



Governance Digest

**A Termly Newsletter for Liverpool Governors and
Trustees**



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Changes to School Inspections

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In a recent [blog](#), Lee Owston, Ofsted Deputy Director, gave an overview of some of the recent changes to the [school inspection handbook](#) and the way schools will be inspected from September:

In June 2023, [Ofsted committed to making a number of changes](#) to the way we inspect and report, including around safeguarding. We've now updated our guidance and reports to reflect these changes. We also published a separate blog which clarifies [when schools can expect their next inspection](#) and launched [a consultation on our complaints procedure](#).

There were also updates to other areas:

Safeguarding

We want to make sure that our judgements around safeguarding are well understood. To help with this, we have:

- Clarified what we mean by ineffective safeguarding (see extract)
- Made some wider changes to our safeguarding guidance, including regarding 'culture', minor improvements and early monitoring inspections.

Ineffective safeguarding

Safeguarding is ineffective when there are serious or widespread failures in the school's safeguarding arrangements. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils do not meet statutory requirements, or they give serious cause for concern, or the school has taken insufficient action to remedy weaknesses following a serious incident.

While it is not possible to produce an exhaustive list, the following are examples of what may constitute ineffective safeguarding:

- Insufficient action is being taken to remedy weaknesses following a serious failure of safeguarding arrangements
- Safeguarding allegations about staff members are not being handled appropriately
- Clear evidence of serious failures in safeguarding practice that lead pupils or particular groups of pupils not to be safe in school
- Statutory requirements, such as breaches of the requirements for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, are not being met
- Pupils have little confidence that the school or setting will address concerns about their safety, including risk of abuse, because leaders have not taken their views seriously and/or addressed relevant concerns
- Pupils, particularly vulnerable pupils, who are not on the school site (whether long term, temporary or for part of the school day) and the school are either not clear where those pupils are or are not able to give reassurances as to the appropriate steps taken to safeguard them when off-site. This can include children absent from education and children attending inappropriate, unregistered or unmonitored alternative provision.

Culture of safeguarding

We have brought the references to schools having a safeguarding 'culture' into a single clear definition. It explains how we will evaluate this during an inspection. The definition makes clear that we expect all schools to have an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first and protects them from serious harm.

Schools that require minor safeguarding improvements

We have also added more clarity on what we mean when we say that schools need to make minor safeguarding improvements. Minor improvements are only things that do not have an immediate impact on the safety of pupils. This could include administrative errors in paperwork or out-of-date policies.

Schools may be able to make minor safeguarding improvements before the end of their inspection. If they cannot, provided they have taken steps to resolve the issue, safeguarding can still be judged effective. If minor safeguarding improvements are identified, this will not stop a school being judged good or outstanding.

Early monitoring inspections

For the small number of schools judged inadequate due to ineffective safeguarding alone, we will return for a monitoring inspection within 3 months. The process will broadly follow other monitoring inspections but will focus on whether safeguarding is now effective. If the school has resolved the safeguarding concerns, its overall grade is likely to improve.

Leadership and governance

Throughout the handbook, we have clarified what we mean when we refer to leaders in maintained schools and academies. For the purpose of inspection, leaders are those responsible for making decisions about how the school operates, including decisions relating to behaviour and the curriculum. This always includes the headteacher and other senior staff. For an academy, it includes leaders at a trust level as well.

Where a school is part of a trust, the board of trustees is legally responsible for governance. Inspectors must, in most cases, speak to the chair and other trustees as well as trust employees. This can be done face-to-face or on a video call. Who else inspectors meet with will depend on the trust the academy is part of and will be decided following a discussion with leaders.

Quality of education

We have clarified who may participate in inspection activities, such as deep dives. For subject discussions, lesson visits and work scrutiny, middle leaders may be accompanied by a colleague, as long as this does not prevent them from participating fully in the discussion. Inspectors will also typically meet groups of pupils without school staff present, so that pupils can speak freely. There will also be the opportunity for staff to speak freely to inspectors without senior colleagues being in the room.

Attendance and behaviour

As the school year starts, attendance is particularly important so that all pupils benefit from the education and experiences that school provides. We have included new sections setting out how inspectors will evaluate attendance and behaviour, while recognising that the context in which schools operate has changed since the pandemic. We understand that schools cannot be everything to everyone, but we expect schools to do all they reasonably can to improve attendance and behaviour. We will look at a school's capacity to improve and have defined what we mean by this.

Other updates

We have made several other, smaller updates to our guidance that school leaders may want to know about. We have:

- Added a new section setting out some of the expectations for conduct during inspection, both for inspectors and schools
- Clarified that leaders can share the inspection outcome and findings with others if they deem it appropriate. But the information still cannot be made public or shared with parents
- Made it clearer for secondary schools that the requirement to teach relationships and sex education includes pupils in the sixth form
- Broadened the definition of off-rolling to include sixth-form pupils and situations where pupils are not formally removed from the roll but are not permitted to attend school.



Education Inspection Framework

Evaluation Plan and Theory of Change



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In the [Ofsted strategy 2022–27](#), we committed to evaluating [the education inspection framework \(EIF\)](#). We are accountable to Parliament on how we inspect and how we spend taxpayers' money. This evaluation supports our commitment to transparency. It will help us learn from and improve our policy, practice and training to make sure we have the best impact we can, both on those we inspect and on children and learners.

Our programme of evaluation

We are carrying out a programme of evaluation spanning 2 to 3 years. We will start with a process evaluation in 2023 and follow this with an impact evaluation.

Our evaluation programme covers:

- The early years
- Schools, including provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and independent schools
- Further education and skills, including provision for learners with high needs.

Through the evaluation, we want to understand:

- The impact of the EIF on those we inspect – childminders, nurseries, schools, colleges and other education providers
- The value the EIF has for parents, central and local government, academy trusts, governing bodies and other education sector stakeholders
- Whether we are implementing the EIF as we intended.

Although we are ultimately interested in the impact of the EIF, we first need to assess whether we are implementing it as we intended in our process evaluation.

Our whole programme of evaluation will look at the main things we designed the EIF to achieve and the processes that are distinct to it. We will not look at aspects of the EIF that apply to inspection in general, such as inspection grades and notice of inspection.

Theory of change

Our approach to the evaluation is theory-based.^{[\[footnote 1\]](#)} We have developed a theory of change that identifies how we expect the EIF to work and the impact we expect it to have.^{[\[footnote 2\]](#)}

Our approach is to evaluate whether the assumptions and mechanisms in the theory of change hold true.

To develop the EIF theory of change, we have worked with an academic adviser with expertise in inspection research and evaluation. We have also held extensive conversations within Ofsted.

We spoke to those involved in developing the EIF and its current implementation, as well as to His Majesty's Chief Inspector, Amanda Spielman. We also collated evidence from various internal and external documents and training materials.

The theory of change clarifies how the features of the EIF are expected to contribute to its desired outcomes. We are just one of many actors in education and training. As an inspectorate, we are only responsible for diagnosis. We are not an 'improvement agency' – improvements are made by the institutions themselves, with or without external intervention – but our inspection, regulation and insights can contribute to these improvements.

The diagram below shows a high-level theory of change that can be applied differently in different inspection remits. It should be interpreted as an initial guide to considering the contributions that the EIF could make to the education sector.

The process evaluation will assess:

- Whether we are carrying out inspections under the EIF as intended across each of the inputs and outputs in the diagram below
- Any barriers to us carrying out effective inspections under the EIF
- The impact evaluation will assess:
 - The extent to which the mechanisms in the diagram below are happening
 - The contribution the EIF has made to the short-term outcomes in the diagram below
 - The value it has for stakeholders
 - Any unintended consequences.

