



LCOGS

NEWSLETTER Autumn TERM 2019

An overview of key issues for Governing Boards to consider and review over the Autumn Term 2019.

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Ofsted Updates

The Education Inspection Framework

Ofsted inspections taking place from September 2019 will take place under the new Education Inspection Framework which can be accessed [here](#). As a reminder, schools will be specifically graded in four areas: the quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership

and management. Ofsted will continue with its existing grading system of outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate.

Inspectors will look at how a school contributes to pupils' broader development, including their character, citizenship and resilience. They will also look at how the school manages behaviour, low-level disruption and bullying, so that parents can be assured that the school is one in which pupils are safe and able to learn.

Inspectors will check that school leaders are behaving with integrity by putting children's interests first. This includes checking that schools do not enter pupils for qualifications that are inappropriate for the child but that may have a positive impact on the school's published performance data.

Inspectors will also check that schools are not removing pupils from the school's roll without a formal, permanent exclusion when this is not in the child's best interests; this is referred to as 'off-rolling'.

With respect to governance, the EIF highlights that inspectors will seek evidence of the impact of those responsible for governance. In a maintained school, those responsible for governance are the school governors. In a stand-alone academy, it is the trustees. In a MAT, the trustees are responsible for governance. If inspectors are informed that a local governing body within a MAT framework has delegated responsibilities, they should establish clearly which powers are with the trustees, which are with the leaders of the MAT and which are with the local governing board; they should then ensure that both their inspection activities and the inspection report reflect this.

Inspectors will explore how governors carry out each of the three core governance functions. For example, the clarity of the school's vision, ethos and strategic direction will have a significant impact on the decisions that leaders make about the curriculum. Inspectors will consider whether the work of governors in this respect is supporting the school to provide a high-quality education for its pupils. In addition, those with governance/oversight are responsible for ensuring that the school fulfils its statutory duties, for example under the Equality Act 2010 and other duties, for example in relation to the 'Prevent' duty and safeguarding.

Following the publication of the EIF, Ofsted has updated its guide for schools (including governors) on what they should expect from and how they can prepare for an inspection. This guide can be accessed [here](#)

The Inspection of Outstanding Schools

The DfE has just announced that schools rated outstanding will no longer be exempt from Ofsted inspections by Ofsted. Routine inspections of outstanding schools were stopped in 2011 but the DfE said that bringing them back would ensure parents had up-to-date information.

A 2018 National Audit Office report found 1,620 schools, most of them outstanding, had not been inspected for six years or more, with 290 not having been inspected for at least a decade. Earlier this year, Ofsted re-inspected 305 schools that had previously been rated outstanding that had since developed specific issues; 80% of these schools lost their outstanding rating.

Inspecting MATs

The summer saw Ofsted publish its report "Multi-academy trusts: benefits, challenges and functions" which looks at: how MATs' central vision and approaches influence day-to-day practice in schools; and to what extent MATs are having a positive, or otherwise, impact on the work of leaders and teachers in the academies that Ofsted inspects.

Following publication of the report (which can be accessed in full [here](#)), Ofsted has renewed its call to be given the power to inspect MATs (rather than undertake summary evaluations of the quality of education provided by the Trust) rather than mass inspect a number of academies within the Trust. Ofsted's argument rests on:

- Three quarters of academy schools now belong to a MAT whose job it is to make important decisions, not just about the financial management of their schools, but also what is taught in them, and how it is taught and assessed. Some MATs may control as many as 50 or more schools.
- Given the power and influence of MATs, it's important that they are properly accountable to parents. The fact that Ofsted is unable to inspect trusts directly means parents and policy makers are only given a partial view of what is happening in a proportion of schools. This presents some very real risks, which have come to light through the recent failures of some academy trusts.

Ofsted's report highlights that schools in larger trusts benefit from economies of scale, back-office support, training, career progression and recruitment. However, size has its drawbacks, and some MATs took on a large number of schools in difficulty quickly, without always having the central capacity and leadership required to improve them.

The report also finds that schools in a MAT are able to share data and expertise, which many staff reported had particular benefits for pupils with SEND. However, getting everyone together in the same place can be costly, time-consuming and frustrating, particularly if the geographical spread of a MAT is wide.

