

Ofsted and the curriculum – a brief overview

	Main Ideas	Key Documents
Working definition of the curriculum	<p>'The curriculum is a framework for setting out the aims of a programme of education, including the knowledge and understanding to be gained at each stage (intent); for translating that framework over time into a structure and narrative, within an institutional context (implementation) and for evaluating what knowledge and understanding pupils have gained against expectations (impact / achievement).'</p>	<p>Curriculum: intent, implementation and impact. Development work for the new inspection framework Sean Harford HMI June 2017 https://www.slideshare.net/Ofstednews/educationfest17</p>
Rationale for renewed focus on the curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little debate or reflection about the curriculum • Lack of clarity around the language of the curriculum • Weak theoretical understanding of the curriculum <p>Reduced understanding of the curriculum leading to 3 important consequences:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Narrowing of primary curriculum in some schools as a consequence of too great a focus on KS2 test preparation 2. Leaders have misunderstood the purpose of KS3 and the new GCSE criteria (narrowing of KS3 curriculum to allow for a longer GCSE and teaching KS3 to GCSE objectives) 3. Curriculum for lower attainers: qualifications that count in league tables but not with other knowledge they should acquire 	<p>HMCI commentary: recent primary and secondary curriculum research October 2017 https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/hmcis-commentary-october-2017</p>

	<p>‘School leaders need to recognise how easy it is to focus on the performance of the school and lose sight of the pupil. I acknowledge that inspection may well have helped to tip this balance in the past.’</p> <p>Inconsistency in definition of skills. Unclear what was being referred to e.g., subject specific skills, personal skills, cognitive skills or life skills.</p>	
<p>Key thinking</p>	<p>Sean Harford In preparation for the revised framework, schools need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know their curriculum – design and intent • Know how their curriculum is being implemented • Know what impact their curriculum is having on pupils’ knowledge and understanding <p>Sarah Hubbard ‘The message I would send to teachers is to be audacious. I would encourage teachers to be brave and creative, to use your subject expertise to design curriculums that will set pupils’ minds alight. English teachers can inspire pupils and at the same time ensure that they are successful in exams.’</p> <p>Amanda Spielman ‘The curriculum is not the timetable. Nor is it what we think might be on the exam. We all have to ask</p>	<p>Curriculum: intent, implementation and impact. Development work for the new inspection framework Sean Harford HMI June 2017</p> <p>See in particular the nine box framework: Thinking about intent, implementation at national, school and classroom level – a useful framework to consider.</p> <p>https://www.slideshare.net/Ofstednews/educationfest17</p> <p>Sarah Hubbard, HMI and national Lead for English, reflects on the English curriculum November 2017 https://educationinspection.blog.gov.uk/2017/11/07/sarah-hubbard-her-majestys-inspector-and-national-lead-for-english-reflects-on-the-english-curriculum/</p>

	<p>ourselves how we have created a situation where second-guessing the test can trump the pursuit of real, deep knowledge and understanding of subjects.’</p> <p>‘... it is clear that as an inspectorate we have not placed enough emphasis on the curriculum. For a long time, our inspections have looked hardest at outcomes, placing too much weight on test and exam results when we consider the overall effectiveness of schools. This has increased the pressure on school leaders, teachers and pupils alike to deliver test scores above all else.’</p> <p>Importance of leadership, and particularly forms of distributed leadership when developing and implementing a curriculum.</p> <p>‘Knowledge and skill are intrinsically linked: skill is a performance built on what a person knows. That performance might be physical or cognitive, but skills matter and they cannot be separated from knowledge.’</p> <p>Ofsted Concepts that matter when discussing the curriculum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress means knowing more and remembering more • Knowledge is generative (or ‘sticky’), i.e. the 	<p>HMCI commentary: curriculum and the new education inspection framework September 2018 https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/hmci-commentary-curriculum-and-the-new-education-inspection-framework</p>
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	<p>more you know the more easily you can learn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge is connected in webs or schemata • Vocabulary size relates to academic success, and schooling is crucial for increasing the breadth of children’s vocabulary <p>Factors that may be linked to curriculum quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on subject disciplines even when topics are taught • Considering depth and breadth of curriculum content • Seeing the curriculum as the progression model • Having a clear purpose for assessment • Reviewing and evaluating curriculum design • Clear curriculum leadership (often distributed) and ownership • Considering local context and filling gaps from pupils’ backgrounds 	<p>Towards the education inspection framework 2019 November 2018 https://www.slideshare.net/Ofstednews/working-towards-the-eif-2019-ofsteds-approach-schools</p>
<p>Implications for inspections</p>	<p>‘We need to assess a school’s curriculum in a way that is valid, fair and reliable and that recognises the importance of schools’ autonomy to choose their own curriculum approaches. Schools taking radically different approaches to the curriculum must be able to be judged consistently.’</p> <p>Inspecting the ‘how’ as well as the ‘what’ of the curriculum will be important in the new framework.</p>	<p>HMCI commentary: curriculum and the new education inspection framework September 2018 https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/hmci-commentary-curriculum-and-the-new-education-inspection-framework</p>

	<p>‘Outcomes’ judgement to be replaced by ‘quality of education’ judgement, to include curriculum, teaching, learning, assessment and will also reflect outcomes.’</p> <p>Quality of education judgement to have three aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intent - what is it that schools want for all their children? • Implementation – how is teaching and assessment fulfilling the intent? • Impact – the results and wider outcomes that children achieve, and the destinations they go on to <p>‘There is, and will be no ‘Ofsted curriculum’. What we will be interested in is the coherence, the sequencing, and construction, the implementation of the curriculum, how it is being taught and how well children and young people are progressing in it.’</p> <p>Findings of Phase 3 curriculum research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links between intent and implementation • Indicators of the relationship between intent and implementation • List of curriculum indicators, which will feed in 	<p>Amanda Spielman speech to the SCHOOLS NorthEast summit October 2018 https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/amanda-spielman-speech-to-the-schools-northeast-summit</p> <p>Amanda Spielman letter to Chair of Public Accounts Committee October 2018 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/amanda-spielman-letter-to-the-public-accounts-committee</p> <p>Amanda Spielman launches Ofsted’s Annual Report 2017 / 2018 December 2018 https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/amanda-spielman-launches-ofsteds-annual-report-201718</p> <p>An investigation into how to assess the quality of education through curriculum intent, implementation and impact December 2018 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/curriculum-</p>
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	<p>to the design of the new framework</p>	<p>research-assessing-intent-implementation-and-impact</p> <p>Commentary on curriculum research – phase 3 December 2018 https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/commentary-on-curriculum-research-phase-3</p>
<p>Next steps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation on the draft framework from 16th January 2019. See @ofstednews for details of dates and venues for face to face meetings • Training for inspectors • Training sessions for schools and colleges (see slides and video from curriculum workshop, December 2018) 	<p>https://www.slideshare.net/Ofstednews</p> <p>https://t.co/BVGL9YS180</p>