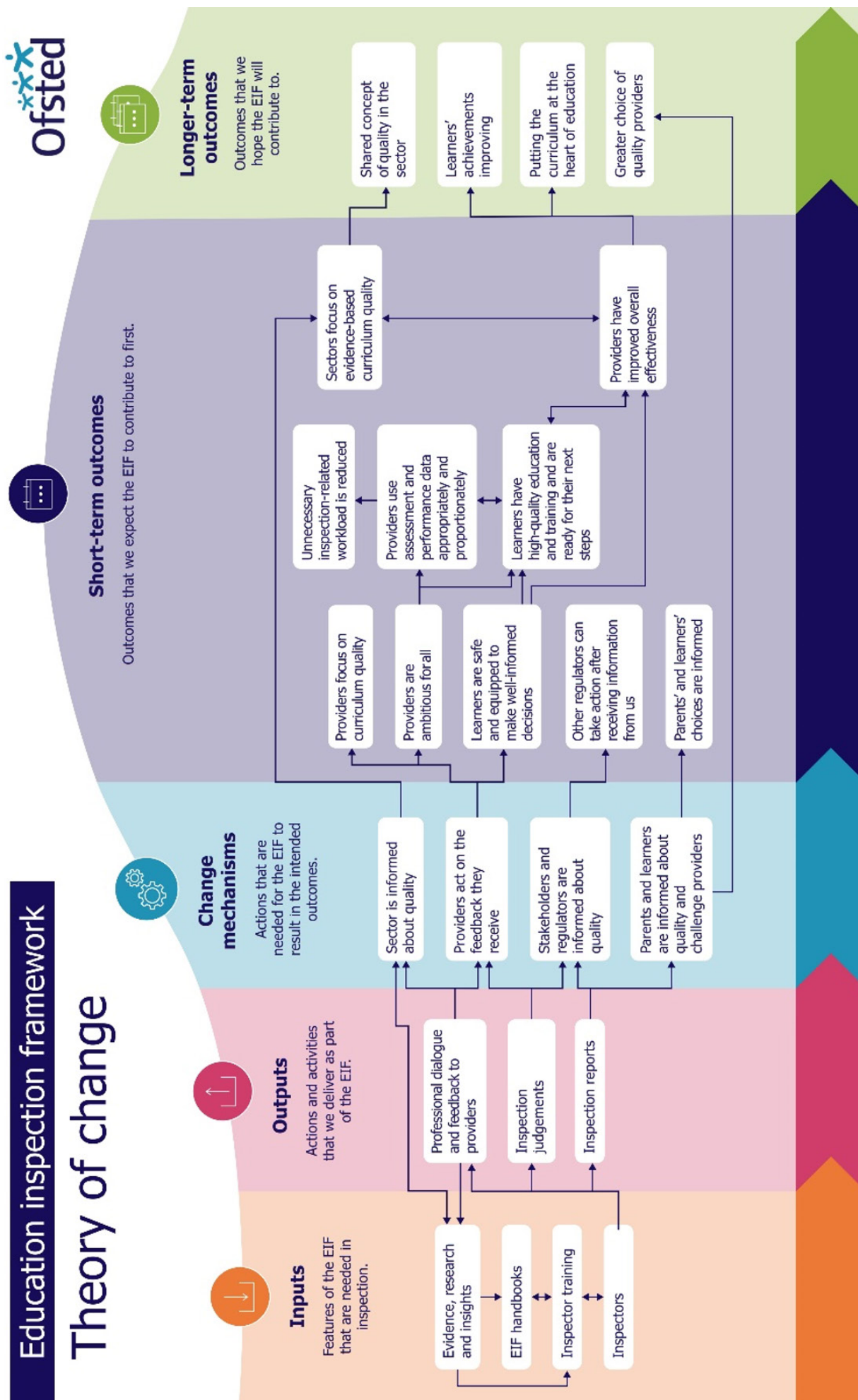
Overall, we designed the EIF with the intention of putting curriculum – the real substance of education – at the heart of education. The theory of change identifies how we expect this to happen, through inspection handbooks, inspectors' professional dialogue, inspection judgements and inspection reports.

The EIF is underpinned by an evidence-based conception of what constitutes high-quality education. This is communicated through our published research, methodology and inspection handbooks. As part of the EIF, inspectors make judgements and hold conversations about education that give leaders the information they need to develop and improve.

For the EIF to contribute positively to change, inspection needs to inform leaders, parents, government and education sector stakeholders about the things that matter. In response, they need to have the ability to act on what inspection tells them.

We expect inspection to contribute to changes in behaviour. As a result, we expect children and learners to receive a higher quality of education and training and be better prepared for their next steps.

In the longer term, we hope to see a shift towards a shared conception of quality across the education sector.



Inputs

Inputs are the features of the EIF that are needed in inspection:

- Evidence, research and insights
- The [EIF handbooks](#)
- Inspector training
- Inspectors.

Outputs

Outputs are the actions and activities that we deliver as part of the EIF:

- Professional dialogue and feedback to providers
- Inspection judgements
- Inspection reports.

Change mechanisms

Change mechanisms are the actions that are needed for the EIF to result in the intended outcomes:

- The sector is informed about quality
- Providers act on the feedback they receive
- Stakeholders and regulators are informed about quality
- Parents and learners are informed about quality and challenge providers.

Short-term outcomes

Outcomes we expect the EIF to contribute to first, such as:

- Other regulators can take action after receiving information from us
- Parents' and learners' choices are informed
- Providers focus on curriculum quality
- Providers are ambitious for all
- Learners are safe and equipped to make well-informed decisions
- Learners have high-quality education and training and are ready for their next steps
- Providers use assessment and performance data appropriately and proportionately
- Unnecessary inspection-related workload is reduced
- The sectors focus on evidence-based curriculum quality
- Providers have improved overall effectiveness.

Longer-term outcomes

Outcomes that we hope the EIF will contribute to, such as:

- Learners' achievements improving
- Putting the curriculum at the heart of education
- A greater choice of quality providers
- A shared concept of quality in the sector.

Footnotes

1. Theory-based evaluation is a methodology used to draw causal conclusions about a programme's effectiveness in the absence of any comparison group. In this instance, there is no comparison group due to the universal availability of the framework since its publication in 2019.
2. Theory of change is a comprehensive description and illustration of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context.

Published 23 August 2023 on www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluating-the-education-inspection-framework/eif-evaluation-plan-and-theory-of-change



Exploring Teachers' Admin Time



The Department for Education commissioned Cooper Gibson Research to conduct qualitative research to understand the types of administrative tasks teachers and senior leaders undertake, how these tasks are allocated and prioritised within schools, and to explore whether tasks could be carried out more efficiently.

Key findings

Common administrative tasks

Teachers most commonly reported carrying out pupil and curriculum focused administrative tasks (typically on a daily or weekly basis), including:

- Recording incidents related to pupil safeguarding and/or health and safety.
- Recording and following up incidents related to pupil attendance and behaviour.
- Responding to requests for information on individual pupils from colleagues and parents/carers.
- Photocopying.
- Recording pupil assessment data.
- Across the school year, teachers completed several other administrative tasks:
- Organising school trips.
- Creating class displays/working walls.
- Providing homework and curriculum information.
- Organising outside speakers.
- Writing/providing updates for the school website.

Time spent on administrative tasks

Participating teachers and middle leaders reported spending an average of 2 hours per day on administration, across both primary and secondary phases. Time spent on administrative tasks was variable across the school year. For example, at the start of the school year, additional time was spent on reading and updating policies, curriculum plans and performance management related tasks.

Trends in administrative tasks over time

Five main trends were identified in how administrative tasks had changed over time:

- An increase in tasks associated with the rise in the number of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including those receiving SEN support and those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- Some participants described an increase in emails from parents/carers and often with an unrealistic expectation of response times since the pandemic.
- Middle leaders and senior leaders reported that there was an increase in administrative tasks and record keeping because of the new early career framework (ECF) based induction programme.

- A shift towards a more pupil focused role for teaching assistants (particularly in the secondary phase), reducing capacity for administration.
- An increase in curriculum focused tasks associated, in part, with the reduction in roles such as the reprographic officer and curriculum support officer (particularly in the secondary phase).

Administrative tasks and workload implications

Several questions were asked on perspectives of administrative tasks in relation to workload. Three main themes emerged. Tasks were identified as:

- Necessary but time consuming. Examples included recording safeguarding incidents, pupil attendance, and behaviour concerns.
- Time consuming and where the outputs do not merit the time spent. Examples included documentation relating to: performance management, extensive curriculum planning documentation, and mentoring for the ECF based induction programme.
- Necessary, but did not have to be undertaken by teachers. Examples included organising trips, class displays, and printing.

Allocation and prioritisation of administrative tasks

Participants were asked to describe how administrative tasks were allocated and prioritised in their settings and as part of their own practice. Key findings were:

- The size of administrative teams varied within and across school phases and administrative staff often carried out multiple functions. Examples included carrying out reception and medical related duties.
- In general, schools did not have a systematic approach to the allocation of administrative tasks.
- All participants prioritised pupil safeguarding over all other tasks. This was followed by other pupil related tasks and the need to meet deadlines.

Sources of administrative tasks

The sources and drivers of administrative tasks included:

- School statutory requirements. Examples included safeguarding, tasks associated with pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and the national curriculum.
- Accountability. Examples included Ofsted and governance requirements.
- Pupils and parents/carers. Examples included record keeping associated with pupil behaviour and dealing with emails from parents/carers.
- The need for communication within the whole school community. Examples included maintaining school websites and online learning platforms.
- Senior leader requirements. Examples included internal accountability processes and changes in senior leadership personnel.

Challenges and mitigations associated with administrative tasks

The following main challenges associated with undertaking administrative tasks were reported:

- The volume and daily accumulation of tasks.
- The importance of most tasks.
- The need for a teacher to complete most tasks.
- Insufficient time to complete tasks.
- Insufficient administrative support for tasks.
- Striking a balance between ensuring accountability and not, unnecessarily, increasing the workload of teachers.

Participants were asked to describe any practices that were implemented in their settings to try and reduce and/or mitigate the impact of administrative tasks. They mentioned the following main practices:

- Use of technology. Examples included software for safeguarding, trips, and automatic emails to parents/carers.
- A supportive senior leadership culture. Examples included minimising administrative tasks going to teachers, school diary planning, and limiting the size of school documentation.
- Delegating responsibility to support staff (on a few occasions).
- Finding additional planning, preparation, and assessment (PPA) time where possible.
- Implementing wellbeing and flexible working practices. Senior leaders reported that administration was an area that was reviewed regularly, in isolation, or as part of a wider wellbeing agenda.

Senior leaders commonly struggled to provide suggestions of further actions, beyond those listed above, that could make a meaningful difference to administrative practices in their schools.

Summary and conclusions

The research aimed to understand the types of administrative tasks that senior leaders, middle leaders and teachers undertake, how these tasks are undertaken and prioritised within schools, and to explore whether these can be carried out more efficiently. Depth interviews were conducted with 14 senior leaders, 14 middle leaders and 10 teachers in 14 primary and 20 secondary schools across England.

The findings showed that teachers are regularly carrying several, pupil, curriculum and personnel focused administrative tasks, that are in addition to all lesson planning, preparation and assessment activities outside of the classroom. According to participants in this research, most of the tasks need to be carried out daily and took, on average, two hours per day.