The report makes a number of recommendations:

For the DfE

- The fact that accountability has multiple audiences and purposes needs to be reflected in the inspection framework for MATs and schools. This suggests the need for a model in which both MATs and individual schools are inspected by Ofsted.
- Whilst accountability at the school level is strong, accountability at MAT level needs to be strengthened, not least in the light of weak implementation in many MATs of internal accountability at trust level. Inspection arrangements should reflect this.

For MATs

- MATs should make full use of the opportunities for standardisation of back-office functions provided by the MAT. They should explore which policies can be most helpfully developed and standardised at MAT level. Developing subject curriculums, which may be beyond the capacity of individual schools, could be one example where more trust-level activity than is currently the norm may be beneficial.
- MATs need to ensure that collaboration within the Trust is used effectively to maximise the benefits of shared expertise and mutual learning, while minimising unproductive networking for its own sake.
- MATs should work productively with the LA and other schools in their local area. They should participate in local coordinating mechanisms around statutory duties such as safeguarding and work with the LA and other schools/MATs to ensure that pupils with SEND and those subject to exclusion receive appropriate provision.
- MATs need to review their accountability carefully to ensure that it encourages educationally-focused conversations about what children are learning and that an excessive focus on data does not exist.

- MATS need to carefully manage growth. If a MAT is too small, it can be hard for it to maximise the advantages of MAT status through economies of scale and central support and challenge. However, overly rapid growth can move MATs beyond the confines of their capacity for support.
- MATs need to have the role of the local governing body clearly set out and explained. In particular, members of local governing bodies need to know what has been delegated to that body, and what is expected of them to fulfil that role.
- As well as mechanisms for monitoring the effectiveness of their individual schools, MATs should put in place mechanisms to monitor their own performance at trust level.

Ofsted Parent View Survey

From September 2019, Ofsted have updated what is asked in the Ofsted Parent View survey so that it links more closely to Ofsted's new Education Inspection Framework. The survey continues to ask parents how strongly they agree or disagree with statements about their child's school, though the focus of what we ask parents has changed. New questions have been added, including a question for parents of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This is in response to requests from parents for a question in this area.

The updated questions can be found [here](#)

Academy Updates

Academies Financial Handbook 2019

The new Academies Financial Handbook (AFH) has come into effect from 1st September 2019 and can be accessed [here](#). As with previous years, the changes have not been significant and have tweaked the current financial/governance framework in place. Some of the main changes include:

- The trust must, with respect to its internal scrutiny work, submit its annual summary report of the areas reviewed, key findings, recommendations and conclusions (as presented to the audit committee by the person or organisation carrying out the programme of work) to the ESFA by 31 December each year, when submitting its audited annual accounts. The trust must also provide ESFA with any other internal scrutiny reports if requested.
- Audited accounts must be provided to the Members of the Trust.
- Trusts must maintain a risk register and effectively manage its risks.
- Further emphasis on the need for a robust, evidence-based process when setting executive pay levels (see sub-section on Executive Pay further in newsletter).
- Emphasising that monthly management accounts must be produced and must include an income and expenditure account, variations to budget report, a cash flow and balance sheet.
- Trusts with Financial Notices to Improve from the ERSFA must publish these on the Trust website.
- Trustees are reminded that they must apply the highest standards of conduct and ensure robust governance, as these are critical for effective financial management

Trustees and Governors are reminded that compliance with the AFH is a requirement of Trust's Funding Agreements.

Annual Report and Accounts

The summer saw the DfE publish its consolidated annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 August 2018 for the academy sector. Whilst the full report, including the financial statements, can be accessed [here](#), the report starts with an overview of the academy sector, including financial and academic attainment indicators. Key points include:

- The number of academies has increased during the year to 31.7.18 to 7,920 (2016/17: 6,925).
- However, the number of academy trusts has decreased during the year to 2,986 (2016/17: 3,054), demonstrating some consolidation within the sector.

