

## Ofsted

### Education inspection framework 2019: inspecting the substance of education

5 April 2019

1. The NASUWT welcomes the opportunity to comment on *Education inspection framework 2019: inspecting the substance of education*.
2. The NASUWT is the teachers' union.

### GENERAL COMMENTS

3. The NASUWT believes that, as publicly funded institutions, schools should be held accountable. The Union's report, *Maintaining World Class Schools*<sup>1</sup>, sets out essential features of an effective accountability system. It specifies that such a system:
  - is fit for purpose and secures public trust and confidence in education;
  - secures greater parental and public engagement in and support for public education;
  - enables teachers to teach more and test less;
  - is driven by educational, rather than political concerns; and
  - evaluates the quality of public education rather than simply measuring the performance of individual schools or colleges.

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<sup>1</sup> NASUWT (2013), *Maintaining World Class Schools*.

4. The NASUWT welcomes the proposed changes to the inspection framework, but believes that further reforms are needed in order to meet the tests set out above.
5. Inspection forms one part of a school and provider accountability system that is high stakes and punitive. This presents risks and challenges for Ofsted, as inspection is likely to continue to drive practice in many schools and colleges.
6. The NASUWT believes that inspection should be developmental and supportive. This would help to lessen the damaging impact that a poor inspection judgement has on schools, teachers and pupils and help to secure school improvement.
7. The NASUWT believes that Ofsted should judge whether a school provides an acceptable standard of education and that the inspection judgement should be 'pass' or 'fail'. The 'pass/fail' approach recognises that all schools should be seeking to improve.
8. Many of the problems that NASUWT members encounter are not due to the inspection framework or guidance in the handbooks *per se* but arise because individual inspectors and school leaders interpret the framework and guidance in ways that were not intended. Therefore, it is vital that Ofsted continues to monitor inspections and practice in schools closely and continues to ensure that problems are identified and challenged robustly, including through training and amendments to the inspection guidance.

**Inspecting how leaders manage staff workload and protect and develop staff**

9. The NASUWT welcomes the emphasis paid in the *Education Inspection Framework* (EIF) and inspection handbooks to addressing workload burdens arising from inspection and/or management practices within the provision. The acknowledgement of the relationship between workload and staff stress and wellbeing is especially welcome.

10. It is vital that Ofsted ensures that inspectors inspect and report on the issues of workload, and staff stress and wellbeing robustly and sensitively. Therefore, the reference in the *School inspection handbook* to the Government's report, *Making data work*<sup>2</sup>, is welcome. However, the NASUWT believes that Ofsted should do more to ensure that inspectors inspect and report on the issues appropriately and fully. The inspection handbooks should make explicit reference to the importance and value of schools undertaking stress and wellbeing surveys and to using the results of these surveys to improve practices, including the support provided to staff. A school's follow-up actions should be flagged up as a potential source of evidence for inspection.

11. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has developed a framework for identifying stress. The framework identifies the six main areas of work design that can affect levels of stress of workers (demands, control, support, relationships, role and change). The NASUWT believes that the framework provides an important means for both judging and taking action to address the causes of stress. The HSE framework is consistent with many of the points already included in the EIF and inspection handbooks. The Union recommends that Ofsted makes explicit reference to the various elements of the HSE framework<sup>3</sup> in the school, early years and further education and skills inspection handbooks. Every inspection team should be able to inspect and report on staff wellbeing. The NASUWT urges Ofsted to provide mandatory training for all inspectors on the HSE framework and the inspection of stress and wellbeing. The Union believes that the following are critical to ensuring staff wellbeing and should be reflected in any training:

- a. recognition of the inextricable link between high quality education and decent pay and conditions for staff;

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<sup>2</sup> Teacher Workload Advisory Group *Making data work: Report of the Teacher Workload Advisory Group*, November 2018

<sup>3</sup> HSE work-related stress website (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/index.htm>). Accessed 4 March 2019.