Participants reported an upward trend in the volume and type of administrative tasks that teachers and leaders are required to carry-out in recent years, alongside the general loss of support staff such as a reprographics officer. Participants noted that many of the reported tasks were necessary, such as, safeguarding and SEND legal responsibilities. The administrative tasks focused on pupils and the curriculum, were also necessary because of their potential to support stronger teaching and learning.

Apart from the volume of tasks, specific challenges related to the fact that many of them could not be planned for and often accumulated over the day. Tasks often had to be completed on the same day due to time sensitive considerations, such as quickly recording and reporting safeguarding concerns or incidents.

A strong finding was that many thought that several of the tasks could only be completed by the teacher as they had direct involvement, for example, entering a pupil behaviour incident on the school information management system or responding to an email from a parent/carer.

Based on these findings, the following recommendations are provided:

- Participants reported the need to recognise the changing role of teachers in the 21st century, where administrative tasks are integral to the role and required allocated time to complete. Therefore, the time required for administrative tasks should form part of any review of PPA time at a national level.
- Many participants reported that roles such as a curriculum support and/or reprographics officer had been lost. A curriculum support officer, like a laboratory or design technology technician replicated in other subject areas, could undertake many of the reported administrative tasks such as photocopying, printing, displays, organising trips, organising cover, entering assessment data and preparing lesson materials, that do not require the direct involvement of teachers. Apart from 40 funding, an important consideration would be to make this role an attractive one professionally with, for example, a clear career structure. Administrative roles in the higher education sector provide clear career progression pathways to, if desired, very senior roles.
- Senior leaders might seek to review flexible working practices in schools, such as, grouping PPA time to allow teachers to work from home on one occasion during the week. Although this would not directly address the specific time sensitive challenges of many of the administrative tasks described in this report, it might contribute to reducing the overall effect of the workload burden.

The Department for Education's Exploring Teachers' Admin Time full report can be found [here](#).





Length of the School Week



The Department for Education has published non-statutory guidance produced to help schools in England that are currently delivering a school week below 32.5 hours to increase the length of their school week to the minimum expectation of 32.5 hours that was announced in the Schools White Paper in March 2022.

Main points

In March 2022, the Government introduced a non-statutory expectation of a 32.5 hour minimum core school week by September 2023. In July 2023 the deadline to meet this expectation was deferred to September 2024 at the latest, in recognition of the pressures facing schools. This applies to all mainstream, state-funded schools in England. It does not include pupils in early years settings, 16-19 provision (including school sixth forms) or specialist settings, such as special schools and alternative provision, but specialist settings and alternative provision are also encouraged to consider extending their core week where appropriate.

A core school week is the time from morning registration to the official end of the school day for all pupils (including breaks). It does not include optional activities, or those that are only available for some pupils.

1. Minimum Length of School Week

The time pupils spend in school [varies across the country](#). Over time this difference accumulates, increasing the disparity between pupils by the time they leave secondary school.

In March 2022 the Government announced, through the White Paper [Opportunity for all: strong schools with great teachers for your child](#), a new minimum expectation on the length of the school week of 32.5 hours for all mainstream, state-funded schools.

Data from July 2021 showed that **80%** of secondary schools and **78%** of primary schools were delivering a school week of at least 32 hours, and **16%** of secondary schools and **7%** of primary schools were delivering 35 hours or more. Some schools will already have increased their hours in response to the expectation set in the White Paper. Any mainstream state-funded school that does not yet meet the minimum expectation of 32.5 hours should be working towards doing so by September 2024 at the latest.

The expectation does not apply to pupils in:

- Early years (including in school settings) due to the age of pupils
- 16-19 education (including school sixth forms) due to the variation in their courses and having different guided learning hours.

- Specialist settings (special schools and alternative provision), due to the varying needs of their pupil cohorts and the particular operational challenges they may face.

The 32.5 hour minimum expectation includes the time in each day from the official start of the school day (i.e. morning registration) to the official end of the compulsory school day (i.e. official home time). The 32.5 hour minimum includes lunch times and other breaks as well as teaching time and any enrichment activities that all pupils are expected to attend. It does not include optional before or after school provision.

All schools should deliver a substantive high-quality morning and afternoon session in every school day. Some schools may wish to finish earlier on specific days, for example to allow pupils to attend religious observances. In those circumstances, these schools should offer longer hours on the remaining days so that they meet the minimum expectation over the course of the week.

The law relating to the school day, school year and term dates

The legislation regulating the school day and school year applies to schools maintained by a local authority and special schools not maintained by a local authority, but not to academies (other than special academies) or pupil referral units. It requires that:

- Every school must normally have two sessions divided by a break in the middle of the day. The length of each session, break and the school day is determined by the school's governing body.
- Employers in maintained schools must set term dates. Maintained school employers are:
 - The local authority in community, voluntary controlled and community special schools and maintained nursery schools
 - The governing body in foundation and voluntary aided schools.

Except in the very limited circumstances set out in the Education (School Day and School Year) England) Regulations 1999, schools must meet for at least 380 sessions or 190 days in any school year. In academies, the length of the school day and year is the responsibility of the Academy Trust as per the Funding Agreement.

Ofsted

The quality of education that schools provide is underpinned by a broad and balanced curriculum. Effective use of time is a crucial part of delivering this curriculum.

Ofsted already look to see that schools are providing a broad and balanced curriculum for their pupils, and will inspect all schools by the end of summer 2025. Where it is clear that increasing the overall time pupils spend in school to at least 32.5 hours per week would improve the quality of education, inspectors will reflect this in their evaluation of the school, and in the inspection report. If a school is not meeting the minimum expectation, and this impacts on the quality of education, inspectors will expect schools to set out a clear rationale for this and understand what impact it has on the quality of education. They will also want to understand what plans are in place to meet the minimum expectation. Ofsted are mindful that some schools will be transitioning towards meeting the minimum expectation over the period to September 2024.

2. Delivering additional time

The length and structure of the school day and week is the responsibility of the governing body for maintained schools and of trustees for academies. In a multi-academy trust this may be delegated to a local governing body in accordance with the trust's scheme of delegation. Any final decisions about changes to the length of the school week should be taken in conjunction with the school's senior leadership team.

Schools that are delivering below a 32.5 hour week

Schools that are not yet meeting the minimum expectation of a 32.5 hour week will want to think about how extra time is used in the context of their school improvement priorities and in ways that allow practical considerations to be addressed.

Schools planning to increase their hours substantially to reach a 32.5 hour week (i.e. by 30 minutes or more per day) should first consider prioritising an increase to lesson time. Where schools only need to add a short amount of time (less than 30 minutes per day), they may want to consider incorporating short activities which meet school priorities into their timetable, for example daily reading practice. These considerations will be different for primary and secondary schools, given that primary school timetables may have more flexibility to add daily blocks of additional time (without affecting the overall timetable). Secondary schools may want to consider consolidating the additional time needed to meet a 32.5 hour week into a block of additional time on one or two days of the week. This approach has the benefit of being able to deliver more substantive additional time in school, e.g. adding an extra timetabled lesson per week.

Going beyond the minimum 32.5 hour core week

Schools that already meet the 32.5 hours a week minimum may wish to consider increasing their school week further to provide additional opportunities for pupils, either as part of the core week or by providing activities that are optional for pupils. This can be done in a variety of ways including an increase to the core school day, increased provision of optional enrichment opportunities at lunch break or after school, tutoring and targeted support, breakfast clubs or wraparound provision.

Evidence suggests that extending time in school can have a positive impact on pupil outcomes, so long as the time is used effectively. Studies have focused on using additional time for academic tasks and found that more time can have significant impact on pupil attainment. The Education Endowment Foundation has shown that using additional time for targeted support and well-structured before and after school programmes, delivered by trained staff, **can also have a positive impact on attainment**.

High quality extra-curricular provision can complement and reinforce curriculum teaching, for instance by providing further opportunities to take part in sport and cultural activities. Personal development opportunities, such as the cadet forces and Duke of Edinburgh Award, can bring benefits to young people's mental and physical health and wellbeing and social engagement, supporting efforts to improve attendance, attainment and behaviour.

When considering extending time beyond the minimum 32.5 hours, schools should look at how additional time can be used to support school priorities, as well as taking into account practical considerations, such as funding implications.

Specialist settings

Specialist settings, including special schools and alternative provision, support a wide range of pupils with diverse needs and therefore currently structure their school week in more varied ways than mainstream schools. Therefore, the expectation for a minimum school week of 32.5 hours does not apply to these settings. However, specialist settings should share the overall ambition to increase the length of the school week, where it is beneficial for their pupils to do so.

When considering any increase in the length of their school week, leaders of specialist settings should make an assessment of what is most appropriate for the needs of their pupils and should take into account operational and financial considerations. For example, they should consider what can be achieved within the existing budget, transport considerations given the larger catchment areas, and staffing arrangements (recognising that these settings tend to utilise higher numbers of staff compared to mainstream schools).

Special units within mainstream schools, and pupils with SEND in mainstream settings, should continue to follow the same length of school week as set by the mainstream school.

3. Practical considerations

The Government recognises the diversity of schools and the unique challenges they face and that a one-size fits all approach is not appropriate.

The bullet points below set out the steps that are recommended for schools to take when extending their school week:

- Explore practical considerations, including financial implications, and propose changes to the length of the school week and the use of additional time
- Consult key stakeholders on the proposed changes (including internal and external staff, parents, carers, pupils, feeder schools and childcare providers)
- Discuss proposed changes to transport with relevant local authorities (ensure adequate notice so changes can be implemented)
- Consider responses from the consultation and make decisions on any changes needed to school timetable
- Inform all key stakeholders of intended changes to the school timetable, with adequate notice
- Publish a new timetable on the school website and implement new timetable.

