

Summary notes from Ofsted webinar (8.12.23); "How Ofsted inspects behaviour"

The webinar link is here but underneath is a summary of all of the content covered:

[How Ofsted inspects behaviour | Ofsted webinar for schools - YouTube](#)

The webinar was led by 4 HMI: Lee Owston, Steve Shaw, Di Mullan and Sue Morris-King.

The session began with a summary of what Ofsted have found from ongoing research in schools, literature, inspection evidence and talking to schools about what helps secure good/outstanding behaviour.

What do we know helps secure good/outstanding behaviour?

- The origins of good behaviour are in the earliest phases of education
- There is **certainty and consistency**; students know that when behaviour is responded to it is not personal but is fair and part of the school procedures
- Continuous CPD for staff around behaviour and inclusion
- A calm and orderly environment is essential
- "Behaving well is the cultural norm"
- There are rules/expectations from the very start and these are a core element of induction to the school
- High expectations of all students
- There are processes and systems for responding to inappropriate behaviour
- Data analysis is pro-active: what is our behaviour data telling us and what are we doing as a result?
- The **teaching** of expected behaviours (and what these look like) is essential and this is reiterated regularly (with the rationale)
- Expectations are constantly re-visited across all parts of the school and by all staff
- "Good behaviour is the default option"

Inspectors are aware that there is increasing prevalence of low-level disruption. (In part this is due to gaps in socialisation as a result of the pandemic; students have not had the opportunities to learn/practise how to behave with others).

In an Ofsted survey of 1500 teachers and leaders, 42% said behaviour had worsened since the pandemic.

Top 3 reported impacts of this in Primary schools;

- Staff absence due to stress
- Teaching staff leaving the profession
- Staff absence due to mental ill health

Top 3 reported impacts in Secondary schools:

- Difficulty recruiting new staff
- Staff absence due to stress

- Staff leaving the profession

Research shared that shows that children with mental health problems at age 7-11 were three times more likely to later develop attendance issues.

A reminder that schools should re-visit their Code of Conduct (Staff) and the Teacher's Standards with staff to guide how staff speak to and interact with young people.

DfE September 2022 Behaviour guidance

Key points to remember from this document:

- Teach students what good behaviour looks like
- Constantly dealing with poor behaviour negatively affects staff wellbeing
- Poor behaviour causes other students anxiety/distress and can facilitate bullying/violence
- Give reasonable adjustments to sanctions (Section 2 of guidance) for children with additional needs
- Section 3 of the guidance: intervention strategies to improve behaviour
- Respond assertively to sexually harmful behaviour, remembering that a perpetrator may also themselves be a victim of harm

How might behaviour be inspected?

Before the initial call

- Lead inspector looking at the website: policies etc
- IDSR (albeit quite out-dated data on attendance, suspensions and exclusions)

The longer "educationally-focused call"

- Chance for senior leaders to explain the current context (e.g. numbers of SEND students with needs that are harder to meet in mainstream, groups of students where behaviour is a significant cause for concern) and what the school has tried so far
- This is an opportunity to flag any parental issues that may then come through the parent/carer survey; making lead inspector aware of the context, if there have been issues affecting a group of parents who have shared concerns, for example
- Staff training on responding to challenging behaviour and meeting the needs of SEND students
- What you do and why, in relation to behaviour and attendance
- "Ungraded" inspection: attendance is a priority, explores high expectations and routines, how the school responds to low level disruption and creates a positive learning environment where bullying is not tolerated
- "Graded": as above but wider evidence gathering activities and a grade is given

"Deep dives"

- Behaviour and attitudes will be explored through lesson visits, work scrutiny, teacher and student voice

- Initial inspector response to what students say/concerns will be "proportionate" and may involve then seeking further information or talking to more children
- Will look at how staff are supported to manage and improve behaviour

Other evidence-gathering

- May visit off-site provision
- Asking students about behaviour at break/lunch/on corridors etc
- Ask staff how they respond to any behaviour incidents and how they work to improve behaviour
- Behaviour support: what is done when sanctions are not working?
- Look at survey responses about behaviour
- Removing students with challenging behaviour from the school site for the duration of the inspection would be viewed very seriously and would be likely to impact on the judgement
- How is AP supporting those children who are attending it?
- What does school do with the behaviour data it collects? For example: on call, suspensions, isolation etc. What is it telling you and what then have you done?

Suspensions and Exclusions

- Inspectors will evaluate the effectiveness of exclusions (if used)
- Look at rates/patterns/reasons
- Reintegration strategies
- How are the child's wider needs considered?
- May talk to students who have been suspended
- How does the school explore safety/wellbeing risks?
- How does the school engage with local support services?
- How is the school tracking improvements in behaviour for students who are accessing behaviour support and interventions?

Removal from classrooms

- Referred schools back to the guidance document about this: "A positive environment where children can flourish"
- If the school has an "isolation room" inspectors will probably visit this and may want to talk to staff who work there
- Is the room helping students to "regain calm in a safe space"?
- Ensure students could leave this room if in extreme circumstances
- Ensure its use is appropriate (e.g. not isolating a child with ADHD because they could not concentrate over a long period)
- How mindful is the school of re-traumatising children? (e.g. very vulnerable child being placed in isolation)

Ofsted are aware that mainstream schools are facing significant challenges in meeting the needs of SEND students.

Paragraph 106 of the Inspection handbook details the range of data schools should make available to the inspection team.

In a "graded" inspection the full inspection schedule is considered. Behaviour & Attitudes is a separate judgement and will impact overall. (See Paragraph 453 onwards of the handbook)

A dedicated attendance webinar recording is available on the Ofsted YouTube channel.

The next webinar will look at Inspecting Alternative Provision. AP leaders should note that Ofsted understand that whilst the full EIF applies in AP, these schools are working with students with (often) very challenging behaviour. Inspectors will expect to see more incidents of dysregulated young people. It is about how these settings are making "demonstrable improvements from the student's starting point" on admission- in terms of behaviour and attitudes." Inspectors know that an AP setting will "look, sound and be different."

CR

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