



- 2.1 The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), Children's Services and Skills and is one of the largest regulatory and inspection bodies in England. It was initially established in 1992 under the Education Act 1992 as "The Office for Standards in Education" to achieve greater independence and consistency in inspections across the country. Prior to this, schools were inspected by Local Authority officers. In 2007 Ofsted's remit expanded to include children's services and work relating to social care and courts through the amalgamation of four separate inspectorates
- 2.2 Ofsted currently operates as an independent, non-ministerial government body which reports directly to Parliament. It is responsible for inspecting and regulating education and training for learners of all ages and for inspecting and regulating those services which care for children and young people. However in April 2011 the Commons Education Select Committee stated that a single inspectorate was too big to function effectively. It has therefore recommended that Ofsted split into two organisations – the Inspectorate for Education and the Inspectorate for Children's Care.
- 2.3 Schools are self-governing institutions which are responsible for their own performance and improvement. External inspection is an important independent method by which to measure and verify the quality of provision in place and how effectively schools are fulfilling their role in meeting the needs of children and young people. Ofsted inspection provides both an independent external evaluation of schools' effectiveness and a diagnosis of what should be done to improve. Findings are published in written format outlining the outcomes achieved by schools and the quality of provision, in order to ensure and raise standards and create better life chances for children and young people.
- 2.4 Inspections undertaken by Ofsted follow a specific framework devised for the particular type of provider for example 'The framework for the inspection of maintained schools in England.' There have been a number of frameworks implemented for the inspection of schools since Ofsted's inception in 1992. In 2005 the inspection framework for schools introduced a reduced inspection burden on good schools and a greater focus on those that were underperforming. The most recent framework for school inspections is outlined in the Education Act 2011 which gained Royal Assent on 15 November 2011 and implemented on 1 January 2012.
- 2.5 In February 2012 the newly appointed Chief Inspector, Sir Michael Wilshaw, published, "A Good Education for All,"<sup>2</sup> which contain proposals for some further changes to the new framework which took effect the previous month. Responses on seven additional changes are invited by 3 May 2012. these seven proposals are as follows:
- (a) Schools cannot be judged "outstanding" unless teaching is "outstanding."

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/good-education-for-all>

- (b) Schools will only be deemed to be providing an acceptable standard of education where they are judged to be “good” or “outstanding.”
  - (c) A single judgement of “requires improvement” will replace the current “satisfactory” judgement and “notice to improve” category.
  - (d) Schools judged as “requires improvement” will be subject to a full re-inspection earlier than is currently the case.
  - (e) A school can only be judged as “requires improvement” on two consecutive inspections before it is deemed to require “special measures.”
  - (f) Inspections will be undertaken without notice being provided to the school.
  - (g) Inspectors should undertake an analysis of anonymised information, provided by the school, of the outcomes of the most recent performance management of all teachers within the school, as part of the evidence for a judgement on leadership and management.
- 2.6 The ‘new framework’ is based on some key principles including schools remaining self-improving institutions which are accountable for their own performance. The additional rigour provided by the further measures under consideration makes quite clear the intention to focus on the aspects which ‘really matter,’ particularly the quality of teaching and leadership.
- 2.7 Section 28 of the statutory guidance, published by the DfE in April 2012, re-states the role of local authorities in working with headteachers, school governors, academy sponsors and principals in order to “promote educational excellence for all children and young people and be ambitious in tackling underperformance.” In effect, despite successive legislation, the performance of schools remains a responsibility shared by Ofsted, the local authority and the school itself. However, the way in which these different but complementary roles will operate requires some close consideration.

### **3. The role of schools**

- 3.1. UK law requires all children to attend school from Reception in the year leading up to their fifth birthday until the end of Year 11, after their final national examinations at the age of sixteen. Recent legislation will raise the age of participation in education or training to seventeen in 2013 and to eighteen in 2015. Despite nearly thirty years of successive government intervention in the performance and status of schools, particularly secondary schools, the biggest variation in the experience that children and young people have of their statutory education continues to be in its quality.
- 3.2. It goes without saying that a good school provides good teaching, effective assessment and a secure learning environment. However, children who have the good fortune to attend one of England’s most effective state schools also have access to opportunities to develop their skills, interests, aptitudes, confidence and aspirations in a supportive and well-managed community which provides the soundest of springboards for adult success. The challenge for our education system is for all schools to be like the best.

