

**To the Chair and Members of the  
SCHOOLS CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL**

**LOCAL AUTHORITY OFSTED EDUCATION INSPECTION FRAMEWORK UPDATE**

<b>Relevant Member(s)</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>	<b>Wards Affected</b>	<b>Key Decision</b>
Cllr Fennelly		All	Information only

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. The report is to inform members of the panel about the new Ofsted inspection procedures applying to Local Authority School Improvement Services with effect from July 2013. The Inspection framework was finalised in June. The process is two fold: a focused inspection of a range of schools in the Local Authority in the same week and a separate on- site inspection of school improvement services. The two processes are not simultaneous or dependent upon each other. Doncaster has not yet been subject to either process, but preparations have been taking place to ensure inspection readiness with schools and the service.

**EXEMPT REPORT**

2. The report is not exempt.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

3. That members note the implications for the Local Authority of the implementation of the inspection procedure, support the policy and approach being driven by the Education Service.
4. That members support the high profile of Education School Improvement in the work of the Council to achieve the key objectives and priorities for children and families.

**BACKGROUND**

5. In January 2013 it was announced that Ofsted intended to hold Local Authorities to account for all school standards in their area, regardless of school status. Local Authorities are now judged on the % of children in good and outstanding education in all areas of provision. Where there are concerns about too few schools being judged good and outstanding, Local Authority school improvement services will be held to account. Inspections will take place according to a published framework. (Appendix A) Eventually all LAs will be inspected, but priority is likely to be given to those who have below the National Average % of children and young people in provision that is less than good. Doncaster is one of these.

**a. Introduction of the Inspection Framework:**

The introduction of the framework means that there is greater accountability needed for Academies by Local Authorities than the DFE has indicated in the past. Doncaster has responded by making changes to the structure and use of resources in the Standards and Effectiveness Service, publishing a more rigorous School Improvement Strategy in consultation with schools and governors. (Appendix B) We have also based service improvement planning on the areas of the framework where developments are needed.

**b. Inspection Part 1 - Focused inspection of a range of schools:**

Ofsted will inspect a range of schools in Doncaster due for inspection. The difference being that their inspections will take place in the same week. The LA will not be notified in advance and may have little or no part to play in the inspection. The schools inspected and a random sample of other good and outstanding schools will be asked a series of questions about their Local Authority school improvement service. Judgements on the LA will be made on the basis of the inspection outcomes and the responses from schools. The DCS will be informed by letter of the findings. (Appendix C)

**c. Inspection Part 2 - On-Site Inspections:**

The on-site inspections of school improvement services will be conducted with a short notice period of five days. Inspection will cover nine aspects arranged under the following four areas:

- Corporate Leadership and Strategic Planning
- Monitoring, Challenge, Intervention and Support
- Support and Challenge for Leadership and Management, including Governance
- Use of Resources

A range of evidence-gathering procedures will be used by inspectors including scrutiny of data and plans linked to school improvement services, school results interviews with staff, Elected Members and education partners.

The outcomes are published in a public report with recommendations for improvement, but no formal category judgement.

Two Local Authorities have already been inspected and their reports published. (Appendix D)

If the Local Authority provision for school improvement is judged to be ineffective, inspectors will decide if there needs to be a re-inspection of the service within twelve months.

**d. Doncaster Statistics regarding School Ofsted Outcomes:**

The current % of children and young people in good and better provision is currently 62% Primary and 41% Secondary. The picture is improving, but is currently below the National average of 79% Primary and 73% secondary. Rigorous strategies are in place to challenge and support all our schools to

become good and outstanding as soon as possible. We aim to exceed the current national average in both Primary and Secondary schools by August 2015.

**e. LA Strategy for improving schools:**

Schools are monitored and formally risk assessed annually against a range of indicators defined in the School Improvement Strategy. (Appendix B) Intervention is delivered according to need and monitored by senior officers. The LA has only a small team of Standards and Effectiveness experts to take the lead in the risk assessment, challenge and intervention in schools and Academies. The function is being enhanced by the engagement of Standards and Effectiveness Partners who will assist in gathering information and conducting a challenge conversation with every LA school. Schools can then purchase the services of these partners themselves for further support. Expert Headteachers and Governors are used regularly to support weaker schools. Partner schools are key to the improvement strategy. Schools also source their own support and development, often working in networks with similar schools and clusters.

**f. Preparation for Ofsted Inspection:**

Since the publication of the draft framework in January 2013 there has been extensive review of practice under the demands of the framework. As a result we have conducted our own survey with Headteachers. The outcome indicated that schools see improvements in the service, but would like more contact and engagement with the LA. We have addressed this with the revision of the School Improvement Strategy and the introduction of Standards and Effectiveness Partners.

We have reviewed our current performance and practice in line with the Ofsted Framework and have produced a self evaluation document with evidence to support each section. The method of self evaluation has been approved by HMI and used as an exemplar across the region.

**OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

6. There are no decisions associated with this paper. It is for information.

**IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY PRIORITIES**

	<b>Priority Outcome</b>	<b>Implications of this initiative</b>
1.	Doncaster's economy develops and thrives, underpinned by effective education and skills	More good and outstanding schools will benefit all children and young people and their future contribution to Doncaster's economy.
2.	Children are safe	Positive inspection outcomes for schools include the quality of care and safeguarding for children. We want all schools to do this well.
3.	Stronger families and stronger communities	Good and outstanding schools engage parents and carers in their

		children's education and are the heart of successful and thriving communities.
4.	Modernised and sustainable Adult Social Care Services with increased choice and control	
5.	Effective arrangements are in place to deliver a clean, safe and attractive local environment	
6.	The Council is operating effectively, with change embedded and sustained with robust plans in place to operate within future resource allocations	The Inspection will judge the Council's effectiveness in providing challenge and support all schools. Value for money will form part of the judgement.

## **RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

7. The risks associated with the inspection process described in this paper relate to the standards schools achieve in their Ofsted inspections. Schools not in Ofsted categories and all Academies are independent of Local Authorities in their decision making. The success of any Local Authority strategy is dependent upon positive partnerships with Headteachers and Governors. Poor relations and partnerships will put the outcomes of the Ofsted inspection of the Local Authority at risk as school outcomes are used to judge the effectiveness of the Council. The Education service prioritises professional relationships with schools and engages them in decision making and consultation via a range of regular meetings.
8. The council has reduced funding in Education School Improvement Services in line with reduction in the statutory functions following the demise of National Strategies led by central government. The service no longer provides training and support to schools on a wide scale. The new Ofsted framework has re-emphasised the need for Local Authorities to engage with all education providers to secure good and better outcomes. There is no intention to increase the resource allocation to meet the demand, but the service has been reconfigured in order to maximize the value for money and constantly evaluates its effectiveness utilising a wide range of strategies to raise standards in schools.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9. The Council has statutory functions with regard to schools of concern which will be judged as part of the inspection process.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

10. The use of Resources to support school improvement will be judged as part of the inspection process.

## **CONSULTATION**

This report has significant implications in terms of the following:

Procurement		Crime & Disorder	
Human Resources		Human Rights & Equalities	
Buildings, Land and Occupiers		Environment & Sustainability	
ICT		Capital Programme	

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Ofsted Framework and Handbook for the Inspection of Local Authority arrangements for supporting School Improvement. May 2013.

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