- 78% of all academies (6,177 academies) are in an academy trust with more than 1 academy (2016/17: 71%, 4,949 academies) forming 1,141 MATs (2016/17: 7.1%, 4,940 academies in 987 MATs).
- There were 1,743 academies/free schools in a single academy trust (SAT), or in a MAT with only one academy compared to 1,976 academies at 31.7.18.
- For the year ending 31 August 2018, the academy sector received £25.3Bn in income (2016/17: £22.5Bn) and spent £25.7Bn (2016/17: £23.6Bn). A significant contributor to the deficit in both years was non-cash movements relating to land and building valuations and fixed asset depreciation. After adjusting for such non-cash expenditure, the sector has an operating surplus of £1.8Bn (2016/17: £1.5Bn).
- The sector's net assets have increased to £48.9Bn at 31.8.18 (£42.6Bn at 31.8.17).
- 146 academy trusts disclosed payments of £150K to individual staff in 2018, c.4.8% of the total sector (146, 4.0% in 2017). 988 academy trusts (32.4% of the sector) made payments of between £100 - £150K in 2018 (941 or 30.1% in 2017).
- Across the sector, the total aggregate cumulative deficit for 2017/18 was £78M (2016/17: £65M), compared to a total cumulative aggregate surplus of £2.5Bn (£2.4Bn in 2016/17). Of the academy trusts in the current year which reported a cumulative deficit figure, 113 trusts also reported a cumulative deficit in the prior year.
- The sector held cash balances of £3,889M (16/17: £3,543M) with the proportion of cash held to operational cash expenditure remaining stable at 15.1% in 2017/18 (which represents approximately two month's cash expenditure). The sector is encouraged not to hold more cash than is required to maintain financial stability.
- The total value of overdrafts held by the academies sector is stable at £1M million; trusts are required to obtain advance permission from the ESFA before borrowing, including bank overdrafts.
- At Key Stage 2, mainstream academies had an average maths progress score of 0.1 scaled score points above the national average, writing progress of 0.2 scaled score points above average and reading progress in line with the national average.
- At Key Stage 4, the average progress 8 score in mainstream academies was 0.03 grades (across pupils' best 8 subjects) above the national average.

Trust Capacity Fund

A new trust capacity fund (TCaF) has been announced by the Government which will award up to £17M to support trust growth and development across England. Applications will open in September 2019, closing in December; awards will be made in conjunction with growth approved by Regional Schools Commissioners.

The TCaF will have 4 strands:

- A1: supporting strong MATs to grow and innovate in areas of long-standing need;
- A2: encouraging strong trusts to grow by converting and improving weaker maintained schools, or adding vulnerable academies to their trust and improving them;
- B: accelerating the development of mid-sized trusts with the potential to be strong; and
- C: creating new strong trusts, either by single-academy trusts joining larger trusts, or by supporting the growth of existing trusts via mergers, or priority projects as identified by RSCs.

Each strand has different eligibility criteria, dependent on: financial health; trust size; school improvement; progress; phonics attainment; and the English Baccalaureate.

Eligibility for the fund will be determined in two stages. Stage one will use published criteria to determine whether a trust is eligible to apply, and under which strand of the fund. To assess their eligibility, the eligibility checker can be accessed [here](#)

Once an eligible trust makes a funding application, alongside their application for growth, RSCs will undertake a stage two assessment, making a final decision on whether the trust should be funded and taking into account the outcome of the application for growth.

Academy Self-Assessment Tool

There is one area in which financial arrangements for maintained schools are deemed by the DfE to be currently more rigorous than for academy trusts. Maintained schools are required to complete, on an annual basis, the Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS), and submit this to the Local Authority.

The SFVS comprises 29 questions in relation to value and governance, and with effect from 2019/20, it also includes a dashboard enabling schools to look at where they stand on a range of measures compared to similar schools. The SFVS is intended to help schools manage their finances and to give assurance that they have secure financial management in place.

A similar tool for academies, the Self-Assessment Tool for academy trusts, was launched in 2018. However, whilst this has been widely used by academies, it is currently not mandatory. The DfE has now decided to make the Self-Assessment Tool mandatory for academies with effect from the end of the academic year 2018/19. This will ensure that there is no area in which the DfE are requiring a weaker accountability of academies than of maintained schools.