- 3.3. For children whose family and life outside of school is chaotic, school also provides a sense of order and a place where expectations and inclusivity can be relied upon. Since all children are, or are expected to be, in school, it has also become the front-door through which a whole host of supportive services access children who would be harder to reach through other mechanisms. As a result of this, schools, and by default, teachers, have become a major tool for social policy and reform beyond educational outcomes.
- 3.4. The core purpose of schooling remains, however, the acquisition of the skills, competences and, eventually, the qualifications necessary for productive and fulfilling adulthood. Schools do not exist in order to be “good.” They must be “good” in order to ensure that the nation’s children benefit throughout their lives from the time they spent in school. There is no doubt that young people who leave school with the required qualifications have greater choice over their own destiny and an increased likelihood of employment, an adequate income and all the protective social factors that accompany it.
- 3.5. There are always exceptional individuals who are successful despite failed schooling but a high quality education is a fundamental responsibility for society since the failure to provide one is incredibly costly in economic as well as in social terms. In addition to the direct cost of unemployment through benefits and lost tax revenues, those without formal qualifications are more likely to be involved in crime, substance abuse and to suffer from ill-health. The European Parliament has estimated that the cost arising from loses in productivity and tax payments as well as higher welfare and health costs amount to 1.4% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the European Union, almost as high as the EU defence spending (1.6% of GDP)
- 3.6. The success of schools is demonstrably the business of us all and it is, therefore, unsurprising that the standard and quality of the education they provide is a primary focus for government. The role of Ofsted and the LA in judging that quality and the mechanisms for intervention and improvement as well as the responsibilities of schools themselves are, therefore, the focus of this paper.

#### **4. The role of Ofsted**

- 4.1. Central to government policy as illustrated in the Education Act 2011, is making it easier for parents and the public to hold schools to account for outcomes and providing value for money. Ofsted, as the independent inspection and regulating body, is the key vehicle by which impartial judgements as to the performance of schools nationally, are made available to Parliament, parents and the wider public.
- 4.2. The inspection of schools performs three essential functions which hold to account and also inform, namely:

- to provide parents with information about the schools their children attend or to inform their choices about which schools they may attend in future
  - to inform the Secretary of State and Parliament through the Annual Report by HMCI, about the work of schools, standards being met and the efficiency in the use of public money
  - to promote the improvement of individual schools and the education system as a whole.
- 4.3. The promotion of improvement both at individual school level and system wide level is an aspect that is crucial in the success of the children and young people concerned but also in the success of the country as a whole. The 'new Ofsted framework' aims to support and drive school improvement in a number of ways including:
- setting challenging expectations through grade descriptors for key aspects
  - offering sharp challenge and impetus to act where improvement is needed
  - clearly identifying strengths and weaknesses
  - recommending specific priorities for improvement and checking when appropriate, subsequent progress
  - developing professional constructive dialogue with school leadership and staff
  - promoting rigour and complementing the school's own self-evaluation.
  - enhancing schools' capacity to improve.
- 4.4. Where schools are found not to be providing an acceptable quality of education they undergo intensive monitoring from Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) under processes laid out in the Ofsted framework. The raising of expectations is reflected in the shortening of the time before the first HMI monitoring visit in those schools identified as being in need of being placed in special measures. It is also reflected in the consultation to remove the concept of "satisfactory" as an adequate standard with the expectation that those schools which "require improvement" must improve and do so quickly.
- 4.5. The Education Act 2011 states the need for Ofsted to refocus inspection on schools' core educational purpose that of 'teaching and learning' and target inspection where it is most needed through a more proportionate approach. The new framework makes graded judgements on four key areas namely:-
- achievement,
  - teaching and learning,
  - behaviour and safety
  - leadership and management.

Within and beyond these there is a strong emphasis on meeting the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and on closing the gap between outcomes for different groups of pupils. These individual judgements contribute to the “Overall Effectiveness” judgement for the school.

- 4.6. Over recent years the nature, range and accuracy of pupil data has improved considerably at pupil, school, area and national levels and this includes data on wider aspects such as attendance, exclusion rates and special educational needs (SEN). It is now possible to measure the impact of the school through making comparisons between individual pupils, groups of pupils within schools, between similar schools and with all schools nationally. Within the data rich environment schools now operate, it is increasingly important for school leadership to demonstrate an understanding of the data and how it is used both to measure impact and to inform on areas for improvement. Through doing so systematically the capacity to improve is strengthened.