- b. excessive workload and pupil indiscipline are tackled, with clear measures in place to prevent unnecessary workload and ensure positive pupil behaviour;
- c. management practices provide clear evidence that leaders are proactive in creating a positive working environment and good working conditions;
- d. teachers are treated with dignity and respect and are recognised and rewarded as highly skilled professionals.

12. The NASUWT welcomes the inclusion of judgements about the steps that leaders take to protect staff from bullying and harassment as part of the inspection of Leadership and Management in the EIF.<sup>4</sup> It is essential that inspectors pay very close attention to how staff are treated by learners and by senior staff and governors. It is also essential that inspectors inspect such issues sensitively and robustly. This includes recognising that adverse management practices may mean that staff feel vulnerable and are reluctant to talk about their experiences, particularly if they believe that their position could be more precarious as a result of highlighting the issue. The NASUWT believes that Ofsted should provide clear guidance and further training to inspectors on the nature and impact of poor management practices on staff including their wellbeing. This should address issues such as inappropriate and poor staff deployment, unreasonable and unrealistic expectations of staff, inappropriate use of data and the misuse of data targets, denial of pay progression, failure to provide appropriate support to teachers in the classroom, and bullying and harassment of staff.

13. The NASUWT welcomes the expectation set out in the EIF and the *School inspection handbook* that school leaders should pay particular attention to developing staff. For example, paragraph 211 of the *School inspection handbook* refers to the alignment of professional development for teachers and staff with the curriculum and the extent to which CPD develops

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<sup>4</sup> Ofsted, *Education Inspection Framework*, Paragraph 28.

teachers' content knowledge and teaching content knowledge over time. Also, the grade descriptors for a 'good' quality of education judgement include leaders providing effective support for those teaching outside their main areas of expertise.<sup>5</sup> It will be important for Ofsted to ensure that inspectors give careful consideration to the role of professional development in supporting implementation of the school's curriculum, including the quality of that CPD. Inspectors should also consider whether all teachers have access to CPD, and whether CPD addresses the needs of different groups of learners, particularly learners with special SEN appropriately.

### **Inspecting equalities, inclusion and sustainability**

14. The NASUWT welcomes the recommendation in the EIF that those with responsibility for governance ensure that the provider fulfils its statutory duties, including under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is also a need for inspectors to consider how well school leaders and managers identify and address equality issues and how this impacts on practice and outcomes across the school. The NASUWT believes that, as part of preparation for inspection, inspectors should ask a school to provide details of the objectives that have been set in relation to the school's responsibilities under the public sector equality duty (PSED). A school should also be asked to provide details of their accessibility plan and their SEN information report. Schools have statutory duties to prepare and maintain these documents and they provide an important starting point for discussions with school leaders about how equality matters are identified and addressed.

15. In its training for inspectors in September 2018, Ofsted emphasised inspectors' responsibilities in respect of the Equality Act 2010 and the PSED. It is essential that Ofsted continues to stress inspectors' responsibilities in respect of the Equality Act and the PSED and continues to provide inspectors with relevant training and exemplifications. Ofsted

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<sup>5</sup> Ofsted, *School inspection handbook* 2019, paragraph 184, first bullet under the implementation heading.

should also monitor the quality of equality inspection reporting in inspection reports.

16. The NASUWT welcomes Ofsted's intention to identify and challenge the practice of off-rolling or illegal exclusion. This is a vital step in ensuring that all children and young people access high-quality education. However, it is important to recognise that some schools and providers operate exclusive and covert admissions practices which mean that other schools/providers, particularly those with an inclusive ethos, may take disproportionate numbers of challenging and disadvantaged learners. The NASUWT believes that Ofsted should seek to obtain evidence about schools operating 'exclusive' practices and that such practices are challenged through inspection. The Union acknowledges the difficulties in obtaining such evidence but believes that Ofsted should draw on evidence from other inspections, such as, evidence from parent forums for special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) area inspections, in order to identify to establish what is happening locally.

