in the school.

What will Ofsted be looking at under ‘Leadership and Management’?



Leadership and management is a broad term but in essence it focuses on the areas where leadership and management can have the strongest effect on the quality of education in a school. Schools may want to consider these questions in reflecting on their leadership and management.

Do leaders...



Focus on: The relationship between Quality of Education and Leadership and Management

In reviewing over 100 inspection reports since the introduction of the new framework, there is a clear and obvious relationship between the Quality of Education and Leadership and Management judgements:

- ▶ *Of the 41 schools in our sample deemed to 'Require Improvement' against the Quality of Education judgement, 80% of those schools were also deemed to 'Require Improvement' against Leadership and Management.*
- ▶ *The narrative of these Ofsted reports was consistently around leadership being ineffective in driving the quality of education - for example, poor leadership around curriculum design, content sequencing, training of teachers and so on.*

What evidence will Ofsted use when assessing leadership and management?



Ofsted's School Inspection Handbook details the sources of evidence specific to leadership and management. These include but are not limited to:

Sources of evidence

Meetings with leaders to discuss how well they know the school and the quality of education it provides.

Meeting with those responsible for governance to understand how effective they are in their roles.

Interviews with staff and pupils as a way of understanding the culture that leaders have created in the school.

Results of any staff and pupil questionnaires and Ofsted Parent View, to give insight into the school culture leaders have created.

Any other evidence a school may have - for example from surveying its staff.

Focus on: Off-rolling

Ofsted will look for any unusual patterns of pupil movement and, where they exist, seek discussions with leaders about those movements. If such movements are deemed to be 'off-rolling' - where a pupil is removed from a school for reasons that are in the best interests of the school rather than the pupil - then this may lead to an 'Inadequate' judgement.



Focus on: Safeguarding

The school's approach to safeguarding is considered under Leadership and Management. Whilst safeguarding itself will not be graded, Ofsted will make a written judgement on the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding in their inspection report. If safeguarding is ineffective, this is likely to mean the Leadership and Management is judged as Inadequate.



Taking a closer look: what do the first inspection reports reveal about leadership and management?



In the following pages we condense the findings of a review of over 100 Ofsted inspection reports under the new framework, drawing on real examples and direct quotes from Ofsted judgements to show what typically differentiates schools across the different gradings.

How far do leaders create a positive culture and set high expectations?

Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
<i>'Leaders should take effective action to ensure that all teachers have the highest expectations of all pupils.'</i>	<i>'The headteacher provides clear purpose for staff and pupils. He is supported by a capable team who have raised pupils' achievement and improved behaviour.'</i>	<i>'The headteacher and leaders have very high expectations. Their vision for the school is shared by everyone involved. Leaders and trustees believe that nothing less than outstanding is good enough.'</i>
<i>'All curriculum areas need to have high ambitions for pupils to prepare them for success at the next stage of their education.'</i>	<i>'Leaders have improved pupils' behaviour across the school. They have insisted on high standards, good manners and respect.'</i>	<i>'Pupils rise to the high expectations that the leaders and teachers have set for them.'</i>
<i>'All middle leaders within the school need to have a strong vision for their subjects. They must know their subject in depth and use this to help other teachers.'</i>	<i>'Leaders make sure that all staff meet their high expectations. This has improved the quality of education throughout the school.'</i>	<i>'The headteacher's compelling vision for an education that prepares pupils for life and work as independent adults is fully shared by his staff.'</i>

- ▶ In 'RI' schools, expectations often vary between the different leaders, making it difficult to establish a common culture of high expectations.
- ▶ In 'Good' schools, there is a more unified vision and set of expectations between all leaders and staff. Everyone is pulling in the same, positive direction.
- ▶ 'Outstanding' schools tend to be characterised by having the very highest expectations of students. The vision set by the leadership team is often compelling and transformative, permeating all elements of what the school does.