## **5. The implication of changes to the Ofsted framework**

- 5.1. There are a number of key differences in the new framework as touched upon in Section 4 but all of these point to the renewed focus on the core purpose of schools. Regardless of the type or status of a school the key factors in school and pupil success remain the quality of leadership; the impact of teaching and the progress and attainment of pupils. These are, of course, intrinsically linked since the ability of school leaders to tackle poor teaching, having identified it through its impact upon pupil progress as well as through informed observation, is fundamental.
- 5.2. The new Ofsted framework sets out the aim to make judgements on how a school ‘typically’ performs. To do this current levels of attainment and rates of progress together with levels of attainment and rates of progress over the previous three years are scrutinised. In addition, comparison with the government’s national floor standards for both primary and secondary schools, outcomes for vulnerable groups and the levels of reading at six years of age and by the time pupils leave the school, are included.
- 5.3. Most schools can point to aspects where practice is good and they have areas of relative strength. Schools are complex organisations, however, and ensuring that *all* teaching is good and *all* pupils, regardless of the barriers which they must overcome and make expected progress is the challenge for school leaders. The new framework focuses on the progress and attainment of all groups of pupils, particularly the most vulnerable. Schools are expected to know which pupils do not make progress and to have implemented actions to address any underperformance. Ofsted will be interested in trends in performance and the way in which teachers use data to identify and plan in response to those trends and the needs of individual pupils in their classes.
- 5.4. Teaching will be assessed in terms of its impact upon pupil progress and achievement and in so far as it is responsive to need. Teachers are expected to think about the next lesson they intend to teach and how it will

adapt to take account of progress in the current lesson. The concept of teaching as a process, not a snapshot, is part of the new approach which will also consider behaviour in the same way. The impact of behaviour on learning is well-researched and Ofsted will expect to scrutinise behaviour and intervention records in addition to observing the behaviour of pupils and staff during the inspection.

- 5.5. The single judgement of leadership acknowledges the primacy of good leadership in the quest for school improvement. All aspects of leadership, senior, middle and within the classroom as well as the challenge provided by governors is considered as a whole. Within this judgement lies the appropriateness of the curriculum; engagement with parents; self-evaluation and the capacity to improve. All of the decisions underlying these elements, the determination to drive them through and the ability to assess their impact are recognised as aspects of leadership.
- 5.6. The key difference, however, is the degree to which the professional judgement of the inspector is brought to bear on the overall judgement of “effectiveness.” This represents a departure from previous frameworks which have relied on a compilation of the various contributory judgements in order to reach an overall measure. Whilst it is logical that the overall judgement will draw heavily on the four key judgements, the ability to take into consideration the ethos of the school and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children, in the view of the inspector, provides the potential for fairer judgements which reflect a school’s overall strength but also the potential for greater discrepancy in outcomes.
- 5.7. The proportionate approach adopted by the new framework will mean that routine inspections for the strongest schools (outstanding) will cease, unless the grade for “Teaching” at the last Ofsted was not also “outstanding.” A full section 5 inspection will only take place if an ‘annual risk assessment,’ first carried out at the point when a routine inspection would normally be expected, indicates a fall in standards or raises concerns. There are implications for ‘exempt’ schools in terms of ensuring the quality of provision remains outstanding and for the LA in terms of support for such schools to do so.
- 5.8. Weaker schools have a higher focus for Ofsted under the new framework. More frequent monitoring visits together with a shorter period in which improvements need to be evident will place increased pressure on schools in these circumstances. These factors will have implications for the LA school improvement service which already operates ‘in inverse proportion to success’ when allocating resources to support and challenge schools, both in terms of supporting these and in preventative work to minimise the number of schools involved.
- 5.9. Early experience of schools inspected under the new framework suggests that the changes and the way in which they are being implemented are profound. The judgement of quality of teaching is rightly based on the progress made by pupils. The difference between an exciting lesson where the teacher works hard and an effective lesson where the pupils work hard and make progress underpins the judgement. In addition, judging both

teaching and behaviour over time rather than as observed during the inspection, means that if teaching or behaviour were inadequate but now they are good, recent improvement or the impact of new leadership on the school may not be sufficient to prevent it going into a category of concern.