The tool and the supporting notes can be accessed via

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-resource-management-self-assessment-tool>

New Guidance on Executive Pay

Whilst Academy Trusts are free to set their own salaries for staff, high pay in the academies sector has been a divisive issue which has been a topic of media scrutiny. Boards should be conscious that their use of public money must represent the best value for money. In light of this media scrutiny and following on from a number of letters issued to Trust Chairs by the Chief Executive of the ESFA, the ESFA has now published guidance which will help Trusts to:

- make robust, fair, reasonable and defensible decisions about executive pay;
- identify the key points for consideration when setting executive salaries;
- determine a fair remuneration package that appropriately reflects the level of challenge and responsibility of the role; and
- justify and be accountable for decisions around executive pay.

The guidance takes into consideration, amongst other things, the requirements of the Academies Financial Handbook, the Trust's academic and financial performance, the educational challenge facing the Trust, the experience of the individual in question, benchmarking and performance management.

Aimed at school leaders, including Trust Boards, this guidance applies to salaries for the CEO, the CFO/Finance Director, executive head teachers and any other executive leadership positions. The guidance can be accessed [here](#)

Department for Education Guidance and Policy Updates

Safeguarding

Keeping Children Safe in Education has been updated for the start of the new academic year; the updated guidance can be found [here](#).

It is essential that all governors read at least Part 2 of the guidance, The Management of Safeguarding, as safeguarding is a collective Board responsibility: many Boards will require all Governors to declare and sign that they have read this section of the guidance at the start of the academic year.

Annex H at the back of the document highlights the changes that have been made to the KCSIE 2018 guidance. Whilst a number of amendments reflects the requirements of the new Education Inspection Framework, Relations Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education, two aspects with respect to school Governors have been clarified/ and added:

- Maintained school Governors are required to have an enhanced criminal records certificate from the DBS and it is the Board's responsibility to apply for these certificates. Governance is not a regulated activity and so Governors do not need a barred list check unless, in addition to their governance duties, they also engage in regulated activity. Schools should also carry out a section 128 check for school governors, because a person subject to one is disqualified from being a Governor.
- The School Governance (Constitution and Federations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 made enhanced DBS checks mandatory for maintained school governors but not associate members.
- For academy trusts and free schools, the trust must require enhanced DBS checks on all members of the academy trust and the individual trustees. Where an academy trust delegates responsibilities to any delegate or committee (including a local governing body), the trust must require DBS checks on all delegates and all member of such committees. Academy trusts must also check that members are not barred from taking part in the management of the school as a result of a section 128 direction.

Relationship and Sex Education

From September 2020, Relationships Education will become compulsory in all primary schools in England and Relationships and Sex Education compulsory in all secondary schools, as well as making Health Education compulsory in all state-funded schools. The DfE is encouraging schools to adopt the statutory guidance early, from September 2019. The guidance can be found on

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

Even if early adoption is implemented, schools will still need to follow

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sex-and-relationship-education> until September 2020 with respect to relationships and sex education.

The guidance highlights:

- Schools must have a written policy and parents must have been consulted when developing and reviewing this policy;
- The policy must include the right of pupils to be withdrawn from (some aspects of) sex education;
- The milestones that children are expected to have reached by the end of their primary and secondary education, including with respect to their physical health and mental well-being; and
- What Governing Boards should ensure:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes;
- the subjects are well led, effectively managed and well planned;
- the quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation;
- teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND;
- clear information is provided for parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn; and
- the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures that the school can fulfil its legal obligations.

Foundation governors and trustees of faith academy trusts will also have wider responsibilities in relation to maintaining and developing the religious ethos of the schools.

Brexit Preparation for Schools

The DfE has issued guidance to schools on how they can prepare for Brexit and this can be accessed [here](#).

Assessment Information

Early Years

The early years foundation stage profile results for the 2018/19 academic year, at both national and local authority level, are expected to be released in October/November 2019. Watch this space!

Key Stage 1 and Phonics Screening Check

The provisional results for KS1 teacher assessments and the phonics screening check are due at the end of September 2019.