Requires improvement: schools at different stages of their journey

Reading across the first Ofsted inspection reports, it is evident that even within the 'Requires Improvement' category there are different types of school. This is sometimes reflected in the narrative of Ofsted's reports rather than the grading, with Ofsted often noting that some schools, while judged as Requiring Improvement, are already aware of their weaknesses and have a convincing plan for addressing them. This contrasts with schools who are perhaps less aware of underlying issues and as such do not have an action plan already formed.



Taking a closer look: what do the first inspection reports reveal about leadership and management?



How far do leaders ensure strong curriculum design in the school?

Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
<i>'Leaders need to ensure that the content of plans in every subject is well chosen, sequenced and delivered.'</i>	<i>'Leaders have planned carefully what is taught so that all pupils can make progress.'</i>	<i>'Leaders take enormous care to organise pupils' learning so that they gain the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to be successful in life.'</i>
<i>'Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced in mathematics.'</i>	<i>'Senior leaders have structured the curriculum so that everyone knows what knowledge is taught at what point.'</i>	<i>'Subject leaders and teachers think deeply about their subjects. They plan good sequences of lessons which build up pupils' knowledge.'</i>
<i>'Leaders need to ensure that the design of the curriculum results in pupils' knowledge and skills building over time across all subject areas.'</i>	<i>'Leaders have designed a well-planned curriculum to help pupils know more and remember more in the different subjects they study.'</i>	<i>'Leaders have thought carefully about what pupils should learn in each subject during their time at school. They have sequenced knowledge and skills well so that pupils build on what they already know.'</i>

- ▶ Typically in schools deemed 'RI', leaders need to give more thought to the content and sequencing of their curriculum. Leaders and staff may not be clear on the most important knowledge to teach and/or the curriculum sequencing may not help pupils build their understanding of this key knowledge.
- ▶ In 'Good' schools, planning of the curriculum tends to be stronger with a logic to the content chosen and its sequencing, perhaps with some areas for strengthening in specific subjects.
- ▶ In 'Outstanding' schools, it is often the case that across all subjects more forensic attention has been paid to what content should go into the curriculum and how that curriculum should be organised.

Focus on: Narrowing the curriculum

A frequent criticism from Ofsted is of leaders who choose to narrow the school curriculum too soon, especially at Key Stage 3. This decision alone, especially when not supported by a clear rationale, can drive a grading of RI across both the Leadership and Management and Quality of Education judgements.



Taking a closer look: what do the first inspection reports reveal about leadership and management?



How effectively do leaders ensure teachers are highly skilled so that the quality of education is as strong as possible?

Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
<i>'Leaders have not made sure that teachers have the required subject knowledge in subjects such as science, history and geography.'</i>	<i>'Leaders want every child to be a good reader and staff are well trained in teaching early reading, including phonics. Staff value the training and support leaders provide.'</i>	<i>'Staff are highly skilled in sensitively supporting each pupil to understand their emotions. Proficient staff use exactly the same techniques to promote pupils' positive behaviour.'</i>
<i>'Leaders need to ensure that training equips teachers with the knowledge and skills they need to improve pupils' reading.'</i>	<i>'Leaders are supporting staff to use research and attend training to improve curriculum plans further.'</i>	<i>'Teachers use their strong subject knowledge and careful assessment of pupils' learning to plan work that builds on what pupils know and can do.'</i>
<i>'Leaders need to make sure there are more experts in early reading across the staff team so all staff who teach phonics are well placed to meet the varying needs of pupils.'</i>	<i>'Staff speak positively about the support and training that they receive from senior leaders.'</i>	<i>'Staff are very well trained to help children develop speaking and listening skills.'</i>

- ▶ In 'RI' schools, there are often issues with teacher subject and/or pedagogical knowledge and no evident plan in place - in terms of CPD, for example - to address this.
- ▶ Leaders in 'Good' schools tend to have ongoing measures in place to support the upskilling of teachers. CPD tends to be either well-established or increasingly part of the school strategy for improving the quality of education.
- ▶ In 'Outstanding' schools, leaders tend to have developed a highly skilled workforce, often as a result of significant attention paid to CPD. Under their leadership, these teachers are maintaining the highest levels of proficiency in a way that sees all pupils making progress.