## **6. The focus on teaching**

- 6.1. The Schools White Paper in 2010 being entitled ‘The Importance of Teaching<sup>3</sup>’ illustrated the government’s view and intention to put more focus on teaching. In the document it states that ‘evidence from different education systems around the world shows that the most important factor in determining how well children do is the quality of teachers and teaching,’ inspectors will spend most of their time during an inspection in classrooms.
- 6.2. The most important role of teaching is to enable learning through meeting the needs of all pupils and thereby raising achievement. Teaching is complex and multi-faceted, however there are core aspects that must be effective which include assessment for learning, planning, curriculum design and delivery, behaviour and classroom management. Teachers are also expected to develop good relationships and successfully engage, inspire, challenge and motivate their pupils so they develop high aspirations and meet with success.
- 6.3. Evidence indicates that ‘satisfactory’ teaching, using Ofsted terms, is not strong enough to accelerate rates of progress so that pupils catch up lost ground. In the academic year 2009/2010 in 50% of the secondary schools and 43% of the primary schools Ofsted inspected, the quality of teaching overall was judged to be satisfactory. This quality of teaching, apart from being uninspiring, will not ‘close the gap’ and achieve the desired degree of social mobility. In Hampshire, 31 schools which are currently graded as “Outstanding” by Ofsted have a grade of “Good” for teaching which means that they will no longer be exempt from inspection under the proposed revisions to the new framework.
- 6.4. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds make less progress in Hampshire schools than their more advantaged peers and those in care achieve far poorer outcomes than those who are not. The statutory guidance makes the role of “all officers and members of the local authority” in improving the outcomes of looked after children and narrowing the gap for the most disadvantaged explicit. The guidance also reiterates the requirement for local authorities to ensure that disabled children and those with special educational needs can access “high quality provision,” which means that the quality of teaching which the most vulnerable children receive must also be of “high quality,” if they are to make at least as much progress as their more fortunate peers.
- 6.5. The new Ofsted framework states that scrutiny will be undertaken of teaching being delivered in the school, which may therefore go beyond the

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<sup>3</sup> The Importance Of Teaching : Education White Paper (2010)<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/toolsandinitiatives/schoolswhitepaper/b0068570/the-importance-of-teaching/>

main teachers in a school. Schools are held responsible for the quality of teaching that the pupils are receiving whether it be from their own class teacher, a supply teacher, member of support staff or external services e.g. music or sport sessions. There is a need therefore, for external 'teachers' to be quality assured.

- 6.6. The government have stated that it intends poor performance to be tackled more rigorously and to make it easier for schools to do so. Processes to address underperformance will be shortened and simplified so that headteachers can address underperformance more swiftly and effectively. One key aspect in the quality of leadership and management in a school is how effective headteachers are at improving teaching and learning. The judgement on leadership and management in the new framework considers this together with the requirement that there are high expectations for what every pupil and teacher can achieve and the setting of high standards for quality and performance.
- 6.7. "The Importance of Teaching," also indicates that the Professional Standards for Teachers and the standards for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) are to be reviewed. This is to ensure they are clear and unequivocal so that underperformance, should it arise, can be addressed more effectively and new entrants to the profession are competent, and known to be so. It is, however, curious, that academies will not have to employ qualified teachers so the rigour of the new QTS may have less impact than intended on overall teaching quality.
- 6.8. As part of the drive to raise standards in comparison to international tests there is a raised expectation that schools will give a higher profile to mathematics; to the effective teaching of reading (particularly in primary schools) and to literacy and communication (particularly in secondary schools). This includes the introduction of the assessment or screening of six year olds in their reading levels, the results of which are to be published in the national RAISEonline document which compares the school's outcomes with those achieved nationally.
- 6.9. A reflection of this focus is seen in the new Ofsted framework in key considerations that are to be made in terms of a judgement on achievement which include a particular focus on the standards in reading attained by pupils in primary schools by the end of key stage one and by the time they leave the school. Although there is no published 'floor target' for reading standards, where below 80% of pupils attain a level 2 in reading at the end of key stage one, the Ofsted inspectors will explore in greater depth the methods for teaching reading the school uses and the extent to which synthetic phonics is applied.
- 6.10. This is a new requirement and schools will need to consider how they would fare under such scrutiny, whether professional development of staff is required, how effective the methods used are and whether the standards achieved are appropriate and if not how they are tackling under-performance. The LA school improvement service works closely with leadership and management in schools, both through intervention where necessary and through being commissioned, to improve the quality of

teaching. This includes working with senior leadership team members as well as headteachers and at times governors, both in developmental terms and through quality assurance activities. This is a core, essential and significant element to the work of the service which does include, where necessary, personnel advice for headteachers in regard to the underperformance of teachers should it arise.