Key Stage 2

The start of September saw the DfE update its provisional attainment statistics for KS2 and the updated statistical analysis can be found [here](#). Key points include:

- 65% pupils reached the expected standard in reading, writing and maths combined (2018: 64%) with 11% (2018: 10%) of pupils reaching the higher standard in all three subjects.
- In reading, 73% of pupils reached the expected standard in 2019 (2018: 75%). In maths, 79% of pupils reached expected (2018: 76%). In GPS, 78% of pupils reached expected, unchanged from 2018. In the writing teacher assessment, 78% of pupils reached expected standard, again unchanged from 2018.
- In reading, 27% of pupils reached the higher standard in 2019 (2018: 28%). In maths, 27% of pupils reached the higher standard (2018: 24%). In GPS, 36% of pupils reached the higher standard (2018: 35%). In the writing teacher assessment, 20% of pupils reached the higher standard, unchanged from 2018.
- Attainment in reading, writing and maths (combined) in 2018 and 2019 is not directly comparable to previous years (2016 and 2017) due to the changes to the writing Teacher Assessment frameworks in 2018.
- 85% of pupils who met the phonics standard in year 1 attained the expected standard in reading at the end of KS2 (2018: 88%).
- The gender gap in reading has increased, driving an increase in the overall gender gap.
- In 2019, 70% of girls reached the expected standard in reading, writing and maths (combined) compared to 60% of boys, a 10% gender gap (2018: 8% gap). This has been driven by an increase in the gender gap in reading, where both boys and girls saw a fall in the proportion reaching the expected standard between 2018 and 2019, but the fall was higher for boys (down

3pp to 69%) than girls (down 1pp to 78%).

- The gap between disadvantaged pupils and others has remained stable.

Key Stage 4

Whilst the provisional date for KS4 will be released by the DfE in mid-October, it can be noted that:

- Of the 5.2M GCSE entries this year, provisional data suggests 4.2M were for EBacc subjects, an increase of almost 4% on 2017/18, and including rises in entries to Spanish (10%) and French (4%).
- The increase in EBacc and modern foreign language entries sits alongside a 3% increase in entries to GCSE arts subjects such as art and design subjects and performing and expressive arts.
- The percentage of entries graded A/7 or above rose to 20.8% in 2019, up 0.3 percentage points. This is the second successive year in which the proportion of top grades has increased since the reformed GCSE qualifications were first sat in 2017.
- The proportion of C/4 grades and above, considered as the "standard pass", also increased slightly to 67.3% of entries, up from 66.9% in 2018.
- Boys continued to narrow the gap at the pass rate, with 62.9% of boys achieving a C/4 grade or above (2018: 62.3%) and 71.7% of girls achieving a standard pass (2018: 71.4%).
- This means the gender gap at C/4 has narrowed from 9.1 percentage points in 2018 to 8.8 in 2019.
- At the top grades of A/7, the gender gap has stabilised at 6.5 percentage points (2018: 6.5pp), after narrowing from 7.3 percentage points in 2017.

Key Stage 5

- Entries to STEM subjects have increased for both boys and girls; a 26.2% rise overall since 2010.
- Maths remains the most popular subject at A level.
- More girls now do science subjects than boys and overall science entries are up by 7.4%, despite the fall in the population.
- Entries to Spanish have risen making it the most popular language at A level while there has been a relative increase in entries to German for the first time since 2007.
- Girls narrowly outperformed boys at A and A* combined, reversing last year's trend, but boys did better than girls at A*.

News in Brief

School Funding

It has been announced that next year schools will receive a £2.6Bn funding uplift, rising to £4.8Bn in 2021-22 and to £7.1Bn in 2022-23. The cash injection will also include £700M of extra funding for special needs pupils and new minimum levels of per pupil funding from 2020-21: secondary schools will have at least £5,000 per pupil whilst primary schools will have a minimum threshold of £4,000 per pupil.

This cash injection will be in addition to the recently announced extra funding of £1.5Bn per year to cover rises in teachers' pension costs. From September 2019, the government will be fully funding increased contributions into the pension scheme which means that teachers will get an employer contribution of 23.6% on top their salary towards their pension every year to ensure the scheme is fully funded.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies calculates that the funding increase should be enough to restore school spending to pre-austerity levels. The independent financial think tank argues that the £7.1Bn increase, promised in three years, will be sufficient to reverse cuts to schools of 8% over the past decade.