Focus on: Distribution and consistency of leadership



Ofsted's position is that effective leadership and management happens when it is shared across different individuals and levels within a school rather than overly-concentrated in a small number of individuals. It will be important, therefore, for all your leaders to be consistently strong - there are already a number of examples of schools being judged to require improvement against Leadership and Management because of weaknesses in one or two subject leadership areas, even though the leadership beyond these areas was strong.

Taking a closer look: what do the first inspection reports reveal about leadership and management?



How skilled and effective are governors in holding school leaders to account?

Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
<i>'Governors are not holding leaders to account sufficiently. They should ensure that they have a detailed focus on all aspects of school performance.'</i>	<i>'Trust members and governors check what leaders are doing. They make sure it makes a difference for pupils.'</i>	<i>'Even though the school is doing very well, leaders and governors are always looking for ways to improve it further. They listen to ideas from everyone in the school community and staff visit other schools to see what is happening and to help other teachers.'</i>
<i>'Governors do not know enough about the quality of education. They do not make sure they have the information they need to carry out their duties well.'</i>	<i>'Governors ask the challenging questions that help the school to keep on improving.'</i>	<i>'Governors are very good critical friends to leaders. They are tenacious in their analysis of the school's progress and hold leaders to account.'</i>
<i>'Governors do not have a good enough grasp of what additional money is coming into the school or how it will be spent. This means that it is difficult for them to check on the use of this important resource.'</i>	<i>'Governors know what they need to do in their roles and are ambitious for their school. They work well with school leaders and ensure that any additional money they receive for pupils is spent well.'</i>	<i>'Governors carry out their statutory duties diligently. They hold the headteacher to account for the quality of education in the school.'</i>

- ▶ In 'RI' schools the governing body tends to function ineffectively. The relationship between governors and school leaders can be distant and the governors themselves can lack the knowledge and expertise to ask the right questions. In short, they are not holding school leaders to account.
- ▶ In 'Good' and 'Outstanding' schools, the governors or trustees tend to fully understand their role and fulfil it, asking leaders the right questions and holding them to account for key decisions. They are a driving force for improving the school.

Focus on: Governors

Now is a good time to look across your governing team and consider:

- ▶ The breadth of skills and experience.
- ▶ The governors' knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the strategy for addressing the latter.
- ▶ The level of involvement governors have had in setting and monitoring the school strategy and its effectiveness.
- ▶ Whether governors fully understand their duties and if they are familiar with the DfE's Governance Handbook.



Taking a closer look: what do the first inspection reports reveal about leadership and management?



How well do leaders cater for the needs of all students, including SEND?

Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
<i>'Leaders should ensure that they have a more secure knowledge of those pupils with SEND who have a support plan. The support plans should be reviewed regularly. These pupils do not acquire the knowledge they need to succeed.'</i>	<i>'Leaders make sure that SEND pupils receive the support they need. They adapt their curriculum plans to help these pupils.'</i>	<i>'Staff are working hard to help pupils to catch up. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) gain the knowledge they need to make good progress.'</i>
<i>'Leaders need to ensure that new curriculum plans are used well to ensure that all pupils, including those with SEND, learn the essential knowledge they need for each subject they study.'</i>	<i>'Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum for these pupils. Well-trained teaching assistants work well with individuals and small groups so that these pupils overcome whatever challenges they face.'</i>	<i>'The curriculum plans are very well adapted for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders work with other professionals, such as the educational psychologist, to meet the needs of these pupils. As a result, these pupils achieve highly.'</i>

- ▶ In 'RI' schools, SEND students are sometimes not fully catered for and more could be done to ensure these pupils are being set high expectations and making the progress they need to,
- ▶ In 'Good' schools, strong provision is put in place for SEND students - often through a combination of a well-crafted, inclusive curriculum and the use of dedicated, trained staff to provide additional support.
- ▶ This is also the case in 'Outstanding' schools, although what sometimes sets these schools apart is the impact of their approach, with SEND pupils achieving highly.