## **7. The role of the Local Authority**

- 7.1. As ‘the champion of children, parents and families,’<sup>4</sup> the local authority (LA) has a duty to ensure the school system works for every family and to challenge every school to do the best for its pupils and its community. The LA school improvement service supports improvement in a range of ways including; setting expectations, validating judgements, identifying strengths and priorities for improvement and adding rigour to evaluations. In addition it also identifies weakness and underperformance and thereby enables these to be addressed with expediency.
- 7.2. Undertaken constructively, whether by the LA school improvement service or through inspection by Ofsted, external scrutiny strengthens the capacity of individual schools and the whole school system to improve. LAs which have used their intervention and support function effectively have had a demonstrable impact on school performance. The importance of this “middle tier” is well described in the 2010 McKinsey Report on the world’s most effective school systems<sup>5</sup>. It is, however, true that the performance of LAs across the country has been extremely variable in this regard. It is important that, in Hampshire, the elements which make the school improvement service effective are retained whilst it adapts and evolves in response to the changing national and local picture.
- 7.3. It is essential, if the LA is to meet its duties and actively support high quality provision in Hampshire schools, that the advice and guidance the LA school improvement service offers is relevant, appropriate and of quality. The targeting and nature of intervention, support and challenge needs to be effective and timely. In addition, it is essential that schools and governors have confidence in the school improvement service and therefore opt to commission work from the service as opposed to seeking this from elsewhere. The government is encouraging local authorities to market their school improvement services locally and beyond their boundaries, which puts such services into a competitive arena.
- 7.4. School to school collaboration is highly valued in Hampshire where it has not only been supported but actively brokered as a mechanism for effecting rapid improvement in a struggling school. This is done with an in depth diagnosis of the issues a school faces and detailed local knowledge of the improvement journey a school has been on and the strengths and weaknesses of the current school and its headteacher. Exercising this “local leadership for tackling issues which cut across more than one

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<sup>4</sup> The Importance Of Teaching : Education White Paper (2010)

<sup>5</sup>[http://www.mckinsey.com/Client\\_Service/Social\\_Sector/Latest\\_thinking/Worlds\\_most\\_improved\\_schools](http://www.mckinsey.com/Client_Service/Social_Sector/Latest_thinking/Worlds_most_improved_schools)

school,”<sup>6</sup> requires understanding and a wider field knowledge of the skills and aspects stronger schools and their staff possess. The LA school improvement service ensures that school to school support is well matched, monitored, facilitated and accountable.

- 7.5. When a school is placed in special measures (SM) by Ofsted, issued with a notice to improve (Ntl) or if it has failed to respond to a warning notice issued by the LA in response to poor performance, the LA has a range of statutory powers which it can invoke in order to drive more rapid improvement. These powers include the requirement to work in partnership with another school, a college or a named person, the appointment of additional governors to the school’s governing body, the replacement of the entire governing body with an interim executive board (IEB) or the removal of the school’s delegated budget so that it cannot govern itself.
- 7.6. If governance is an issue in a school then the local authority must require the governing body to fulfil its statutory responsibilities and either support it to do so or remove it. The governing body of an academy has a wider and more explicit set of responsibilities and, in the absence of a sponsor, it is to the governing body that the local authority must offer challenge on behalf of children and their families if school performance, inclusion or access give cause for concern.
- 7.7. When used with discretion, these powers can be very effective in driving improvement. Some LAs have been reluctant to use their powers since schools have appeared to be more and more autonomous and LAs without a robust school improvement service may not have intervened as effectively as might be expected. The Education Act 2011 makes it quite clear that the LA is the champion of children and their parents, not of schools, and it is, therefore, important that LAs “take rapid and decisive action,” when schools are performing poorly including the consideration of structural and operational solutions.
- 7.8. The Secretary of State (SoS) also has powers of intervention in individual schools, similar to those of the LA. The SoS may, however, require LAs to exercise their powers or may decide to close a school which is subject to special measures. Increasingly, schools which are in an Ofsted category of concern or which perform below the current floor standards, can be compelled by the SoS to accept a sponsor and become an academy. Sponsors have a range of powers which go beyond those of the LA since they take on the direct line-management of the headteacher and have executive powers in respect of governance and financial delegation.
- 7.9. The role of the LA as the champion of children, especially vulnerable children, should not be regarded lightly. The duty to monitor the performance of schools and to intervene decisively when pupils are not being well served needs to be real and effective. In addition the LA must challenge academies, both converting and sponsored, on behalf of children and parents when performance is unacceptable. It is not yet clear how much information LAs will have access to in order to carry out this function,