Consultation

When a school decides to make changes to its school week, it is expected that the school will act reasonably, giving sufficient notice, and consider the impact on those affected, including pupils, staff, and parents and carers. It is a school's responsibility to ensure any consultation is fair.

Transport

Local authorities have a statutory duty to make travel arrangements for eligible children in their area to enable them to travel to school for the beginning of the school day and to return home at the end of the school day.

Where schools propose changes to the school day or week which may affect existing school transport arrangements, they should consult any relevant local authorities in advance of any proposed change, and work with them to minimise any unintended consequences or costs for school transport. Any changes to transport arrangements may require the local authority to re-negotiate existing contracts with transport operators, or tender for new ones. The local authority may also wish to discuss alternative arrangements that minimise additional costs but still ensure that a school can meet its objectives, so engaging with them as early as possible will allow for changes to be made in time for the implementation of the new school timetable.

Staffing

When making changes to the length of the core school week, schools should consult and inform staff with adequate notice. This includes all staff who will be affected by any change, for example sport coaches, wraparound care providers and peripatetic music teachers. Schools may need to review and amend the contracts of some staff, especially those paid on an hourly basis.

Maintained schools must have regard to the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document. In particular, teachers in maintained schools can only be directed by the headteacher for a maximum of 1,265 hours per year. Any additional teacher time needed to deliver a longer school week will need to be incorporated into a school's directed time allocations. The limit on directed hours does not apply to academies and free schools, but these schools will also want to take account of teacher contracts and the impact on teacher workload.

Wraparound provision

Before-school and after-school clubs (wraparound childcare) play an integral role in supporting the enrichment and wellbeing of children and young people and meeting the childcare needs of parents and carers.

Schools that are considering increasing their hours are advised to engage with any external wraparound providers before doing so, to consider how this provision may be used to complement additional hours, and to ensure that sufficient wraparound provision remains available to parents who need childcare.

Breaks

The 32.5 hour minimum core school week is inclusive of breaks as these form an important part of time in school for pupils, allowing opportunities for social interaction, physical activity, and enrichment activities. However, when schools increase their hours to meet the minimum 32.5 hour week, they should first consider prioritising lesson time above breaks. Any increases to breaks should be proportionate and bring value to the school week, for example by providing opportunities for sport and other enrichment activities.

Funding

The minimum expected school week of 32.5 hours is the weekly average (as at July 2021) for mainstream schools and most schools already deliver a school week of at least this length. Mainstream primary and secondary schools that are not currently delivering this minimum are therefore expected to do so by September 2024 at the latest from within their existing budgets.

Mainstream schools or special schools would not be expected to propose changes to their pupils' education, health, and care (EHC) plans, or to seek extra high needs funding from the relevant local authority, as a means to enhance their hours of operation.

4. Information requirements

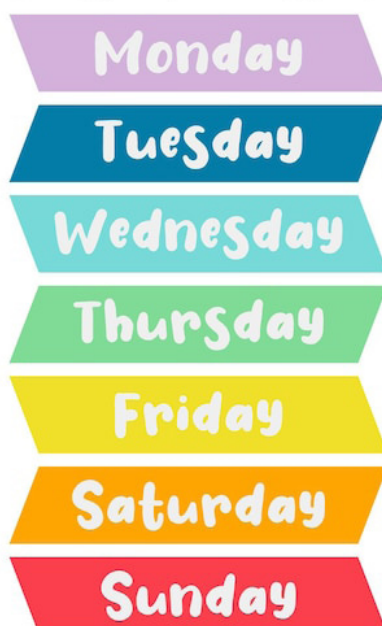
Publication of hours on school websites

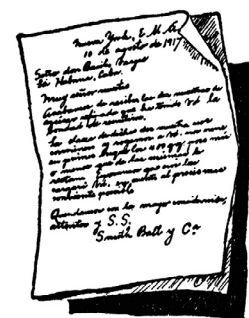
Most schools already publish their opening and closing times on their website. All schools should do this and they should also publish the total weekly hours. Publication of school hours should present the compulsory time a school is open from the official start of the school day (i.e. morning registration) to the official end to the compulsory school day (i.e. official home time) including breaks, but not optional before or after school activities. This consistent definition will be helpful, particularly to parents and carers when comparing the opening times of different schools.

Data collection

DfE now collects data on the total compulsory time pupils spend in school in a week, as part of the school census. Schools are expected, as part of the spring census collection, to enter their typical total, compulsory school week for pupils. This data will be used to identify schools that are not yet meeting the minimum weekly expectation so that they can be offered support. More information and guidance can be found here: [Complete the school census - Guidance](#).

Days Of The Week





Letter to School Leaders on Mild Illness and School Attendance



The Chief Medical Officer and leading health professionals have [written to schools](#) to provide a clinical and public health perspective on mild illnesses and school attendance:

Published 5 September 2023

Dear headteachers and trust leaders,

As you begin to welcome children and young people back for a new school year, we have been asked by the Department for Education (DfE) to provide you with a clinical and public health perspective on mild illnesses and school attendance.

We are aware that the COVID-19 pandemic may have caused some parents to feel less confident with assessing whether their child is well enough to be in school so we have laid out some information which we hope you will find helpful.

There is wide agreement among health professionals and educational professionals that school attendance is vital to the life chances of children and young people. Being in school improves health, wellbeing and socialisation throughout the life course. The greatest benefits come from children and young people attending school regularly.

It is usually appropriate for parents and carers to send their children to school with mild respiratory illnesses. This would include general cold symptoms: a minor cough, runny nose or sore throat. However, children should not be sent to school if they have a temperature of 38°C or above. We would encourage you to share the [NHS 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance](#) with parents and carers in your schools and communities which has further information.

In addition to respiratory illnesses, we are aware that more children may be absent from school due to symptoms of anxiety than before the pandemic. Worry and mild or moderate anxiety, whilst sometimes difficult emotions, can be a normal part of growing up for many children and young people. Being in school can often help alleviate the underlying issues. A prolonged period of absence is likely to heighten a child's anxiety about attending in the future, rather than reduce it. DfE has published useful [guidance on mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance](#) and those who are experiencing persistent symptoms can be encouraged to access additional support.

Thank you for your efforts so far to facilitate immunisation sessions within schools. As we head into winter, encouraging high uptake of seasonal flu vaccination and routine immunisations for eligible children and young people will help to reduce absences and the disruption they cause.

You, and the teachers you lead, are already supporting families to build up children's confidence to attend school regularly. The Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) recently approved [**5 principles to promote school attendance**](#). We hope this guidance will support GPs in having sensitive and reassuring conversations with parents, carers and pupils.

Thank you and your colleagues for your continued commitment to supporting the health and wellbeing of children and young people.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Chris Whitty, Chief Medical Officer, England

Pat Cullen, General Secretary, Royal College of Nursing

Professor Kamila Hawthorne, Chair, Royal College of General Practitioners

Dr Camilla Kingdon, President, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health

William Roberts, Chief Executive, Royal Society for Public Health

Dr Lade Smith, President, Royal College of Psychiatrists

Guidance Regarding RAAC



Guidance for Responsible Bodies and education settings with confirmed RAAC in their buildings

September 2023

Following recent high-profile announcements, the Department for Education (DfE) has issued guidance that explains the actions to be taken if Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) is confirmed in one or more of their buildings. The guidance is summarised below; the full version is available to view or download [here](#).

Background

RAAC is a lightweight form of concrete. The Standing Committee on Structural Safety (SCOSS) has noted that RAAC is very different from traditional concrete and because of the way in which it was made, much weaker. RAAC was used in schools, colleges and other building construction from the 1950s until the mid-1990s. It may

therefore be found in any school and college building (educational and ancillary) that was either built or modified in this time period.

In the 1990s, several bodies recognised structural deficiencies in RAAC panels installed up until the mid-1990s. It was recognised that the in-service performance was poor with cracking, excessive displacements and durability all being raised as concerns. In December 2018, the DfE and the Local Government Association (LGA) made building owners aware of a recent building component failure in a property constructed using RAAC. In May 2019, SCOSS raised an alert to emphasise the potential risks from such construction. Further information can be found in the [RAAC Estates guidance](#).

The guidance sets out the view of the DfE in relation to education settings. The Institute of Structural Engineers recommends a case-by-case approach, and DfE will allocate a case worker to each affected setting. The approach taken may differ for each setting, depending on their individual circumstances.

Managing RAAC in your building

If the DfE's survey programme confirms that there is RAAC in one or more of your buildings, it will allocate a caseworker in the DfE's capital team to support your school. The caseworker will do an initial triage with you, which will cover:

- The support that you think you might need during this period
- The amount of RAAC in your buildings and the likely size and scale of works to mitigate it.

Schools should vacate and restrict access to the spaces with RAAC and ensure that they are out of use. If the RAAC is in a small enough area, this may be done with minimal disruption to the school.

Schools may already have a contingency plan in place, which can be activated at this point. The DfE expects that most local authorities and education settings will be able to manage the mitigation works themselves. Where it is agreed in the initial triage with your caseworker that additional support is required or the scale of works is large, the DfE will allocate an additional project delivery manager to support your school.

Emergency accommodation

If a school has insufficient accommodation once the areas with RAAC are taken out of use, it should find emergency accommodation if needed or temporary accommodation for the first few weeks until the building has been made safe through structural supports. This may be:

- Space in a nearby, local school, college, or nursery that you can use for a period of time
- Semi rigid temporary structures that can quickly be brought to your school, college, or maintained nursery school
- Space in a community centre or empty local office building Your caseworker will discuss this with you.

