

School inspection update: academic year 2018 to 2019

Documents

Details

The November edition, the first since the roll-out of the [education inspection framework \(EIF\)](#), focuses on the minor changes to section 5 and section 8 handbooks following the first two months under EIF. A summary of the changes is included and the edition also includes information on the release of key stage 4 checking data.

The July edition provides a single point of reference for any policy matters relating to the new framework not covered by the EIF school inspection handbooks published in May. Information in this edition replaces or reiterates all previous guidance in earlier editions.

The March edition clarifies a number of areas, such as summary evaluations of multi-academy trusts (MATs), how inspectors should treat safeguarding concerns from questionnaires, inspection timings and Ofsted's process for publishing reports for schools that have closed.

The January school inspection update was launched together with a [consultation on Ofsted's education inspection framework \(EIF\) 2019](#). Part 1 explains why we believe there is a need for a new framework at this point in the improvement journey of England's education sector; it also summarises the theory and evidence underpinning the development of the EIF 2019. Parts 2 and 3 focus on some of the main features that inspectors will look at within the proposed framework. Part 4 summarises how we propose to go about gathering evidence and reporting to users.

The November edition includes our approach to unlawful segregation, an update on electronic evidence gathering during school inspections and links to new or recently updated guidance.

The September edition focuses on the reformed 9 to 1 GCSEs. We also provide an update on floor standards and coasting schools, guidance on off-rolling in schools, clarification on conducting inspections in schools that are part of multi-academy trusts, guidance on in-school cadet units, and information on Ofsted's new inspection reports website.

Published 20 September 2018

Last updated 1 November 2019 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 1 November 2019 Added the November 2019 edition of the school inspection update.
2. 8 July 2019 Added July 2019 update.

3. 14 March 2019 Added the March 2019 edition of school inspection update.
 4. 16 January 2019 Added a special edition of the school inspection update about Ofsted's new education inspection framework for 2019.
 5. 20 November 2018 Added School inspection update: November 2018.
 6. 20 September 2018 First published.
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[New safe drilling guidance published](#)

The Coal Authority has updated its guidance to the geotechnical community on the management of hazardous gases when drilling or piling through coal.

[New safe drilling guidance published](#)

Forty industry professionals were given an outline of the Coal Authority's new drilling guidance at an engagement event at its Mansfield headquarters.

[Guidance on managing the risk of hazardous gases](#) is designed to protect drilling operatives, the public and property.

Serious incidents have occurred in the past, with deaths linked to carbon monoxide poisoning.

Carbon monoxide, methane, hydrogen sulphide and carbon dioxide, are the most common hazardous gases found in mine workings, with hydrogen being less common.

Dr Stuart Walker, Principal Manager of the Coal Authority's Permitting and Licensing Team, said:

Drilling and piling into coal measures can present many hazards for both site operatives and any properties in close proximity to a site and unfortunately incidents still occur.

The different drilling methods can all pose a risk in different situations and the guidance details the risks associated with mine gases and provides practical advice on how these can be managed.

The updated guidance is a reminder to anyone carrying out drilling work within coal measures that they should consider mine gases as part of a suitable and sufficient risk assessment that takes into

account the potential effects on wider public safety and surrounding property.

Operations to investigate, treat or disturb such features should only be planned and undertaken by suitably competent persons.

We are advising all companies who are involved with drilling and piling on the former coalfields to familiarise themselves with the new guidance.

The new guidance updates a document produced in 2012, which was developed following a number of serious incidents that resulted in toxic gas entering properties during or following the investigation and treatment of former coal mine workings.

This original guidance was written following a collaboration between the Coal Authority, the Health and Safety Executive, the British Drilling Association, the Federation of Piling Specialists, and the Association of Geotechnical and Geoenvironmental Specialists.

[£20 million fund marks one year on from the Inclusive Transport Strategy](#)

- industry invited to nominate stations across Britain that would benefit from improvements to accessibility
- department marks one-year since the publication of the Inclusive Transport Strategy
- move follows wider developments to make the transport network more inclusive, such as the extension of the Blue Badge scheme

Disabled rail passengers across the UK are set to benefit from a raft of accessibility improvements with the opening of a [£20 million government fund](#) today (8 July 2019).