Taking a closer look: what do the first inspection reports reveal about leadership and management?



How well do leaders monitor the implementation of the curriculum?

Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
<i>'Leaders have planned what pupils study carefully and in a logical order but they have not ensured that teachers are following the plans well enough.'</i>	<i>'Leaders have appointed teachers to be in charge of each of the subjects. The role of these teachers is to implement the new teaching plans and ensure that the quality of teaching continues to improve.'</i>	<i>'Staff make expert use of information in pupils' education, health and care plans to decide the best way for each pupil to learn. Staff skilfully change the way they teach to help each child succeed.'</i>
<i>'Leaders need to monitor the teaching more closely. They should identify weaknesses quickly and provide the right support and training to improve the delivery of the curriculum.'</i>		
<i>'Leaders need to ensure that subject-specific curriculums are implemented effectively so that pupils achieve well.'</i>	<i>'A year ago, leaders noticed that pupils were not doing as well as they could in English and mathematics. Leaders have addressed this.'</i>	

- ▶ In 'RI' schools, leaders tend not to monitor the implementation of the curriculum as closely as would be done in 'Good' and 'Outstanding' schools. In such scenarios, leaders may have a well-planned curriculum but its impact is limited because it is not delivered as intended and leaders may be slow to realise this
- ▶ In 'Good' and 'Outstanding' schools, leaders tend to be proactively monitoring how a curriculum is being implemented, meaning a closer relationship between the 'planned' and 'experienced' curriculum.

Taking a closer look: what do the first inspection reports reveal about leadership and management?



How well do leaders use assessment information to effectively adapt learning?

Requires Improvement	Good	Outstanding
<i>'Leaders need to ensure that assessment across all subjects revisits key concepts and components so that any gaps in essential learning are identified in a timely manner.'</i>	<i>'Leaders give teachers time to check how well pupils have understood their learning. Teachers use this time to work out who needs help to keep up.'</i>	<i>'Teachers use their strong subject knowledge and careful assessment of pupils' learning to plan work that builds on what pupils know and can do.'</i>
<i>'Leaders have not ensured that teachers make appropriate use of assessment information well enough to check pupils' understanding and adapt their teaching accordingly.'</i>	<i>'Leaders use assessment well to inform pupils of their next steps. They also use assessment effectively to alter teaching or curriculum plans so that recurring weaknesses in pupils' understanding are addressed.'</i>	<i>'Leaders check that any pupil who is falling behind gets extra support. This closes the gaps in these pupils' phonics knowledge and helps them with their reading.'</i>
<i>'Assessment is not used as well as it should be. In science and mathematics, teachers lack clarity over what knowledge pupils have already gained. Leaders need to ensure that methods of assessment across the school give them and teachers the information they need to plan for what pupils still need to be taught.'</i>	<i>'Teachers use the information they collect about pupils to plan their work at the right level.'</i>	

- ▶ In 'RI' schools, there can be patchy or inconsistent use of assessment across subjects. Data gathered is either not useful in identifying what pupils have and haven't learnt and remembered or is not used as well as it should be.
- ▶ In 'Good' and 'Outstanding' schools, leaders have ensured that assessment is used as a force for informing and improving what is taught next. This approach to assessment tends to be school-wide, particularly in 'Outstanding' schools.

Focus on: Useful assessment

Under the new framework, Ofsted will be interested in understanding why a school has collected the data they have and how they are using that data to inform their curriculum and teaching. They will look to the leaders in the school to explain and understand the approach to assessment.



We're working with schools to help design and deliver outstanding curricula – from off-the-shelf solutions to bespoke curriculum design.

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Look out for the rest of our Handy Guide to Ofsted's Inspection Framework series:

Part 1: Quality of Education

Part 2: Leadership and Management

Part 3: Personal Development

Part 4: Behaviour and Attitudes



Please note this summary prepared by Pearson of Ofsted's EIF document is intended as a helpful reference. Pearson is not responsible for the contents of the EIF and schools are advised to refer to the full version for any reliance on the document.