Longer-term temporary accommodation

In parallel to putting in place short-term plans to accommodate face-to-face education, you will need to make plans for the longer term (following the first few weeks of emergency accommodation). If it is possible to use structural supports to make safe areas with RAAC, you should do this, taking into account your survey report. If this is not possible, you will want to procure temporary accommodation if there is space to accommodate this on your site. The DfE caseworker will support schools with this and also if there is no space on the school site.

Funding

DfE will provide funding for all mitigation works that are capital funded. Your caseworker will provide you with the relevant form to complete. We expect you to be able to fund anything that is an additional revenue cost, for example additional transport costs for local authorities. If you have difficulty with this, you should discuss this with your caseworker and the Education and Skills Funding Agency in the first instance. DfE recommends that schools contact their commercial insurer or the Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA).

Safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is of paramount importance. [**Keeping children safe in education \(KCSIE\)**](#) is statutory safeguarding guidance that you should continue to have regard to as required by legislation and your funding agreement.

Schools should, as far as is reasonably possible, take a whole-institution approach to safeguarding and undertake any necessary risk assessments. This will allow you to satisfy yourself that any new policies and processes in response to RAAC are not weakening your approach to safeguarding or undermining your child protection policy.

After discussion with your caseworker about your individual circumstances, and the mitigating actions needed to ensure continuity of provision, schools should consider how they will keep in touch with their children and young people to provide reassurance that they are safe and well, especially where transition to emergency or temporary accommodation is needed.

Managing the impact on education

Maintaining face-to-face education

Whilst the circumstances for each education setting where RAAC has been identified will be different, you should consider educational, safeguarding and wellbeing impacts for pupils and students before taking any mitigating actions. You should do your best to minimise the amount and length of any disruption to education and your caseworker will support you with this. The DfE expects that schools and colleges affected by RAAC will still be able to deliver face-to-face, high-quality education to all pupils and students other than in exceptional circumstances and you must continue to follow any legislation that applies to your education setting in relation to the curriculum and compulsory subjects.

Where an area with RAAC has been taken out of use and this has implications for certain facilities, for example a sports hall, you should consider the options for whether alternative space on the site can be safely used, sharing facilities with a nearby school or college, or using local venues that have these facilities (such as a leisure centre or community centre). You are responsible for ensuring that pupils, students, staff, parents and carers are aware of the alternative arrangements in place to ensure continuity of education provision.

Attendance

Attendance is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including for their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. Schools and other settings should consider the approaches set out in this guidance while also working closely with pupils, parents, carers, and any other relevant partners such as the local authority, to remove any barriers to attendance.

Schools should continue to record pupil absence in the register in line with the [**Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006**](#) and the [**DfE's attendance guidance**](#), using the most appropriate code.

If you need to prioritise attendance by telling some pupils not to attend, the Y code should be used for those pupils, reflecting the exceptional circumstances. Pupils who are required to attend should be recorded in the normal way. The Y code does not count towards the pupil or school's absence record.

Remote education

Remote education should only ever be considered as a last resort and for a short period of time where the alternative would be no education provision. It should only be used where all options to continue face-to-face education – either on your site, at an alternative, or in temporary accommodation – have been exhausted. Remote education is unlikely to be possible for children who attend maintained nursery schools.

If restricting face-to-face attendance for pupils and students is the only viable option, schools and colleges should provide high-quality remote education to help pupils and students stay on track with the education they would normally receive.

Schools and colleges are likely to have established remote education plans when attendance in schools and colleges was restricted during the COVID-19 pandemic. If schools and colleges choose to use established remote education plans, these should be reviewed and kept up to date so that they remain relevant to the current context and children return to face-to-face education at the earliest possible moment.

Work provided during periods of remote education should be high quality, meaningful, ambitious and cover an appropriate range of subjects to enable pupils and students to keep on track with their education. Where pupils and students have access to appropriate devices, remote education might include recorded or live direct teaching time, as well as time for pupils and students to complete tasks, reading and assignments independently (depending on their age and stage of development). Online video lessons do not necessarily need to be recorded by teaching staff at the school or college. If preferred, high-quality lessons developed by external providers such as [**Oak National Academy**](#) can be provided instead of school-led video content at key stages 1-4. Schools and colleges should consider the approaches that best suit the needs of their children, young people and staff.

Some pupils and students with SEND may not be able to access remote education without adult support. Schools and colleges should work collaboratively with families and put arrangements in place that allow pupils and students with SEND to access remote education successfully. In this situation, decisions on how provision can be delivered should be informed by relevant considerations including the support families will require and types of services that the pupil or student can access remotely.

Schools and colleges should ensure that their safeguarding and child protection policies are up to date and reflect the potential need for remote online education provision and the fact that pupils and students might be learning both online and in the classroom.

In the very limited circumstances where a school or college decides to use remote education, you should refer to the Department's non-statutory [**guidance for schools on providing remote education**](#) or the Department's non-statutory [**guidance for 16-19 study programmes**](#).

Inspection

DfE is working closely with Ofsted to share information about this issue, and to ensure it can take it into account where necessary in scheduling inspections. Where a school, college or maintained nursery school is restricting attendance, or has substantial disruption due to RAAC and you are notified of an inspection, you should contact the lead inspector at Ofsted and discuss your deferral options under the heading of 'exceptional circumstances'.

Ofsted has updated its [deferral policy](#) to make reference to inspections of schools where there is disruption as a result of RAAC:

Building and/or refurbishment work is not normally a reason for deferral if the school is open and users are on site. However, if a school is significantly disrupted by measures taken to deal with reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC), we will consider these deferral requests carefully as an exceptional circumstance.

Inspections of, or visits to, providers may still go ahead when all, or substantial numbers of, pupils are not on site, but continue to be educated through remote or blended learning.

School meals

Schools should continue to provide:

- Meal options for all pupils who are in school
- Free meals to:
- All infant pupils
- Pupils and students who meet the benefits-related free school meals eligibility criteria.

If a child who qualifies for benefits-related free meals is receiving remote education, you should continue to provide this support, for example by providing a lunch parcel or vouchers. Schools should speak to their school catering team or provider about the best arrangements for providing school meals for pupils and students in this situation. This will ensure that eligible pupils and students continue to be supported for the period they are unable to attend school. You can find out more at [Free school meals](#).

Provision for pupils and students with SEND

If pupils and students with SEND need to be taught in emergency accommodation or require remote education, school and college leaders and teachers are best placed to know how to meet their needs most effectively. Schools and colleges will need to put in place an appropriate curriculum, teaching and support to enable the pupil or student to continue learning effectively. Decisions on how provision can continue to be delivered should be informed by relevant considerations, including the support families will require and types of support, resources and equipment that pupils and students can access in emergency or temporary accommodation. Your DfE caseworker will be able to discuss with you the support you might need and mitigations you are putting in place.

If a pupil or student has an EHC plan, whether they are in a mainstream or special school, the school must work with the local authority to ensure that all the relevant duties under the 2014 Act continue to be met.

The duties under the Equality Act 2010 relating to disability (and more broadly) also continue to apply, such as to make reasonable adjustments, not to discriminate and to have due regard to the statutory objectives in the public sector equality duty.

It may be challenging for the school or college to deliver the kind of approach that it does in the classroom remotely or on an alternative site, for example the provision of certain differentiated resources and the support of a teaching assistant. If this is the case, the school or college must instead consider, in co-operation with the local authority if the pupil or student has an EHC plan, other ways in which it and the local authority can meet their statutory duties, working closely with the parents or carers.

School transport

Where pupils and students are to be educated in temporary accommodation at a different location from the usual school site, you should consider how they will travel there, identify any pupils and students who may have difficulty getting there and consider how you can support them.

Some children of compulsory school age are eligible for free travel arranged by the local authority. You may need to work with the local authority to ensure suitable arrangements are made for pupils and students who are eligible for free travel to the usual school site, but who will be educated at a different location.

It is possible some children who are not currently in receipt of free travel may become eligible because of attending temporary accommodation in a new location. Where they are only attending the new location for a short period of time, it may not be feasible for the local authority to make travel arrangements. They may, however, be able to arrange travel for eligible children who attend a new site for a prolonged period. More information about this can be found in the [Home-to school travel guidance](#).

More Parental Complaints Don't Mean More Inspections



Chris Russell - National director for education, Ofsted

Recently we've noticed a rise in the number of complaints we receive from parents.

While parents should be able to complain to Ofsted if they've gone through their school's internal process and not found a resolution, we know there's a perception that this increase in complaints is prompting more snap inspections.

This year we received 14,900 complaints about schools, almost a 25 per cent increase on the previous year. Prior to the pandemic, we received around 10,300 complaints in 2019/20 and around 12,200 in 2018/19.

We take every complaint seriously and take action where required. However, I'd like to reassure everyone working in the sector that the need for immediate action is rare and has not increased alongside the number of complaints.

We always advise parents to go through their child's school internal complaint process before making a complaint to Ofsted as we know the majority of problems can be solved this way. When a parent comes to us directly, we encourage them to approach the school first.

Two-thirds of complaints we receive are around safeguarding concerns, and around one-third of these complaints will contain an aspect of bullying. We carefully consider all of these concerns and decide if they need to be referred to another agency, whether that's the local authority or the police. A qualifying complaint for Ofsted would be something that raises an issue that affects the whole school. As the inspectorate, we do not have the power to investigate an individual complaint such as the provision of a child's education, health and care plan or to reverse a school decision such as the exclusion of a child.

