



Guidelines for Denominational
Inspections
Sept 2021-July 2022

Inspection Schedule

In line with the requirement for Ofsted to resume their inspection cycle the Diocese will also resume its schedule of Denominational Inspection. For the forthcoming academic year, the existing framework will be used. However, in line with the national agenda from September 2022 the new framework will be implemented. Inspections for this current year will commence at the start of October 2021. It was previously thought it would not be until Term 2 however, this is in line with other dioceses.

In light of the suspension of inspections there is an acceptance that schools will have fallen outside of the legal framework for a Section 48 inspection. This means that should a school receive a section 8 or 5 Ofsted a letter from the Diocese verifying the deferral will be acceptable. This means that Ofsted will not refer to the lateness in their main report. It is the intention of our Diocese to catch up as quickly as possible, to ensure that the provision of Catholicity remains at a good standard. However, we are governed by the number and availability of inspectors. With a national inspectorate framework and approved national inspectors coming online during the next year it is hoped that this may provide additional capacity as we move forward. Whilst the intention is to continue to deploy two inspectors for each inspection for the forthcoming year it may not always be possible and so in the case of primary some inspections may be undertaken with just one.

On Site Inspection

Inspections will take place on site. However, some elements of the inspection may be carried out by video/telephone calls. This will be agreed with the headteacher in the preliminary phone call.

Pre-Inspection Phone calls

In line with our existing processes there will a two-day notice period starting with an initial phone call by 12 informing the school of the date of the inspection and who the inspectors. A call will then be followed up by the lead inspector to discuss the practicalities of the inspection along with agreed safety protocols that the school will need the inspectors to follow. The discussion will also take account of what, if any, elements of remote education remain in place at the time of the inspection.

During the inspection

Inspectors recognise and appreciate the challenges that schools have faced during the pandemic and that schools will have been unable to implement Catholic Life, Religious Education and Collective Worship in the usual way during this period. However, Inspectors will want to discuss how Catholic Life, RE and Collective Worship have remained a priority throughout the pandemic. The provision, quality and monitoring of remote education will therefore contribute to the final judgment. Inspectors are also aware that schools were not required by the DfE to provide education to all pupils from March 2020 to July 2020 due to Covid 19 therefore this time span will not be considered

for the inspection. However, the inspection judgment is based on what has occurred since the previous inspection which, for most schools will be a period of 5 years. Therefore, the expectation is that schools will have retained and maintained their evidence prior to Covid and since schools' return. This means inspectors will be considering and using evidence from before March 20 and since September 21 along with the remote provision, to inform their judgements.

One of the key areas, inspectors will focus on during the inspection is how leadership has identified pupils' learning gaps and new starting points, and how they have responded to this in their curriculum planning.

Where remote education remains in place, inspectors may observe remote teaching and review materials. Inspectors will only expect to see the school's typical approach to remote education, and do not expect schools to arrange anything solely for inspection.

Use of data

Inspection of RE in secondary schools will not use any data from 2020 or 2021, as this is unavailable. Internal data will not be expected or accepted. Historical externally published data will be considered, but inspectors will be mindful of its age. Data in primary schools from 2020 and 2021 will also not be required.

Progress since last inspection

Inspectors recognise that responding to COVID-19 has placed great demands on school leaders and may have disrupted schools' development plans and impacted on the progress since the last inspection. Consequently, inspectors will be understanding of this when making a judgment related to this aspect of the report.

RSE & Health Education

When forming judgements about RSE & Health Education inspectors will seek to understand what took place before the pandemic, what the school has in place currently, what it did in terms of planning for the new statutory requirements and what its future plans are. Inspectors recognise that many elements of RSE & Health Education that were in place before the pandemic may have been disrupted. Therefore, they will focus on understanding the steps that leaders have taken to offer a wide range of RSE & Health Education opportunity since the school opened to all pupils in March 2021 with the knowledge that the curriculum did not become statutory until September 2021.

Monitoring Visits

The normal cycle remains suspended for the Academic Year 2021-22.

Monitoring visits will continue in their current format, i.e., mid-way through the inspection cycle, only for schools graded less than Good in their most recent Section 48 Inspection (or CSI).

School visits and support for schools will of course continue as normal.