

EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSPECTORATE

Monitoring Visits

Guidance for monitoring visits in schools and Education Other Than At School centres

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Providing Inspection services for:
Department of Education
Department for the Economy
and other commissioning Departments



Introduction

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) will conduct a range of monitoring visits to a number of schools and Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) centres which are currently in the follow-up inspection process¹. The views of a number of stakeholders have been sought to inform guidance for the monitoring visits. This guidance is intended to outline key information about the purpose and format of monitoring visits in schools and EOTAS centres.

A monitoring visit will be conducted usually by the District Inspector and another inspector, typically over two days. There will be no published report following the visit; however, the ETI will provide feedback to the school or EOTAS centre, and a short summary letter to the Department (copied to the school or centre).

The visits will focus on areas for improvement from the last school inspection, improvements effected prior to the pandemic, current priorities and any impact of COVID-19 on the curriculum, including practical work, learning experiences, and the quality of learning and teaching.

In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, the ETI will follow appropriate health and safety guidelines and the organisations' procedures, including the wearing of face coverings as required. Further information on how the ETI visit schools and EOTAS centres is available on the ETI website:

[ETI guidance on visiting organisations | Education Training Inspectorate \(etini.gov.uk\)](https://www.etini.gov.uk/guidance-on-visiting-organisations)

Overview of the visit

The school or centre will receive notification through a telephone call from the District Inspector at least two weeks prior to the visit to make the necessary arrangements, which will include clarification of the current organisation of the school day.

Inspectors do not require additional information or documentation to be produced. They will review relevant information and existing routine working documents in whatever format they are used by the school or centre and at the school's or centre's current stage of review, for example, the school development plan, interim school development plan and associated action plans.

There will be meetings with staff, pupils, governors and representative/s from the employing authority as appropriate, which may be organised remotely.

Inspectors acknowledge that COVID-19 has impacted on the provision for learning and teaching and on learning experiences. A sample of lessons, (depending on the context, COVID-19 restrictions and mitigating actions), will be observed and inspectors will provide feedback to the teacher, typically, at the end of a lesson observation. If there is a reason why this feedback needs to be delayed, the inspector will let the teacher know.

¹ Owing to COVID-19, inspections were paused on the 18 March 2020 until further notice (subject to review).

Across primary and post-primary, the ETI will discuss the progress, progression and attainment of pupils, as appropriate and linked to the areas for improvement and the school or EOTAS centre's current priorities. However, in line with the Department's and the Education Minister's communication to schools on temporary changes to pupil assessments and reporting arrangements², 20 May 2020, the outcomes from the summer 2020 examination series will not be used formally in the monitoring visit or subsequent follow-up inspection; nor will examination results from summer be included in the monitoring visit summary letter or published in the subsequent follow-up inspection report.

At the end of the monitoring visit, based on the evidence from the meetings, the school will be provided with oral feedback on the findings. A representative from the Education Authority and the employing authority may attend this feedback at the invitation of the school.

A summary note on the monitoring visit will be provided to the Department of Education, and to the school or EOTAS centre; a report will not be published.

The summary note will cover:

- areas for improvement identified in the original inspection;
- any changes in the school/centre context;
- the impact of any action/s the school/centre have taken following the inspection/or follow-up inspection;
- the nature, extent and impact of the external support provided by the Education Authority; and
- the appropriateness of the school/centre's current priorities for improvement.

² [Temporary changes to pupil assessments and reporting requirements](#)

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