Providers of 16-19 education, such as further education and sixth form colleges, will also receive £400M million of additional funding. This includes:

- Protecting and increasing the base rate with funding worth £190M to boost access to high quality courses.
- £120M to help deliver expensive but key subjects such as engineering.
- £35M more for targeted interventions to support students on level 3 courses (A level equivalent) who failed GCSE Maths and English, so they can re-sit their exams in these subjects.
- £25M to deliver T-levels.
- The advanced maths premium, which adds £600 to college budgets for every additional student who takes on A- and AS- level maths, is also funded with £10M of additional funding.
- £20M investment to help the FE sector to continue to recruit and retain strong teachers and leaders and provide more support to ensure high-quality teaching of T Levels.

School Teachers' Pay

The new Education Secretary, Gavin Williamson, has just proposed increasing teachers' starting salaries by up to £6,000 in a letter to the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB). If recommended, salaries for new teachers would rise to £30,000 by 2022-23. Watch this space!

School teachers and leaders are set to receive an above inflation pay rise in the 2019-20 academic year. All the recommendations from the independent STRB to raise the upper and lower boundaries of all pay ranges by 2.75% have been accepted by the Government. A 2.75% increase is equivalent to a £1,000 increase to average classroom teacher pay and a £1,620 increase in the average pay of school leaders.

Whilst schools will continue to determine how staff are paid, the pay increase will be supported by an additional £105M to be paid through the teachers' pay grant.

School Improvement Support

The DfE has set out a package of bespoke support that will be available for schools with a 'Requires Improvement' judgement from Ofsted, taken from a pool, of expert education leaders and National Leaders of Education. A more intensive offer of leadership guidance, plus up to £16,000 in support, will be available to schools with two consecutive Ofsted RI judgements, to help them improve in a sustainable way. This is expected to amount to c.£16.5M worth of support to around 2,400 schools nationally. The DfE will be contacting schools throughout the 2019/20 academic year to offer this support package.

This follows the previous Education Secretary's commitment at the National Association of Headteachers conference in 2019 to use Ofsted's RI judgement as the only trigger for offering tailored support to leadership teams.

Teacher Well-Being

The summer saw Ofsted release its research on the well-being of staff; when asked to contribute ideas towards Ofsted's research programme, teachers overwhelmingly wanted Ofsted to research teacher stress, workload and well-being. Whilst the full report can be accessed [here](#), the report's key findings were:

- Teachers enjoy teaching and are positive about their workplace and colleagues, but they are disappointed by the profession.
- Levels of satisfaction with life are higher among the general public than staff in schools and FE providers and overall levels of teachers' occupational well-being are low.
- Workload is high, affecting work–life balance.
- Staff perceive a lack of resources as a problem that stops them from doing their job as well as they can.
- Poor behaviour is a considerable source of low occupational well-being, and teachers do not always feel supported by senior leaders and parents with managing it.
- Relationships with parents can be a negative factor and a source of stress.
- Educators feel that they do not have enough influence over policy, which changes too quickly.
- Educators also feel that Ofsted inspections are a source of stress.
- Findings on overall support from senior leaders are mixed.
- Staff need more support from their line managers.

Ofsted's report makes a number of recommendations in response to these findings, aimed primarily at school leaders and the DfE.

As strategic leaders, Boards should have oversight over the levels of well-being of school staff, including the headteacher and should be monitoring the range and success of initiatives to ensure low well-being does not impact in terms of staff retention rates and the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom.

Teacher Workload

Research published in the summer identified that school leaders are taking action to reduce teacher workload. Based on a survey, conducted twice a year on a range of departmental policy areas, of 836 school leaders and over 1,000 classroom teachers:

- 94% of leaders reported reducing workload related to marking (2018: 88%).
- More than three-quarters (78%) reported they had reduced workload related to planning, compared to 71% last year.
- Almost half of leaders surveyed (46%) reported they were already making use of the DfE's Workload Reduction Toolkit.

The previous Secretary of State also committed to:

- only asking for pupil attainment data if a school is at risk of failure, above that which is collected for national assessments;
- requesting data in a school's existing format, where possible, to avoid duplication; and
- updating the workload reduction toolkit with new sections on behaviour management and tools for governing boards.

No changes to these commitments have been made by the new Secretary of State, as yet.

The DfE has also worked with Ofsted on its new Education Inspection Framework which will:

- have a strong focus on reducing teacher workload;
- consider staff workload as part of the leadership and management judgment;
- look unfavourably on schools that implement burdensome data practices; and
- refuse to look at internal assessment data.