17. The NASUWT acknowledges the UK Government's commitment to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) domestically as well as through its international development work. The Government is seeking to embed work to meet the goals into mainstream activities and actions, including single department plans (SDPs). It is also seeking to support and encourage others to work towards the SDGs. While there is a specific goal for education (SDG4: inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all), the goals are broad and address all areas of life. They place particular emphasis on tackling inequalities and on promoting inclusion and sustainability. The NASUWT believes that Ofsted has an important role to play in helping the UK to meet the SDGs, particularly SDG4. The Union recommends that Ofsted reviews how it is addressing the SDGs through its inspection, evidence-gathering and research activities, and establishes what more it could do. Further, the NASUWT recommends that Ofsted includes advice about inspection and the SDGs in future training for inspectors.

## **Inspection of ‘outstanding’ schools**

18. The NASUWT notes that concerns have been raised that some schools judged ‘outstanding’ have not been inspected for up to 11 years. It is disappointing that the planned reforms do not include plans to remove the exemption of ‘outstanding’ schools from routine inspections. This undermines Ofsted’s role in serving the public interest and ensuring that the education system is fit for purpose. It is also at odds with Ofsted’s statement that data provides a partial picture of the quality of education. The Union believes that Ofsted should raise these concerns with the Department for Education (DfE) and ministers with a view to securing legislative changes and additional funding so that it can fulfil its functions effectively.

## **SPECIFIC COMMENTS**

### **Proposal 1: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to introduce a ‘quality of education’ judgement?**

19. The NASUWT strongly agrees with the proposal to introduce a ‘quality of education’ judgement and supports the rationale for doing this. This recognises the need to shift away from the emphasis on performance data to taking a more holistic view of a provider’s performance which recognises the centrality of the curriculum. This approach should allow inspectors to take account of a provider’s context when making a judgement about quality. However, the NASUWT has concerns about how inspectors will interpret the EIF and guidance in the relevant handbook when they inspect, and about how school leaders interpret and respond to the inspection reforms.

20. Paragraph 165 of the draft School Inspection Handbook states that *‘inspectors will bear in mind that developing and embedding an effective curriculum takes time and that leaders may only be part way through the*

*process of adopting or redeveloping a curriculum'*. This is a key point and Ofsted must ensure that both inspectors and school leaders understand what this means in practice. For instance, it is vital that inspectors and school leaders understand that inspection reforms should not result in increased workload for teachers or school leaders – changes to the curriculum should be planned to take place over time.

21. Inspectors will need to recognise that the increased focus on the curriculum could have implications for leadership roles and responsibilities in schools. For example, school leaders may need to pay less attention to data management and have greater pedagogical oversight of the curriculum, including the design and implementation of the curriculum. The NASUWT believes that Ofsted should consider how schools are managing this change as part of the judgements about the quality of education and leadership and management. Inspectors should evaluate whether school leaders are taking actions which help teachers to teach and learners to learn.

22. The NASUWT welcomes Ofsted's recognition that the curriculum should remain as broad as possible for as long as possible (paragraph 157, fifth bullet) and that disadvantaged learners and learners with SEND should not be offered a reduced curriculum (sixth bullet). The NASUWT also welcomes the guidance in paragraph 161 which makes it clear that inspectors will expect a school that has shortened KS3 to demonstrate that pupils can still study a broad range of subjects in years 7, 8 and 9. However, Ofsted will need to provide very clear guidance about what this means in practice. It should be clear, for example, that a broad and balanced curriculum is about more than the academic core of subjects such as EBacc subjects. It should also be clear that a minimum expectation of academies is that their curriculum should be at least as broad and balanced as the National Curriculum.

23. It should be clear that an academically focused curriculum may be appropriate for some learners with SEND but may not meet the needs of other learners with SEND. The NASUWT believes that Ofsted should

highlight the need for schools to respond to the different needs of all learners and provide a curriculum that meets the needs and aspirations of different learners.

24. The NASUWT is concerned about the wording of the descriptor for the evaluation judgement that covers the impact of the teaching of early reading in infant, junior and middle/lower schools.<sup>6</sup> The descriptor states that *'all pupils, including the weakest readers, make sufficient progress to meet or exceed age-related expectations'*. This appears to be saying that all pupils should meet or exceed age-related expectations. Some pupils, notably some pupils with special educational needs (SEN), may not meet age-related expectations. The descriptor should accommodate these pupils. Inspectors may also need to make a judgement that recognises the starting point for the pupil or pupils and the quality of the support that is provided to help them to progress.