We never rush to inspect

The remaining qualifying complaints are usually concerned with the leadership and management of a school, pupils' well-being or both. In these situations, we have a process whereby we examine the complaint carefully to see whether it merits any action. If we think the complaint does merit action, then we can decide to bring forward an inspection of the school or retain the information for the school's next inspection.

This year, we have retained the information from around 1,530 complaints for the next scheduled school inspection so that the issues can be taken into account there.

There are of course times when we decide that a complaint is serious enough to necessitate an immediate inspection. This could be if we have concerns that the safety of the pupils or staff is at risk, or if there's evidence to suggest a significant decline in standards or a breakdown in leadership. However, just because we decide to inspect immediately or retain information about a complaint for the next inspection does not necessarily mean that there is a problem at the school. Inspectors approach things with an open mind.

This year, we made a decision to carry out 76 immediate inspections following complaints made to us, less than 1 per cent of all complaints closed in the year. This compares with 72 immediate inspections in 2019/20 and 71 in 2018/19. So, despite the rise in complaints, this has not led to a rise in snap inspections.

It's really important that parents are able to contact us and raise concerns if they believe they have exhausted the school's own systems.

But we want to be clear that we never rush to inspect without carefully considering whether this is the right and proportionate thing to do, in the interests of pupils.

<https://educationinspection.blog.gov.uk/2023/08/30/more-parental-complaints-dont-mean-more-inspections>



PE and Sport Premium for Primary Schools



The Department for Education has updated its guidance on how much PE and Sport Premium funding schools will receive for the academic year 2023/2024 and advice on how to spend it:

About the PE and Sport Premium

All children and young people should live healthy active lives. The UK Chief Medical Officers recommend that all children and young people should take part in moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity for at least 60 minutes every day. Children with special educational needs and disabilities should take part in 20 minutes of daily activity.

The [Childhood Obesity Plan](#) says that at least 30 minutes of daily activity should take place in schools.

Schools have a key role to play in achieving this aim. This is particularly true of primary schools where the foundations of positive and enjoyable participation in regular physical activity are embedded. All children should have equal access to high-quality PE provision and opportunities to experience and participate in a wide range of sports and physical activities. Academic achievement can improve in school because of the benefits children can gain.

Schools should use the PE and Sport Premium funding to help achieve these aims. It must not be used for core-type school activities. They should use it to make additional and sustainable improvements to the PE, sport and physical activity they provide, such as:

- Funding high-quality PE and sport for at least 2 hours a week, complemented by a wide range of extracurricular sport and competitive opportunities
- Providing or improving equal access to sport for boys and girls
- Schools should prioritise PE and Sport Premium spending to improve in the following 5 key areas:
 - Increasing all staff's confidence, knowledge and skills in teaching PE and sport
 - Increasing engagement of all pupils in regular physical activity and sport
 - Raising the profile of PE and sport across the school, to support whole school improvement
 - Offer a broader and more equal experience of a range of sports and physical activities to all pupils
 - Increase participation in competitive sport

Eligibility

Most schools with primary-age pupils receive the PE and Sport Premium. The exceptions are:

- Nursery schools
- Studio schools
- University technical colleges
- Independent schools, except for non-maintained special schools

How funding is calculated and the amounts payable for 2023/2024

Schools receive PE and Sport Premium funding based on the number of pupils they have in years 1 to 6. In cases where schools may not have set year groups (for example, in some special schools), pupils aged 5 to 10 attract the funding.

In most cases, funding is determined by using data from the January 2023 school census. For a new school, or a school teaching eligible pupils for the first time in the academic year 2023/2024, funding is based on data from the autumn 2023 school census.

For the year 2023/2024, the amounts payable will be:

- Schools with 16 or fewer eligible pupils will receive £1,000 per pupil
- Schools with 17 or more eligible pupils will receive £16,000 and an additional payment of £10 per pupil

Payment dates for 2023/2024

Maintained schools, including PRUs and general hospitals

Funding goes to the local authority in two separate payments in October and April who then passes it on to the school.

Academies, free schools, city technology colleges and non-maintained special schools

PE and Sport Premium funding is received direct over two separate payments made in November and April.

Using the PE and Sport Premium

Any use of the PE and Sport Premium must be in accordance with the terms outlined in the conditions of [grant document](#). This means schools must use the PE and Sport Premium to:

- Build capacity and capability in the school and make sure that improvements made to the quality of PE, sport and physical activity provision now are sustainable and will benefit pupils joining the school in future
- Develop or add to the PE, sport and physical activity that the school provides.

Continued professional development

Schools should see the continued professional development (CPD) of teachers as a key priority to make sure that the future quality of the teaching of PE, sport and physical activity is sustainable. This includes providing staff with:

- Professional development
- Mentoring
- Appropriate training
- Access to external resources

Schools should monitor and assess the effectiveness of the CPD being provided to make sure that it is up to standard.

Other effective ways to spend the premium

Schools can also:

- Embed physical activity into the school day by encouraging active travel to and from school and having active break times
- Provide targeted activities or support to involve and encourage the least active children
- Help to provide equal access for all pupils to the range of sports and physical activities that the school offers

Schools can also use the PE and Sport Premium to raise attainment in primary school swimming and water safety by funding top-up swimming sessions for those pupils that do not meet national curriculum requirements after they've completed core swimming lessons.

Sustainability

Achieving sustainable outcomes is key to any spending of the PE and Sport Premium.

Before making any decision on what the funding should be used for, schools (in particular, governors and trustees) should consider how the spending will benefit future pupils and what the lasting legacy of this spending will be.

Schools should focus their efforts on upskilling the whole staff workforce so that they feel confident and able to lead a PE lesson independently.

Use of external coaches

Schools may wish to engage the expertise of external coaches to offer their pupils a wider variety of sports. Governing bodies, trustees or proprietors should seek assurance that providers have appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place, including inspecting these as needed.

Employing external coaches should not replace the need for the primary teaching staff or fund annually repeated coach-led initiatives.

Spending in an academic year

Schools must spend the PE and Sport Premium funding in full for the benefit of the pupils attending the school within the academic year it has been allocated for. Funding should not be allocated to only benefit a certain year group.

Schools cannot roll over any unused funding into the following academic year. They must spend the funding before 31 July 2024 so it can be accounted for in:

- The school's published online report
- The new [digital PE and Sport Premium reporting tool](#) (once in place).

What the PE and Sport Premium should not be used for

Funding must not be used for:

- Capital expenditure
- Employing coaches or specialist teachers to cover planning preparation and assessment arrangements (this should be funded from the school's core staffing budgets)
- Teaching the minimum requirements of the national curriculum or, for academies, the existing PE curriculum – apart from top-up swimming lessons after pupils have completed core lessons. Teaching the curriculum should be funded through the school's core funding
- Buying services that will be delivered or used in following academic years (this includes paying for invoices and subscriptions in advance)
- Goods that exceed the de minimis (lowest) value for purchases set by the school
- Buying staff PE kit.

Examples of what comes under capital expenditure include:

- Multi-use games areas and Daily Mile tracks
- Forest School environments and Trim Trails
- Buying vehicles
- Fixed playground equipment, such as climbing frames
- Trophy cabinets or similar.

Examples of what schools should pay for from their staffing budget include:

- Subsidising core staffing, such as PE subject leaders or external coaches who are engaged in repeated annual initiatives
- Funding the cost of a teaching assistant or apprentice to deliver PE lessons instead of primary teaching staff.

Schools receive separate funding for the national PE curriculum. An example that falls under this is swimming and water safety lessons and any associated costs, other than additional top-up lessons for pupils who have not been able to meet the national curriculum requirements.

Defining capital expenditure

Schools can only use PE and Sport Premium funding for revenue expenditure. Capital expenditure for the purposes of this grant funding is defined as: 'The purchase of an asset (tangible or intangible), or expenditure which adds to/enhances and not merely maintains the value of an existing asset.'

For expenditure to be treated as capital, the asset must:

- Be used for more than one year
- Be above the school's (local authority's or trust's) de minimis threshold for recognition of assets to its balance sheet - this can include:
- Individual assets worth over the de minimis threshold
- Grouped assets, that is assets of a similar nature that the school buys at the same time, which cost more than the de minimis threshold
- Bulk assets, for example a bulk purchase of equipment where the value of the individual item is below the set value, which cost more overall than the de minimis threshold

- Increase the useful life, performance or value of the asset.

If the spending would trigger asset recognition for the school or local authority, under your own local accounting policy, the spending would not be eligible to be funded through this grant.

Schools can use grant funds to maintain existing assets because the funding can be used towards maintenance costs. For example, repainting lines on the playground is allowable as the playground should already be recognised as an asset, and the cost of repainting lines on it is a revenue maintenance cost.

Accountability and reporting

Schools are accountable for how they use the PE and Sport Premium funding allocated to them. The school's senior leadership team should make sure that the funding is spent for the purpose it has been provided - that is to make additional and sustainable improvements to the PE, sport and physical activity offered.

As part of their role, governors and academy trustees should monitor how the funding is being spent and determine how it fits into school improvement plans and assess the impact it is having on pupils.

Schools, local authorities and academy proprietors must follow the terms set out in the [**conditions of grant**](#) document. If a school, local authority or academy proprietor fails to comply with these terms, the Secretary of State may require the school to repay all or any part of the premium paid. As part of the conditions of grant, schools must publish a report detailing how they have spent their PE and Sport Premium funding allocation on their school website by 31 July 2024.

Reports must include:

- The amount of PE and Sport Premium received
- A full breakdown of how it has been spent, including justifying any additional costs incurred and describing:
- The measurable impact that the school has seen on pupils' PE attainment, physical activity and sport participation due to the spending
- How the spend will be sustainable in the future

Schools must also publish the percentage of pupils within its year 6 cohort in the 2023/2024 academic year who met the national curriculum swimming and water safety requirements even though the funding can only be used to provide additional support for pupils failing to meet the curriculum standards.