It marks a year since the launch of the [Inclusive Transport Strategy](#), the government's flagship accessibility programme.

Key commitments delivered in the last 12 months include the introduction of the first ever impartial independent Rail Ombudsman, to make sure passengers get a fair deal when train companies fall short, and the launch of a £2 million fund to bring [Changing Places accessible toilets to more motorway](#)

[service areas](#).

And last month, guidance was issued to local authorities in England for [extending the Blue Badge scheme](#) – the biggest change in 50 years – making it easier for people with non-visible disabilities to travel.

[Inclusive transport – one year on video](#)

Nusrat Ghani, Accessibility Minister, said:

While many take for granted the ability to travel easily from A to B, access for the fifth of people who identify as disabled can be far from straightforward.

We want disabled people to travel easily, confidently and without extra cost, which is why it is fantastic to be opening this fund today.

I look forward to seeing what ideas the industry has for accessibility improvements as we work towards a more inclusive rail network.

The £20 million fund will be open for applications from stations in need of accessibility improvements, leading to small-scale enhancements such as tactile paving, handrails and Harrington Humps, which increase platform heights. Taken together, these improvements will open up journeys for disabled passengers, allowing them to travel with confidence.

John Welsman, Policy Business Partner at the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, said:

Guide Dogs welcomes the additional funding as independent train travel is a real challenge for people living with sight loss.

Elements like tactile paving on platform edges and steps, better signage, improved lighting and colour contrast will make stations easier to negotiate confidently and more safely.

However, train travel is still a very complex environment for people with sight loss and we will continue to work to find solutions so that no one with sight loss is left out of life.

This follows the announcement in April that 73 stations will benefit from accessible routes to and between every platform, as part of the government's £300 million [Access for All fund](#).

The Access for All programme was first launched in 2006 and has so far delivered more than 200 accessible routes into stations along with smaller scale improvements at a further 1,500 stations.

Previous projects funded through the programme include the installation of Harrington Humps at 77 stations to help reduce stepping distances from the platform to the train; accessible toilets installed at 18 stations – including a Changing Places toilet at London Paddington – and a new footbridge and 4 lifts installed at St Neots Station, Cambridgeshire.

The government is also proposing a number of measures to be delivered in partnership with industry to improve the flying experience for disabled passengers and those with reduced mobility as part of its [Aviation 2050 Strategy](#).

The work is all part of the government's aspiration that by 2030 all major transport hubs and terminals on both public and private transport networks will meet the needs of disabled people, including toilet and changing facilities, straightforward signage, audio and visual messaging and space to navigate.

[Proposals launched to boost the quality and uptake of Higher Technical Qualifications](#)

Opaque and misunderstood Level 4 and 5 qualifications are being renamed and revamped [under plans unveiled today](#) (Monday 8 July) by Education Secretary Damian Hinds.

Level 4 and 5 qualifications – lesser known qualifications that sit between A Level (Level 3) and degrees (Level 6), such as CertHE, DipHE and foundation degrees – will be rebadged as Higher Technical Qualifications and quality approved, in a drive to attract more students to study them.

[Despite research showing Higher Technical Qualifications can lead to better wages and provide the skills in demand in the future job market](#), only around [1 in 10 adults](#) in England hold them – one of the lowest rates in the OECD. Of the 4,000 qualifications offered, [research shows](#) that over 40% of these only have 5 students or even fewer on them.

[Recent research](#) has also revealed that students who gain these qualifications in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects can earn up to £5,000 more a year than people with degrees from many universities.

[The CBI](#) have predicted that in 5 years' time almost half (47%) of all employment will be in management, professional and technical roles – boosting demand for the specialist skills that Higher Technical Qualifications provide.

Education Secretary Damian Hinds said:

Employers across the country are crying out for more computer programmers, engineers, electricians and technicians in fields from advanced manufacturing to healthcare. But the evidence shows that despite these qualifications putting people in prime position to take advantage of that demand and the opportunities for better wages and better prospects – not enough people know about them.