25. The NASUWT agrees that schools have an important role to play in enabling learners to build the cultural capital that they need to succeed in life, but believes that the definitions in the schools and early years inspection handbooks are too narrow. The definitions need to be broadened from the focus on the essential knowledge that children need to be educated citizens, to also recognise the importance of personal development in building cultural capital. This is particularly important when considering the curriculum for younger learners, learners from disadvantaged backgrounds and learners with SEN. It is crucial that those responsible for curriculum leadership consider how the curriculum will support learners' personal development and design and implement a curriculum that does this. The NASUWT recommends that the definition of cultural capital is expanded to include reference to aims for personal development such as those set out in paragraph 27 of the EIF, including: developing learners' character, enabling learners to develop and discover their interests and talents, and equipping learners for life in modern Britain,

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<sup>6</sup> Ofsted, *School inspection handbook*, paragraph 285, first bullet under the impact heading.

including as responsible, respectful, active citizens who contribute positively to society and who understand and appreciate diversity.

26. The NASUWT welcomes Ofsted's intention that schools taking radically different approaches to the curriculum will be judged fairly if leaders are able to show that they have built a curriculum with appropriate coverage, content, structure and sequencing that has been implemented effectively (paragraph 160). Ofsted guidance should make it clear that all curriculum approaches should be inclusive and accommodate the needs of all groups of learners.

27. The NASUWT welcomes Ofsted's recognition of the link between quality of education and teacher workload. As indicated above, it is critical that Ofsted ensures that inspection does not place workload burdens on teachers and school leaders directly or indirectly; for example, through school leaders making assumptions about what Ofsted requires. It is also vital that inspectors look critically at how schools address teacher and school leader workload. This should include explicit consideration of the steps that school leaders have taken to minimise workload and manage potential generators of workload. It must also include explicit consideration of what the school is doing to ensure the wellbeing of staff.

**Proposal 2: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed separation of inspection judgements about learners' personal development and learners' behaviour and attitudes?**

28. The NASUWT strongly agrees with the proposal to separate inspection judgements for behaviour and attitudes and personal development. The Union acknowledges Ofsted's rationale for making the change and agrees that the current framework makes it difficult to understand reporting under the judgement. Further, the NASUWT welcomes the recognition that while schools and other providers may encourage children and young people to develop, other factors such as home environment and the community also impact on their personal development. It is appropriate for inspectors to

consider how well a school or provider supports the personal development of pupils and learners. It would not be appropriate for them to seek to judge the impact of this support on their personal development.

29. Paragraph 234 of the *School inspection handbook* is preceded by the heading 'Inclusion and off-rolling'. 'Inclusion' should be presented under a separate heading from 'off-rolling'. This will help to make it clear that inclusion is a positive approach that should be considered in its own right rather than simply something to be considered in relation to gaming.
30. The bullet points in paragraph 234 refer to schools having an inclusive culture. There is a need for the handbook to also make explicit reference to the role of school leaders in leading and managing inclusion. Inspectors should examine how inclusion is addressed through strategic planning and decision making. Inspectors should also examine the role of the special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) or head of inclusion and how they are enabled to contribute to strategic planning and decision-making. Further, inspectors should examine how staff are supported, including through professional development, so that they are able to meet the needs of the learners they teach, including learners with SEN.
31. The NASUWT recommends that the grade descriptors for 'good' and 'outstanding' leadership and management make reference to leaders providing strategic leadership of SEN and inclusion. This is important because failure to address SEN and inclusion strategically is likely to impact adversely on pupils' behaviour and attitudes and on their personal development.
32. The NASUWT welcomes the intention to talk to staff who are often 'not heard' and who may be best placed to provide a picture of behaviour in the school (supply teachers, catering staff, NQTs). This should provide evidence about the strategic leadership of behaviour, as well as the actual behaviour that the staff encounter. However, Ofsted must recognise the limitations of seeking evidence from these members of staff. For example,

staff may feel vulnerable talking candidly about the difficulties they encounter or the behaviour that they observe. This is particularly likely to be the case if they consider their job to be vulnerable (e.g. they are on a short-term or casual contract, or the school is seeking to cut posts). It will be important for inspectors to ensure that such staff are protected and to reassure staff that they will not be left vulnerable.