Schools should provide attainment data for year 6 pupils from their most recent swimming lessons. This may be data from previous years, depending on the swimming programme at the school. Schools must keep attainment data from swimming lessons in years 3 to 5 to be able to report this accurately in year 6.

To help schools plan, monitor and report on the impact of their spending, partners in the PE and school sport sector have developed a planning tool and a recording template. These are on the [Association for PE](#) and [Youth Sport Trust](#) websites. Schools are recommended to use these to plan and record how they use the PE and Sport Premium throughout the year, to be ready to publish the report at the end of the school year.

Review of online reports

The DfE will monitor a selection of published reports to confirm that the use of the PE and Sport Premium meets the requirements outlined within the guidance and the [conditions of grant document](#).

If any concerns or discrepancies are identified, DfE will contact the school to address and investigate these fully. If any concerns are confirmed, 'appropriate and proportionate' action will be taken against the school, which may include action to recover funding.

Digital tool

A new digital PE and Sport Premium reporting tool will be piloted during summer term 2024. The tool will provide a further measure of accountability and will help identify any non-compliant spending of the PE and Sport Premium. It will be a mandatory requirement for schools to complete it from 2024/25.

The information gathered will include:

- Figures on the overall spend
- What the funding has been spent on
- Whether there is any unspent funding
- Swimming and water safety attainment.



School Sport and Activity Action Plan Update



The 2019 cross-government action plan has been updated to provide more pupils with increased opportunities to play sport and take physical exercise during their time in school.

Introduction

PE and sport have always been central to what schools do and are a key part of a school's identity. Where schools provide high quality PE and pupils play sport, they equip pupils to continue that participation into their later lives. This goes beyond the immediate benefits of improved attainment, mental wellbeing and personal development.

The [Active Lives Children and Young People's Survey](#) provides detailed insight into the amount, frequency and type of sport and physical activity undertaken by children. The most recent data was published in December 2022 and shows that the proportion of children who are active has increased by **2.6%** compared to the academic year 2020/21, bringing activity levels back in line with those seen pre-pandemic. Despite this encouraging increase, the evidence also tells us that stubborn inequalities persist.

Not all groups of children currently access and experience the benefits of sport and exercise with differences by age, ethnicity, sex, disability and socio-economic group. Girls' equality has been brought into sharp focus by the Lionesses' European Championship 2022 win and their campaign to ensure girls and boys have the same opportunities to take part in high quality PE and for every girl in England to be able to play football at school.

A new focus for PE and sport

The 2019 School Sport and Activity Action Plan set out a cross-Government commitment to collaborate at a national level to ensure that PE and sport are an integral part of both the school day and after-school activities. Good progress has been made in delivering on the actions set out in the 2019 plan even with the additional challenge of a global pandemic. More schools have opened their sport facilities outside of the core school day, new resources and training have been developed and delivered, and extra-curricular clubs for pupils have been made available. This has happened alongside continued funding for the Primary PE and Sport Premium and School Games Organiser network.

The update focuses on further work to improve the quality of PE and school sport provision, ensuring equality of access to sport, increasing the number of children playing sport in school and meeting curriculum expectations, including for swimming and water safety. The action plan will not sit in isolation. The Government's new sport strategy will set the long-term strategy for sport in the UK and focus on addressing inactivity levels at all ages and making the sport sector more sustainable.

The strategy will set out plans to achieve a step-change in activity levels, particularly in children and young people. This action plan supports that aim by ensuring children have increased opportunities to play sport and take physical exercise during their time in school.

Monitoring and evaluation

To help ensure the School Sport and Activity Action Plan delivers on its aims, it is important to understand how the proposed actions are delivered and affect the quality of PE and sport in schools. To this end, the Department for Education will explore the current provision of PE and sport in schools in England, and how this is impacted by Government programmes. The research will specifically consider the Primary PE and Sport Premium and Opening School Facilities programme, to improve understanding of what works, for whom and in which contexts. Findings from the research will be used to inform future policy development and decision-making on how best to meet the Government's aims.

High quality PE and sport for all pupils

The Government recognises PE and sport as being integral to what makes an excellent school, with dedicated time in the curriculum ensuring all pupils experience the benefits of regular physical exercise. This is why schools are being encouraged to deliver a minimum of two hours' PE time during the school day every week alongside equal access to sport for girls and boys.

Non-statutory guidance

Non-statutory PE and sport guidance will be published by the end of 2023. With support from national governing bodies and other sporting organisations, the Government will identify schools that offer equal access for girls to sport during the school day and additional extracurricular activities highlighting how schools deliver two hours of PE a week and equal access for girls to PE and school sport. Research will include both independent schools and the best examples in the state sector as a comparison. This guidance will include detailed case-studies outlining examples of good practice, to help support teachers and senior leaders to deliver good PE and sport in schools.

Future PE and sport for all schools

As set out in the 2022 schools white paper, a new arm's length curriculum body, Oak National Academy (Oak), has been established. Oak will work with teachers across the country giving them and their pupils access to free, optional, and adaptable high-quality digital curriculum resources, including for PE.

Oak will work closely with its curriculum partners and subject expert groups to create full curriculum packages that align with the national curriculum and are informed by best practice and non-statutory guidance.

Primary PE and Sport Premium

The Government has confirmed that the Primary PE and Sport Premium will continue for academic years 2023/24 and 2024/25 with a total of over £600m across the two years, with funding provided by the Department for Education and the Department for Health and Social Care.

At an individual school level, the Primary PE and Sport Premium will be used as a focus for improved local accountability and leadership of PE and sport in primary schools. Significant dedicated funding has made a difference but there is potential for schools to use it better. DfE will improve oversight of the premium and give schools more tools to understand how to use this grant more effectively. To support schools to make changes DfE will publish updated guidance and conditions of grant to steer schools towards the most effective uses of the premium, drawing on the experience of the schools who use their premium well.

To improve accountability of the premium, a new digital tool will be introduced for schools to report on spending of their allocation of the premium. The digital tool will be made available from summer 2024 with an expectation for schools to trial completing this tool at the end of the 2023/24 academic year. For the 2024/25 academic year, completion of the digital tool will be required through the conditions of grant for all schools in receipt of the premium. Further information on the digital tool will be provided in updated PE premium guidance.

In addition to this, schools will be signposted to a planning, reporting and evaluation template created by the Youth Sport Trust and Association for PE. This will be for schools to complete alongside the digital tool and will provide opportunities for schools to plan their premium spend to effectively deliver the premium objectives, be more transparent with their premium spend and will offer the opportunity for schools to record more information to support the data submitted through the digital tool. There will still be a requirement for schools to publish this template or a similar report on their website.

Summary of actions

High quality PE and sport for all pupils

- By the end of 2023 the DfE will publish non-statutory guidance to help primary and secondary schools deal with the issues they face in providing high quality PE and sport, including a focus on girls' equal access and at least 2 hours of PE and sport a week.
- In summer 2023 the DfE will publish updated guidance on the Primary PE and Sport Premium (as covered in previous article), alongside a refreshed tool from the Association for Physical Education and Youth Sport Trust to help schools plan, report and evaluate the use of their premium.
- The Department will continue to support Drowning Prevention Week in June 2024. New water safety lesson resources for primary schools will be available.
- In summer 2024 the new digital reporting tool for the PE premium will become available for schools to use.
- In academic year 2024/25 all schools in receipt of the PE premium will be required to complete the digital tool to report on their premium spend.

Extra-curricular sport and competition

- At the end of the Opening School Facilities programme in March 2025, Active Partnerships and consortium partners will publish a practical guide with details of how schools can effectively use their sport facilities to increase the participation rates of some of the most inactive groups.

- In autumn 2023 the refreshed School Games Mark will be made available to schools.
- At the end of the programme in March 2025, Active Partnerships and consortium partners will publish a guide with advice on how schools can effectively use their sport facilities to increase the participation rates of some of the most inactive groups.
- Sport activities will continue to be provided through the Holiday Activity and Food programme in Easter, summer and winter school holidays.
- DfE and DCMS will collaborate with the Youth Sport Trust and national governing bodies to use the annual National School Sport Week to recognise schools that offer a minimum of 2 hours PE and equal access to sports during curriculum time and additional extracurricular activities.

Securing equal access to PE and sport opportunities

- Outcomes from the Your:Time leadership programme second year of delivery will be shared in autumn 2023. The overall outcomes for the 3-year programme will be shared in academic year 2024/25.
- An independent evaluation of the Inclusion 2024 grant will be published in autumn 2024.

The plan can be viewed in full at www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-sport-and-activity-action-plan





Annual Review for the Academic Year Ending 31st August 2023

Forward

Governors and trustees have an important role in the education and support of our children and the LGF was established in 1996 to coordinate and represent the views of Liverpool's governors and trustees on the various high-level strategic education committees which operate in the city.

We are always looking for new members to contribute to our work. They present excellent opportunities to have input into education policy and further develop your personal skills. We do hope that some of you will give this matter your serious consideration and make contact with us.

The range of committees is listed below at Appendix A, together with the name of the committee member and the committees on which he/she currently represents the LGF.

LGF works closely with several key partners, which include the three Liverpool Headteachers' Associations, Liverpool Learning Partnership, Liverpool Local Authority, School Improvement Liverpool, and the National Governance Association. However, more detailed information on our work and activity is available on our website: www.livgovforum.org.uk

Overview Comments by Michael Morris, LGF Chair

I have much pleasure in welcoming you to this ninth formal LGF Annual Review, which is also my second report as the LGF Chair. As usual, the report aims to provide Liverpool school governors, academy trustees, and our partners with a succinct overview of our key activities and the progress we have made during the 2022/23 academic year.