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<sup>6</sup> DfE Statutory Guidance on the Roles and Responsibilities of the DCS and LMCS – section 28

but there is a clear duty to challenge the governing body or sponsor of an academy and require a clear plan of improvement and evidence of impact. LAs must be prepared to appeal to the SoS where academies are not improving and they have no statutory powers to intervene.

- 7.10. A national network of Teaching Schools is being set up reflecting the belief that teachers learn best from other professionals and a reliance on the effectiveness of school to school support. Teaching Schools are based on the model of teaching hospitals with the intention that outstanding schools will take the role of leading the training and professional development of teachers and headteachers in an area as well as intervening to improve the performance of other schools. They are funded directly by the government to undertake this work with the intention that they will also provide a quality assurance role for initial teacher training. The National College will be responsible for quality assuring their work and will remove accreditation from a Teaching School not meeting the standards.
- 7.11. In Hampshire currently there are five accredited teaching school “alliances” led by five secondary schools, two primary schools and a special school. For the most part, these new “alliances” recognise the need to work with the LA school improvement service to draw upon the infrastructure and knowledge in fulfilling the role and ensuring that support is well targeted. As individual schools the demands and accountability will be challenging. The investment in terms of resource and training which the government is making in teaching schools means that LAs must prioritise their success and ensure that a “blended” approach is developed so that teaching schools and LA services operate in concert for the benefit of schools and their pupils.
- 7.12. It is important to recognise, however, that some school improvement issues require direct intervention and sharp accountability such as leadership or governance capability or safeguarding concerns. The range of expertise as well as the accountability which sits in the LA must also be retained for a truly responsive and effective service in the future. Teaching schools provide an exciting opportunity which the historic practice in Hampshire makes it well placed to respond to. The strength of the retained school improvement service is a vital component of this futurescape as is its data analysis and local knowledge. Together, these aspects of school support and challenge make for a potentially bright future in Hampshire.

## **8. Closing the Gap**

- 8.1. Contextual Value Added (CVA) compares the progress a group of pupils makes compared with pupils nationally with similar characteristics. Schools are expected to compare the progress their pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) make against the national average for FSM pupils and aim to match this. This has led to the expectation that some pupils make less progress than others from the same starting points. It could be said therefore that some schools have in effect been aspiring for these pupils to underperform. “There are schools that show that, no matter what the

circumstances, all children can succeed. We owe them that chance. Many schools succeed against considerable odds; all schools must follow suit.”<sup>7</sup>