That needs to change. To help that change we need to make sure these courses are high-quality, lead to good jobs and that people know about them. We can't legislate for parity of esteem between academic and technical routes, but we can make sure the options out there are clear and high-quality so students and employers know and trust that they will give them the skills they need.

This overhaul is part of Mr Hinds' radical shake-up of technical and vocational education, so students and employers understand Higher Technical Qualifications and see them as high-quality and valued alternatives to a traditional academic route.

To boost uptake of these qualifications and ensure they are of a high standard the Government has outlined proposals including:

- Reviewing Level 4 and 5 Qualifications – ensuring they are of a high-quality and lead to well-paid jobs – and awarding a new quality mark for all approved Higher Technical Qualifications so students and employers can be confident courses provide the skills they need
- Ensuring that approved Higher Technical Qualifications are only available with access to student finance at high-quality further and higher education providers – so that students know the qualifications they get from these institutions are prestigious and highly valued by employers
- A new public campaign working alongside employers and careers advisers to showcase the benefits and the wide range of career opportunities that studying a Higher Technical Qualification can open up

To be internationally competitive and develop the skills our economy needs to drive growth, more people need to gain these Higher Technical Qualifications. In Germany, where productivity levels [are 25% higher than in the UK](#), leading to better wages and prosperity, one in five adults holds a qualification to this level.

Today's plans build on the action already underway to transform technical and vocational education in this country. This includes the introduction of new T

Levels from 2020 – technical alternatives to A Levels – and the creation of more high-quality apprenticeship opportunities.

Higher Technical Qualifications will provide a natural progression route for young people taking new T Levels from 2020 or A Levels (Level 3) enabling them to take the next step up and gain higher technical skills in key subjects like STEM.

Matthew Fell, CBI Chief UK Policy Director, said:

There is increasing demand from business for skills at all levels, so it's vital the education system keeps pace with the changing world of work.

It's terrific to see a focus on level 4 and 5 qualifications. This 'missing middle' has been overlooked for too long, and yet for many employers it can provide the skills by bridging a gap between A levels and degrees.

The CBI encourages more flexible routes to higher skills. Ensuring firms have confidence in these qualifications is critical, so an increased role for the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education and Office for Students to oversee and kitemark quality on behalf of employers will be welcomed.

Federation of Small Businesses National Chairman Mike Cherry said:

We welcome the findings of this review into higher technical qualifications. It's vital for future generations and for the economy, that education and training at all levels are readily accessible. Small firms tell us that technical skills are the most important skillset to achieving future growth. However, many small businesses are still unaware of the potential training possibilities that are available to meet the technical skills gaps they face. We want to work with the Government to change this.

Lord Sainsbury of Turville, chair of the Independent Panel on Technical Education, said:

In the world's best technical education systems, higher technical qualifications play an essential role in equipping people with the skills that modern industry and business need. In England, however, this 'missing middle' of technical education has been neglected for decades. As a result, we now see a significant mismatch between the skills that our economy needs and the qualifications on offer.

I warmly welcome these plans for reform. Qualifications bearing the new, government-backed quality-mark will have met employer

standards, be taught in excellent institutions and align with apprenticeships. In this way, employers and students alike can be confident that they have real value in the labour market.

Higher technical courses are offered at universities, FE colleges and National Colleges – such as the London South Bank University and the National College for Nuclear. [The Government's network of Institutes of Technology](#) – unique collaborations between universities, FE colleges, and leading employers – will also specialise in delivering quality Higher Technical Qualifications and training in STEM subjects, such as digital, advanced manufacturing and engineering that will provide employers with the skilled workforce they need.

The Level 4 and 5 review will complement the Government's Post-18 review, to ensure the system is joined up, accessible to all and encourages the development of the skills the country needs. This is central to the Government's modern Industrial Strategy, which aims to make sure everyone is equipped for the jobs of the future.

The Government is also [reviewing post-16 qualifications at Level 3](#) and below to make sure that all qualifications taken by students are high quality and lead to employment or further study.