

Since publication of Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework (EIF) in May 2019, together with the new School Inspection Handbook, an emphasis upon the inspection of reading in our primary schools is clear. Recent inspections show how significant these changes are, and how thoroughly they are being applied to the Ofsted inspection process.

As a leader of English in your primary school, you will want to be fully informed and prepared for any potential inspection, but also to ensure that your school is providing well for your children. Reading should be an enjoyable thing to do, and children should all find it so. To read fluently with understanding is a crucial life skill, regardless of any inspection process.

The following points set out key information from Ofsted's updated publications. The checklist included in this file will help you to ascertain how far your school has reached in addressing the requirements of the EIF and Inspection Handbook 2019 (section 5).

- Inspectors must focus on how well pupils are taught to read **as a main inspection activity**. One of their 'deep dives' will always relate to reading. This means that they will follow a detailed line of enquiry into some aspect of how your school approaches the teaching, learning and assessment of reading
- They will pay particular attention to pupils who are reading well below age-related expectations (the lowest 20%) to assess how well the school is teaching phonics, and how it is supporting all children to become confident, fluent readers
- The school's reading ethos should show a determination for every child to learn to read, regardless of their background, needs or abilities. Ofsted inspectors will be interested to know how you are tackling the under-performance of your lowest ability readers, and your end goals for these individuals
- It is important that your pupils are reading books within their phonic knowledge and reading ability. Your sequence of reading books should closely match your school's phonics programme. (Tip: early readers should be able to read nine words out of every ten, to be reading texts at the 'instructional level'. If they continually stumble over every fourth or fifth word, for example, the book is not suitable for them)
- The range of texts chosen for children to experience is also important: aim for a mix of poetry, rhymes, non-fiction and stories, which together help children to develop their vocabulary, language comprehension and love of reading.

Finally, be ready to be drawn into conversations about reading during the inspection. There may be more than one of these. Think about how your school helps all pupils to enjoy reading. Know why you have chosen to read the specific texts in your curriculum. Familiarise yourself with the reading scheme books available in Early Years and KS1 to ensure that phonically decodable books are included in that repertoire, alongside picture books or other scheme books. This cannot all be achieved in a few weeks. Provided that you have a plan in place, you need not feel overly concerned.

SAMPLE