- 8.2. Value added (VA) measures the amount of progress pupils have made from their starting point or prior attainment. This method sets out to expect every pupil to make progress and to measure schools against how much “value” they have added for each pupil. The new framework uses both the national data set known as RAISEonline and the school’s own data to make judgements about pupil progress and achievement. The inspectors consider the value added by the school which is available in RAISEonline, the interactive part of which available to schools. This tool enables schools to calculate their own value added scores for groups of pupils across the school. Comparisons will be made against all pupils nationally and between different groups of pupils within the school.
- 8.3. The change to measuring the performance of schools using VA as opposed to CVA may alter the ranking of schools. Schools for example which have a higher level of pupils with FSM, special educational needs (SEN) or other contextual characteristics which in the past been compared with similar schools, may find themselves doing less well when compared with all schools nationally. Schools need to understand how this change will impact upon them and what they need to do to ensure that they are able to support the progress of all their pupils. the LA has a role to play in helping schools to assess and meet the professional development needs that may arise.
- 8.4. The progress children make is the outcome of how well the curriculum offered is delivered through teaching and also the quality of the curriculum itself. ‘The Importance of Teaching’ states the government’s intention for a curriculum which sets out the essential knowledge and understanding that all children should acquire and which leaves teachers free to decide how to teach this most effectively. The document also states the government’s view that the curriculum should embody rigour, high standards and outline a core of knowledge in the traditional subject disciplines. Reviews of the curriculum associated with early years, primary and secondary stages are all underway and were expected to be reported on in spring 2012. However, the publication of the curriculum has been delayed until at least 2013.
- 8.5. There remains the expectation that schools will provide a broad, balanced, yet personally tailored curriculum to meet the needs, aptitudes and interests of their children. Where this is successfully achieved both academically and vocationally, progression to the next stage of education, training or employment is supported. At the end of 2009, 183,000 16 -18 year olds nationally were not in education, employment or training (NEET). This figure represents 9.2% of that age group with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds being more likely to become NEET than their peers. In Hampshire the figure is generally below 6% but all young people will be expected to participate post-16 from 2013 onwards.

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<sup>7</sup> “A Good Education for All,” – Foreword by Sir Michael Wilshaw (Feb 2012)

- 8.6. The new Ofsted framework takes the quality of a school's curriculum into account when making a judgement on the quality of the leadership and management of the school. Ofsted inspectors will focus on how the decisions the school leadership has taken concerning curriculum design meet the needs of all children, promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and impact on the progression and destination of children when they leave the school. This is a demanding area for schools and one which requires insightful and skilful leadership. It is also an important area for the LA school improvement service in order to fulfil the DfE requirement to support maintained schools in delivering an appropriate national curriculum and be in a position to provide high quality support and guidance to enable schools to be confident in their strategic thinking and decision making.
- 8.7. The LA has a 'democratic mandate' to represent the interests of children and parents through its strategic role as a champion of children and parents, families and for vulnerable children. This extends to all children and young people in the authority including those attending academies and in post-16 institutions, despite the challenge this sets due to the removal of powers of intervention the LA has where academies are concerned. 'The Importance of Teaching' does however set out the government view of the role of LAs as being key in six areas namely:
- Supporting parents and families through promoting a good supply of strong schools
  - Ensuring fair access to schools for all children.<sup>8</sup>
  - Standing up for the interests of parents and children.
  - Supporting vulnerable children, including Looked After Children, those with special educational needs and those outside of mainstream education.
  - Supporting schools performing below the floor standards to improve rapidly.
  - Developing their own school improvement strategies, marketing these to all schools, not just those in their immediate geographical area.
- 8.8. The government and the LA is committed to increasing social mobility and to 'closing the gap' in terms of educational outcomes between advantaged and disadvantaged children and children in other vulnerable groups such as those with special educational needs or those who are looked after and those who live in relative poverty. In the new framework inspectors will consider how well the gaps are narrowing between the performance of different groups of children in the school and compared to all children nationally. Inspectors will also consider how effective the school is at overcoming barriers to learning and therefore accelerating the progress children make.

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<sup>8</sup> The DfE Statutory Guidance extends the concept of "Fair Access" to encompass early years provision; leisure-time activities; participation in education or training up to 19 (25 for those with LDD); participation in public decision-making and appropriate home to school transport.

- 8.9. In Hampshire the 'Virtual School' provides a focus on looked after children and rigorous challenge to schools about the quality of provision they deliver and the outcomes they achieve. Working together, schools and LA services have begun to improve outcomes for 'Looked After' children and the gap is closing, most significantly at KS1 where the most intensive work has focussed. Investment in this "early help" for children in care is expected to begin to impact on subsequent key stages as children move through the school system. The work of the 'Virtual School' and the systems in place to improve outcomes for vulnerable children were commended in the LA Annual Children Services Assessment. The continuation of this work is vital if all children, particularly vulnerable children, are to have opportunities to achieve.