33. Ofsted should make it clear to inspectors why the views of these groups of staff are important, what sorts of evidence should be sought and the inferences that might be made. For example, are supply teachers routinely given information to orientate themselves in the school? Are supply teachers allowed in to the staff room? Have supply teachers been inducted and does this include being given information about the school's behaviour and SEN policies? Are supply teachers given information about pupils who have specific needs or exhibit problem behaviours? Ofsted should also provide training for inspectors to ensure that they address these issues appropriately and sensitively.

34. The NASUWT believes that the inspection of behaviour and attitudes should include careful consideration of a provider's policies and procedures for managing behaviour, including how those policies and procedures are developed and communicated, and whether they are implemented consistently and coherently. This should also include consideration of whether policies take account of the Equality Act 2010 and the requirement to make reasonable adjustments. Evidence from NASUWT surveys indicates that behaviour problems are most likely to arise when leaders fail to provide the necessary leadership and support to staff, including when policies are not communicated clearly or implemented consistently and fairly.

35. The NASUWT notes that the 'outstanding' and 'good' grade descriptors for behaviour and attitudes focus on behaviour outcomes, rather than on leadership of behaviour and attitudes. This seems to assume that 'good' or 'outstanding' behaviour is the result of strategic leadership and management of behaviour. However, teachers report that pupil behaviour

may be good or excellent despite the lack of strategic leadership and support from senior leaders. The Union believes that inspectors should examine and make judgements about the strategic leadership of behaviour, including 'good' and 'outstanding' behaviour, and that it would be most appropriate for this judgement to be made under leadership and management.

36. It will be important for inspectors to consider evidence about behaviour and attitudes alongside evidence about the quality of the curriculum, and the support and development of staff.

37. Paragraph 186 of the *School inspection handbook* makes reference to factors such as an environment where pupils feel safe, in which bullying and discrimination are not accepted and in which they are dealt with quickly, consistently and effectively whenever they occur. The wording should be amended to say 'pupils and staff'. The behaviour and attitudes of pupils is unlikely to be acceptable if staff do not feel safe or if staff are bullied or discriminated against by pupils or other staff.

## **Early years provision**

### **Proposal 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposals will work well for early years settings?**

38. The NASUWT supports Ofsted's intention to have a single EIF with separate handbooks for schools, early years, further education and skills and non-association independent schools. This should help to ensure consistency across inspections. It is right that providers should be subject to the same standards when making inspection judgements. However, the Union notes that the EIF appears to have been developed primarily with schools in mind. For example, the current definition of cultural capital is taken from a definition of aims for the national curriculum. The NASUWT considers the current definition of cultural capital to be too limited and believes that it should be broadened to cover personal development. In the

context of early years, the definition should cohere with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and recognise the importance of a broad, balanced and age-appropriate curriculum.

39. Research undertaken on behalf of the Government by the Effective Provision of Pre-school Education (EPPE) project<sup>7</sup> and the Quality of Childcare Settings in the Millennium Cohort<sup>8</sup> Study has established that children make the best progress in early years settings that have highly qualified and trained staff, particularly those settings that deploy appropriately qualified teachers. It is worrying, therefore, that few early years providers, aside from schools and nursery schools, employ qualified teachers or graduate childcare professionals. The emphasis in the leadership and management grade descriptors in the early years inspection handbook on practitioners receiving relevant, quality professional development is both welcome and critical.

## **Maintained schools and academies**

**Proposal 4: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed focus of section 8 inspections of good schools and non-exempt outstanding schools and current proposals to increase the length of these inspections from the current one day to two days?**

40. The NASUWT agrees with the proposal to increase the length of S8 inspections of 'good' schools and non-exempt 'outstanding' schools from the current one day to two days. This will provide inspectors with more time to evaluate the full range of work that the school is doing. However, questions still need to be raised about whether inspectors will be able to form accurate judgements about the quality of education being offered to all learners within two days.

