

Extracts from the 2019 Ofsted School Inspection Handbook

Section 1.01 Leadership and management

225. 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. It focuses on the areas where inspection and research indicate that leaders and managers can have the strongest effect on the quality of the education provided by the school.

Important factors include:

- leaders' high expectations of all pupils in the school, and the extent to which these are embodied in leaders' and staff's day-to-day interactions with pupils
- the extent to which leaders focus their attention on the education provided by the school. There are many demands on leaders, but a greater focus on this area is associated with better outcomes for pupils
- whether continuing professional development for teachers and staff is aligned with the curriculum, and the extent to which this develops teachers' content knowledge and teaching content knowledge over time, so that they are able to deliver better teaching for pupils
- the extent to which leaders create coherence and consistency across the school so that pupils benefit from effective teaching and consistent expectations, wherever they are in the school
- whether leaders seek to engage parents and their community thoughtfully and positively in a way that supports pupils' education. Also, whether leaders are thoughtful in drawing boundaries and resisting inappropriate attempts to influence what is taught and the day-to-day life of the school
- the extent to which leaders take into account the workload and well-being of their staff, while also developing and strengthening the quality of the workforce
- the extent to which leaders' and managers' high ambitions are for all pupils, including those who are harder to reach. This includes ensuring that practices such as 'off-rolling' do not take place and that the way the school uses the pupil premium is founded on good evidence.

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- whether leaders and those responsible for governance all understand their respective roles and perform these in a way that enhances the effectiveness of the school.

226. Our evidence for the importance of each of these factors comes from our inspection experience, areas of consensus in academic research and our own research. A full note of how the criteria relate to the available research can be found in our research commentary.¹

227. Paragraphs 271–280 set out the importance and place of safeguarding.

(a) Leadership and management in school

228. Research suggests that leadership and management can be highly effective when they are shared by different individuals and distributed across different levels in a school. Inspectors will look at the work of headteachers, senior leaders, subject leaders and others with leadership and management roles when reaching this judgement.

(b) Leadership and management in multi-academy trusts²

229. When a school is part of a MAT, it is important for inspectors to remember that the trust is one entity, and that leaders and managers of the MAT are responsible for the quality of education provided in all the schools that make up the MAT.

230. It is highly likely that parts of some of the leadership functions described in the grade criteria are performed by MAT leaders (for example, the CEO or an education director) and not solely by individual leaders of the school. School leaders are responsible for giving inspectors accurate and appropriate information about those roles and responsibilities. If leadership functions are performed by MAT leaders, then inspectors will consider whether they need to meet MAT leaders to gather evidence.

231. MAT leaders may request to meet inspectors as a part of the inspection. They may also request to attend key inspection team meetings at the end of each inspection day. These are appropriate requests and should be accommodated. These individuals,

¹ 'Education inspection framework: overview of research', Ofsted, January 2019; www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-inspection-framework-overview-of-research.

² In this handbook, a reference to a MAT includes multi-academy companies.

however, should abide by the same code of conduct as all others involved in the inspection.³

(c) Governance

232. Inspectors will seek evidence of the impact of those responsible for governance.
233. In a maintained school, those responsible for governance are the school governors. In a stand-alone academy, it is the trustees.
234. In a MAT, the trustees are responsible for governance. Inspectors will ask to speak to one or more of the trustees. It may be that, on occasion, the trustees have chosen to delegate some of their powers to the members of the 'academy committee' or 'local governing board' at school level.⁴ If inspectors are informed that a local governing body has delegated responsibilities, they should establish clearly which powers are with the trustees, which are with the leaders of the MAT and which are with the local governing board. They should then ensure that both their inspection activities and the inspection report reflect this.
235. Inspectors will need to bear in mind, when inspecting academies that are part of a MAT, that governance functions can be quite different from those in a maintained school. Some functions that a governing body in a maintained school would carry out may be done by management or executive staff in a trust. If this is the case, it will still be important for inspectors to ascertain the trust board's role in that process and how it ensures that these functions are carried out properly.
236. The governance handbook⁵ sets out the purpose of governance, which is to provide confident, strategic leadership, and to create robust accountability, oversight and assurance for educational and financial performance.

³ 'Conduct of inspectors during Ofsted inspections', Ofsted, February 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/conduct-of-inspectors-during-ofsted-inspections.

⁴ All MATs should have, and publish, a scheme of delegation clearly setting out everything that has been delegated by the board of trustees to the local governing board or any other person or body. Advice on how this should work can be found in the DfE guidance; www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-academy-trusts-establishing-and-developing-your-trust.

⁵ Governance handbook, Department for Education and National College for Teaching and Leadership, 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook.

237. The governance handbook also sets out the statutory functions of all boards, no matter what type of school or how many schools they govern. There are three core functions:

- ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
- overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure that its money is well spent, including the pupil premium.

238. Inspectors will explore how governors carry out each of these functions. For example, the clarity of the school's vision, ethos and strategic direction will have a significant impact on the decisions that leaders make about the curriculum. Inspectors will consider whether the work of governors in this respect is supporting the school to provide a high-quality education for its pupils.

239. In addition, those with governance/oversight are responsible for ensuring that the school fulfils its statutory duties, for example under the Equality Act 2010, and other duties, for example in relation to the 'Prevent' duty and safeguarding. Please note that, when inspectors consider whether governors are fulfilling this responsibility, they are not expected to construct or review a list of duties.

240. Inspectors will report clearly on governance in the inspection report.

(d) Use of the pupil premium

241. Inspectors will gather evidence about the use of the pupil premium, particularly regarding:

- the level of pupil premium funding received by the school in the current academic year and levels of funding received in previous academic years
- how leaders and governors have spent the pupil premium, their rationale for this spending and its intended impact
- the learning and progress of disadvantaged pupils, as shown by published outcomes data.