## **9. Parent view**

- 9.1. Where parents are closely involved in their children's education then the children value it more and are able to perform more effectively. Engaging parents and gaining their views, however, is no easy task. The last three Ofsted frameworks have included parent questionnaires and the opportunity for parents to meet with inspectors in an attempt to glean a range of parental views. However it is not unusual for fewer than 20% of parents to respond to such requests.
- 9.2. The DfE has launched an initiative as part of the new framework know as 'Parent View' which went live on the 20 October 2011. This a real time website where parents/carers can register and answer a questionnaire about their child's school at anytime and more than once. The ongoing results are accessible to the general public as well as schools. At the end of a year the results will be frozen but available for schools and the general public to access in order to look for trends in parental views at a school and also to make comparisons between schools. The new Ofsted framework will access this website to help inform inspections and also the 'annual risk assessments' for good and outstanding schools. Ofsted will undertake to monitor the website and put measures in place to try to ensure it reflects an accurate picture of the views of a true cross section of parents. To date too few entries have been made for most schools to have the views expressed published.

## **10. Risks to the system**

- 10.1. It is, in many ways, a logical progression for the inspection of schools to focus on those schools where progress has been slow or is insecure. In a system which has become accustomed to accountability and where resources are increasingly scarce the move to risk-based inspection is unsurprising and, in theory at least, the right direction of travel. However, the fact that it is those schools deemed "outstanding" under the current framework which will be exempt from inspection under the new framework, fails to take account of some of the other factors of current education policy which increase the risk of rapid decline in these schools. Ofsted have judged that around 40% of schools decline between one inspection and the next and a proportionate number of these had been "outstanding."

- 10.2. Schools which have embraced academy status and are currently graded as “outstanding” will be subject to very little monitoring and no statutory intervention from local authorities. Whilst a change in leadership can result in very rapid decline, other factors can also affect the performance of a school, for example changes in the make-up of the pupil cohort due to migration, new housing developments, the increased popularity of a neighbouring school or difficulty in replacing key teaching staff. In such cases early recognition of a trend and decisive intervention are vital in arresting decline.
- 10.3. Whilst the new framework includes a desk-based “risk assessment” for exempt schools it is not at all clear how accurate and rigorous this will be and without local knowledge or context, it is equally unclear how intervention in such schools will be determined and carried out and by whom. A truly outstanding school is self-evaluative and will seek support to avoid decline but exemption fails to provide confidence concerning schools deemed “outstanding” whilst no longer truly being so. In addition, recent desk-based analyses carried out in respect of Teaching Schools and the deployment of National Leaders of Education (NLEs) by national bodies suggests such activity is based on data which is not current and not understood as a broad and informative narrative on a school.
- 10.4. One of the primary functions of Ofsted is to ensure a high quality education for all children and one of the challenges for school leaders is to make their school outstanding and keep it so in the face of constant change. Ofsted provides validation, challenge and a framework for improvement. The position of the English Education System as one of the few which has experienced continual improvement over the last ten years is based on accountability to an independent inspection service and intervention by a mediating middle tier. This is the pattern in all of those systems recognised by the McKinsey Report as the most successful. The removal of two aspects of that system, independent inspection and local intervention, at the same time must be considered a risk to its continued improvement which the new framework will need to guard against when implemented.
- 10.5. There is no doubt, however, that the new framework intends to hold schools firmly to account for the progress of all of their pupils and that HMCI has lost patience with the slow and irregular pace of improvement in some areas of the system. Early indications are that the current and proposed changes require schools to re-assess the way they promote high quality teaching and pupil progress if they are to be judged successful under the new framework.

**CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:****Links to the Corporate Strategy**

<b><i>Hampshire safer and more secure for all:</i></b>	<b>Yes</b>
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
<b><i>Maximising well-being:</i></b>	<b>Yes</b>
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
<b><i>Enhancing our quality of place:</i></b>	<b>No</b>
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Date</u>
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>		
<u>Title</u>		<u>Date</u>
The Importance Of Teaching : Education White Paper (2010)		2010
DfE Statutory Guidance on the Roles and Responsibilities of the DCS and LMCS		2012
A Good Education for All		2012

**Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents**

**The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)**

DocumentLocation

None

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**

### **1. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

- 1.1. There is no impact arising directly from this report although the new value added measures for schools are intended to impact positively on all pupils but particularly on the outcomes achieved by vulnerable groups.

### **2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:**

- 2.1. Improved educational outcomes impact upon economic wellbeing and participation in further learning so there is a direct link between improving the quality of education and reduced crime and disorder.

### **3. Climate Change:**

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

There is no impact on the carbon footprint from the proposals within this report

- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

Education has a role to play in preparing future generations to understand and adapt to climate change.