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<sup>7</sup> Sylva, K., Melhuish, E., Sammons, P., Siraj-Blatchford, I., and Taggart, B. (2004), *The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project: Final Report*. London: DfES.

<sup>8</sup> Mathers, S.; Sylva, K.; Joshi, H; Hansen, K.; Plewis, I.; Johnson, J.; George, A.; Linskey, F.; and Grabbe, Y. (2007), *Quality of childcare settings in the Millennium Cohort Study*. London; HMSO.

**Proposal 5: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed introduction of on-site preparation for all section 5 inspections, and for section 8 inspections of good schools, on the afternoon prior to the inspection?**

41. The NASUWT welcomes Ofsted's plan that preparation for inspection should take place on site for all section 5 inspections and on the afternoon prior to section 8 inspections of good schools. The Union recognises that the arrangement is being introduced in response to concerns about the workload that is generated in some schools when they are notified that an inspection is taking place. However, it will be important for Ofsted to ensure that the preparation time is used appropriately and that this does not mean that inspection is extended by half a day.

42. The NASUWT has concerns that while the proposal will stop schools from preparing for inspection just before an inspection, it may not stop the practice of preparing for inspection. There is a risk that some school leaders will extend the preparation process and expect staff to be continually on guard and ready for Ofsted. It will be important, therefore, for inspectors to seek evidence about and question such practices.

43. The NASUWT welcomes Ofsted's plans to ask academies that are in a multi-academy trust (MAT) to provide any written scheme of delegation so that it is clear who is responsible for decision-making and management in respect of the areas and activities being inspected. The Union believes that this information is critical if inspectors are to make accurate judgements about the academy.

**Proposal 6: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal not to look at non-statutory internal progress and attainment data and our reasons why?**

44. The NASUWT agrees that internal data has its limitations and may not provide an accurate representation of the education of pupils at the school.<sup>9</sup> It is also clear that assessment data is a huge generator of workload in schools. Further, it is vital that inspections operate in accordance with the principles set out in *Making data work*<sup>10</sup> and inspectors consider the extent to which schools are complying with the report's recommendations.

45. However, the NASUWT notes that some schools with highly mobile pupil populations have used internal assessment data as evidence to show the progress that pupils are making. In such instances, national attainment and progress data may paint a very partial and potentially inaccurate picture of the quality of education. Similarly, schools that have pupils who are working below the national curriculum will not be able to rely on national data to demonstrate the progress that those pupils are making. It is vital that good work is recognised and valued in inspection. Ofsted must make it clear to inspectors and to schools how inspectors will form judgements about the quality of education in schools with highly mobile populations or where pupils are working below the national curriculum. The NASUWT recognises that case studies may provide one means of demonstrating how pupils make progress. Ofsted must provide clear guidance as to whether there will be circumstances where school-level data might be used.

46. The NASUWT welcomes Ofsted's plan that inspectors will hold discussions with subject leaders and teachers about the implementation of the curriculum. The Union particularly welcomes the plan that discussions with teachers will include how often they are expected to record, upload and review data.<sup>11</sup> It will be important for inspectors to explore whether this appears to be self-imposed but actually reflects a wider culture of expectation and pressure within the school, or whether it is an explicit

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<sup>9</sup> Ofsted, *School inspection handbook*, paragraph 178, first bullet point.

<sup>10</sup> Teacher Workload Advisory Group, *Making data work: Report of the Teacher Workload Advisory Group*, November 2018.

<sup>11</sup> Ofsted, *School inspection handbook*, paragraph 174, third bullet point.

requirement of senior or departmental managers. It will also be important for inspectors to examine the steps being taken, if any, by the school to challenge and change such cultures and practices.