It was a year that proved to be another interesting and challenging time for the LGF with high demands from governors and schools for our support, in particular, to sit as independent governors on various panels across Liverpool city schools.

We continued our policy to deliver another conference which was held last May, when Mr Rohit Naik OBE, Hope School Headteacher delivered a passionate and engaging presentation on the *"Attachment and trauma framework"*. The feedback from the delegates attending was undoubtedly very positive.

Included in the presentation was an overview of the Hearts project which is supporting several schools across Liverpool to develop a robust model of embedding attachment and trauma-responsive care within each school.

On behalf of the LGF, I would like to take the opportunity to offer our congratulations to all those involved in this innovative programme on being awarded the “Pearson National Teaching Silver Award in the category: Impact through Partnership” and offer our best wishes when they will be assessed for the gold award later in the year.

Finally, I would like to record my thanks to my fellow hard-working committee colleagues for their commitment and dedication representing Liverpool governors/trustees over the last academic year to ensure we have an input into the important educational decision-making on behalf of Liverpool schools.

A special thanks to David Blythe for the many duties he efficiently undertakes administrating and coordinating the work of the LGF and to Paula Anderson for the prompt and effective secretarial service she provides, coupled with her general support which is greatly appreciated.

Conference

As mentioned in the chair’s comments above, last May we were pleased to hold our 10th half-day conference. It was delivered and presented by Rohit Naik OBE, Headteacher at Hope School of Excellence, and covered the topic “Building children’s resilience and improving their educational outcomes through attachment and trauma-informed friendly practices”. Support was provided by Sarah Goldman and Katie Atkinson, both parents and Hope School governors, who were able to provide testimonies from their personal experiences. The conference included an introduction and overview of the Hearts programme which currently supports and facilitates 32 Liverpool schools to build capacity and progress towards being recognised as a committed and effective attachment and trauma-informed school.

The conference was attended by 50 governors/trustees from across the city who overwhelmingly endorsed that the conference fully met its objectives. Furthermore, they felt Rohit was an engaging speaker with a comprehensive and in-depth knowledge of attachment and trauma-informed principles and that it was a well-organised event from which they had fully benefited.

Meetings & Guest Speakers

We held seven committee meetings during the academic year. We would like to take the opportunity to record our thanks to all the schools who hosted the meetings and for their kind hospitality.

For six meetings we also invited guest speakers to address us on a range of various development topics. These were all informative and engaging. We would also like to thank all our guest speakers for giving their time and making a valuable contribution to our work. We would particularly like to mention Jonathan Nichols, who despite being unwell, insisted on delivering his talk via Zoom from his hospital bed. Sadly, Jonathan passed away during the year and will be greatly missed by his family and the education sector in general.

A summary of the meetings held is as follows:

MONTH	MEETING, GUEST SPEAKER & TOPIC (Pre-meeting Development/Information session)
September	Committee meeting at Hope School <i>Guest speaker:</i> Mr Rohit Naik OBE, Headteacher <i>Topic:</i> Introduction to attachment and trauma principles
November	AGM and Committee meeting at St Margaret's C of E Academy <i>Guest speaker:</i> Mr Paul Olubayo, Race Equality Officer, Liverpool City Council <i>Topic:</i> Overview of his role and responsibilities as LA Race Equality Officer
December	Committee meeting at Belle Vale Primary School <i>Guest speaker:</i> Mr Jonathan Nichols, CEO of Rainbow Education MAT <i>Topic:</i> Independent overview of the academisation process
January	Committee meeting at The Beacon C of E Primary School <i>Guest speakers:</i> Community Police Officers Danielle Sewoo and Neelam Chohan, Merseyside Police <i>Topic:</i> Hate crime makes me feel!
March	Committee meeting at Mossfits Lane Primary School <i>Guest speaker:</i> Mr Jonathan Dickson, Head of Resonate, Notre Dame School <i>Topic:</i> Update on music in education and the available support
May	Committee meeting only at Childwall Valley Primary School
July	Committee meeting at Archbishop Blanch C of E Girls School <i>Guest speaker:</i> Mr Ahmad Dolani, governor at Smithdown School <i>Topic:</i> Overview of research exercise into ethnic diversity on the Board of Governors in Liverpool Schools.

Publications

School Improvement Liverpool continued to publish three further issues of "Governance News" during the academic year, which also contained articles submitted by LGF members.

These important information documents contain a wealth of advice and guidance on current governance practice, ensuring governors and trustees are kept up to date on a wide range of topics. We do recommend governors and trustees access and make full use of the documents, which can be accessed [here](#).

We would also like to record our thanks to SIL for their ongoing support, in particular, Dave Cadwallader for his specialist knowledge and guidance, which is very much appreciated.

Meeting Venues

For the 2022/23 academic year, we are aiming to deliver a similar programme of meetings and events in schools across the city.

If you would like to host one of our meetings, then please let us know by contacting David Blythe, LGF Honorary Secretary at: admin@livgovforum.org.uk

Dates for Future Events

The dates for our 2023/24 Autumn Term meetings are:

- 19th September, 2023
- 7th November, 2023
- 5th December, 2023

All meetings are on Tuesdays from 10 am until approximately 12 noon, except for our meeting on the 7th November, which starts with our AGM from 10 am to 10:30 am. This is then followed by our Committee Meeting from 10:30 am until 12:30 pm. Further details regarding our meetings and venues will be shown on our website.

Funding and Finance

LGF is funded by subscriptions from the majority of Liverpool schools, primary, special, and secondary at a nominal charge of £25 per school. This is collected on our behalf through the three Headteacher Associations, which is much appreciated. This enables us to play a full and active role in improving educational standards in Liverpool.

However, as academisation continues to grow, some academy schools are unfortunately no longer contributing or engaging with us and this is having a negative impact on our funding. We will, therefore, need to be innovative going forward on how we can bridge the discrepancy gap and remain an important and viable organisation.

To ensure financial control and accountability, we have a “Finance and Operating Manual” which sets out important parameters and is regularly reviewed and updated as required. The accounts are also independently audited.

A summary of the accounts for the year ending 31st August, 2023 is as follows:

SUMMARY OF 2022/23 FINANCIAL STATEMENT	£
Bank balance brought forward on 1st September 2022	4525.02
Income received during the 2022/23 academic year	3105.00
Expenditure during the reporting year	2515.70
Closing bank balance on 31st August 2023	5070.62
NB: A full statement of accounts will be available at the LGF November, 2023 AGM	

Finally, we hope you find this 9th issue of the LGF annual review as interesting and informative as ever.

Appendix

2022/23 Overview of LGF Committee Activities





The table below details the LGF members and the various committees they represent on behalf of the LGF.

The aim of the LGF committee meetings is to coordinate its activities, obtain feedback from members who have attended the various strategic educational committee meetings, formulate policy and progress development plans. Minutes of committee meetings and other relevant information are promptly published on the LGF website: www.livgovforum.org.uk

LGF sub-committees are established when required, to focus and drive forward special projects e.g. the LGF Conferences.

LGF COMMITTEE / ASSOCIATE MEMBERS	
NAME & SCHOOL	COMMITTEE MEMBERS & REPRESENTATION
Joe Hartley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Honorary President
Michael Morris (St Margaret's C of E Academy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Member, Liverpool Learning Partnership LCC Educational Improvement Plan Priority 4
Maureen McDaid (St Nicholas Catholic Primary & Gateacre)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main Committee and Formula Working Group, Liverpool Schools Forum
David Blythe (Honorary Secretary) (Hope & Gateacre)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners Who Need More Strategic Group, Liverpool Learning Partnership • Main Committee and Formula Working Group, Liverpool Schools Forum
Danielle Azanuwha (The Beacon C of E Primary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liverpool Safeguarding Children Partnership
Cliff Barton (Sudley Infant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main Committee and Formula Working Group, Liverpool Schools Forum
Dave Cadwallader (Rainbow Education MAT, Smithdown Primary, Gateacre & Clifford Holroyde)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides advice and guidance to the LGF committee and acts as the liaison with School Improvement Liverpool
Andy Chadwick (Ranworth Square Primary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main committee, Liverpool Schools Forum All Learners Strategic Group, Liverpool Learning Partnership
Haley Igbokwe (Blackmoor Park Junior)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners Who Need More Strategic Group, Liverpool Learning Partnership
Richard Lovegrove (Springwood Heath Primary & Faith Primary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board observer, Liverpool Learning Partnership
Avril O'Brien	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners Who Need More Strategic Group, Liverpool Learning Partnership
Dave Owens (Mossfits Lane Primary & Ernest Cookson)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main Committee, Liverpool Schools Forum All Learners Strategic Group, Liverpool Learning Partnership
Ian Smith (Middlefield Primary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee Member

LGF COMMITTEE / ASSOCIATE MEMBERS	
NAME & SCHOOL	COMMITTEE MEMBERS & REPRESENTATION
Marlene Taylor (Lawrence Community Primary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main Committee, Liverpool Schools Forum
NAME & SCHOOL	ASSOCIATE MEMBERS
Peter Devaney (St Patricks Catholic Primary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent panel governor
Cllr Barbara Murray (Childwall Valley Primary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate
Mark Rea (Ernest Cookson & Longmoor Primary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent panel governor
Joyce Smith (Mossfits Lane Primary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate
Paula Anderson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting Secretary

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