The survey also found that:

- The number of schools with a designated lead for pupil mental health has significantly increased, from 70% in 2017 to 82% in 2018, with a major jump at primary level, from 67% to 81%.
- All schools surveyed indicated that they monitor wellbeing through one to one discussions with pupils and parents.
- 85% of maths teachers said they were confident in teaching their reformed GCSEs.
- Almost all leaders (just under 100%) and 99% of teachers had accessed at least one type of CPD in the past 12 months.

Financial Transparency of Maintained Schools: A Consultation

As part of its drive to make financial reporting across all types of schools more consistent, the DfE has launched a consultation, inviting views on the proposal to apply some of the financial measures used in academies to local authority run schools. Current financial transparency arrangements are different and provide different levels of assurance across LA maintained schools and academy trusts.

The key issues highlighted in the consultations are:

- Making public where local authorities are failing to comply with deadlines for completing assurance returns and financial collections;
- Strengthening Dedicated School Grant annual assurance returns;
- Whether maintained schools should be required to provide local authorities with 3-year budget forecasts;
- Strengthening Related Party Transaction arrangements in maintained schools;
- The concern that internal audit visits to maintained schools are too infrequent;
- Strengthening arrangements to help schools that are in financial difficulty; and
- Concerns that there is not enough transparency when it comes to reporting high pay for school staff or reporting maintained school income and expenditure.

The consultation is open until 30th September 2019 and can be accessed [here](#)

Primary Sports Premium Funding

The DfE recently undertook a survey on the Primary PE and Sport Premium, focusing on how primary schools have used the Premium, their views on the outcomes it has had and what, if any, difference the doubling of the Premium has made since it was given to schools in September 2017. Whilst the full report can be accessed [here](#) some key findings include:

Compared to 2016/17:

- Almost 9 in 10 respondents thought that the profile of PE/Sport in supporting whole school improvement had increased (with half of all respondents reporting it had improved 'a lot').
- Almost 9 in 10 respondents thought that the confidence, knowledge and/or skills of all staff in teaching PE had increased 'a little' or 'a lot'.
- More than 8 in 10 thought the level of competitive sport being offered had increased 'a little' or 'a lot'. Over 6 in 10 thought it had increased for all pupils.
- Around 8 in 10 thought that the proportion of pupils doing 30 minutes of exercise a day in school had increased 'a little' or 'a lot'. Also, more than 6 in 10 thought participation had increased for all pupils in PE and more than 7 in 10 thought it had increased for all pupils in extracurricular sport.
- The vast majority of respondents (over 9 in 10) indicated that there was now a broader range of PE and sport being offered to all pupils.
- Almost no school reported that any of these had decreased since 2016/17.

School Exclusions

The DfE has released statistics on the permanent and fixed term exclusions in England's schools for 2017/18 and this analysis can be accessed [here](#). The analysis found that:

- The rate of permanent exclusions has remained stable across all school types at 0.1% across all state funded primary, secondary and special schools. However, the increase in permanent exclusions seen in recent years has slowed.
- The number of fixed term exclusions has increased by 8%, resulting in a fixed term exclusion rate of 5.08% across all stated funded schools.
- Persistent disruptive behaviour remains the most common factor behind both permanent and fixed term exclusions but permanent exclusions for this specific reason have fallen for the first time in five years.
- Primary, secondary and special academies all have higher exclusion rates than LA maintained schools.

Exclusions, fixed and permanent, should be reported to Boards, at least on a termly basis, aiding Board discussions on whether their school's behaviour policy remains fit for purpose.

Following the Timpson review on exclusions earlier in 2019, the DfE have stated that the current statutory exclusions guidance will be updated by the end of the 2019/20 academic year. Watch this space!

Healthy School Rating Scheme

The healthy schools rating scheme has been designed to recognise and encourage schools' contributions to pupils' health and wellbeing. Celebrating the positive actions that schools are delivering in terms of healthy eating and physical activity, it also aims to help schools identify useful next steps in their provision.

This voluntary scheme is available for both primary and secondary schools. Schools will complete a self-assessment and then receive a rating based on their responses around food education, compliance with the school food standards, time spent on physical education and the promotion of active travel. Further details can be found [here](#)