47. The NASUWT notes that inspectors will ensure that samples of pupils chosen to triangulate evidence are sufficient to allow them to reach valid and reliable judgements on the quality of education offered by the school overall. The Union acknowledges the importance of inspectors ensuring that judgements are valid and reliable and of sample size being an important factor in making valid and reliable judgements. It is also vital that inspectors make valid and reliable judgements about the quality of education that all learners receive, including small groups of learners, such as learners with SEND who are recently arrived and/or have English as an additional language (EAL), and those who are from mobile families. It must be made clear how inspectors should make judgements about the quality of education provided to these groups, e.g. through case studies and triangulation of evidence from a number of case studies.

## **Non-association independent schools**

**Proposal 7: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal that inspectors [inspecting non-association independent schools] should normally use the non-specialist curriculum as their primary source of evidence in assessing the extent to which the school meets the quality of education criteria?**

48. The NASUWT agrees with the proposal that inspectors should normally use the non-specialist curriculum as their primary source of evidence when assessing the quality of education in non-association independent schools. It is important that all learners have access to a broad and balanced curriculum and the non-specialist curriculum provides a reference point for forming this judgement. It helps to ensure consistency with inspection judgements of maintained schools and academies. It will also remind inspectors of non-association independent schools that offer a specialist

curriculum of the need to judge the breadth and balance of the curriculum offer.

**Proposal 8: To what extent do you agree or disagree that where non-association independent schools have been found to improve or decline at an additional inspection, Ofsted should provide up-to-date judgements about the school's current performance?**

49. The NASUWT strongly agrees with the proposal to acknowledge sooner where a school's performance has improved or declined. The NASUWT believes that it is most appropriate to do this by bringing forward the date of the standard inspection.

### **Further education and skills**

**Proposal 9: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal to reduce the types of provision we grade and specifically report on will make our inspection reports more coherent and inclusive?**

50. The NASUWT has concerns about the proposal to reduce the types of provision that inspectors grade and specifically report on. While the Union acknowledges the need for inspectors to consider provision for SEND and/or those with high needs as part of all inspection judgements, there is a significant risk that this will mean that insufficient attention is paid to the needs of and provision for learners with SEND/high needs. Inspectors may not have the necessary knowledge and understanding to address SEND issues sensitively and appropriately. Critically, time pressures mean that inspectors will need to prioritise what is covered in inspection. This increases the risk that inspectors will pay little attention to SEND.

51. It is important to note that one of the key purposes of inspection is to provide learners and parents with evidence about the quality of provision. Those learners with SEND and high needs often require more expensive

provision and so are particularly vulnerable when providers are cutting provision. Evidence from NASUWT members working in further education provision indicates that some providers are reducing support and specialist provision for learners with SEND and high needs. The NASUWT believes that inspectors should integrate judgements about provision for SEND into all inspection judgements, but that they should also report separately on high needs provision. Ofsted should provide training to inspectors so that they are clear about the need to examine and report on matters such as access arrangements and support.

**Proposal 10: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed model for short inspections [of further education and skills providers]?**

52. The NASUWT agrees with Ofsted's proposals to adjust the focus of short inspections and believes that the questions that it seeks to answer in short inspections are the right ones [Is the quality of education/training good? Has the provider addressed the areas for improvement/next steps identified in the last inspection report well? Are the provider's safeguarding arrangements effective? Are careers education and guidance of good quality? Has the provider managed and implemented changes to provision effectively since the last inspection?].

53. It will be important for Ofsted to provide training for inspectors which addresses what should be covered when making judgements about the key areas. The NASUWT wishes to stress the importance of ensuring that judgements about the quality of education/training include consideration or evidence about staff workload and wellbeing and about how staff are developed and supported.

**Proposal 11: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the timescale within which providers that are judged to require improvement receive their next inspection should be extended from '12 to 24 months' to '12 to 30 months'?**

54. The NASUWT agrees with the proposal to extend the timescale for re-inspecting providers that require improvement from '12 to 24 months' to '12 to 30 months'. This brings inspection of further education and skills providers into line with the arrangements for inspecting schools and other education provision.

Ms. Chris Keates

**General Secretary**

For further information on the Union's response, contact Sonja Hall, Principal Official (Education).

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