

ASCL Policy Wins: Inspection and accountability

Policy	Which means for schools...
<p>Changes to the conversion of section 8 inspections for 'good' schools</p>	<p>ASCL worked with Ofsted to secure changes to the conversion of section 8 inspections for 'good' schools. Schools which would previously have moved from 'good' to 'RI' within 48 hours now receive a one to two-year period in which to work on priorities before inspectors return to carry out a full inspection. This has helped to reduce the 'cliff edge' of Ofsted's judgements.</p> <p>ASCL also directly influenced the wording of the letter schools receive, including a line that makes it clear the school's good judgement has not been changed by the section 8 inspection. This has helped schools to manage the message with their communities.</p>
<p>Ofsted Education Inspection Framework 2019</p>	<p>In line with members' feedback, ASCL supported the new inspection framework but also successfully lobbied for important improvements. For example, a line was added regarding the EBacc which states clearly this issue won't solely or primarily dictate an inspection judgement.</p> <p>In accordance with ASCL's recommendation, Ofsted's proposal for same-day notice was dropped in favour of a longer pre-inspection phone call.</p> <p>ASCL's approach to policy influencing also made it possible for our Curriculum and Inspection Specialist Stephen Rollett to attend inspector training, shadow a pilot inspection and attend Ofsted's curriculum advisory group. These activities allow ASCL to speak with more authority when influencing policy.</p>
<p>Transition Arrangements</p>	<p>ASCL successfully lobbied for the inclusion of 'transition arrangements' in the new handbook which give credit to schools for the work they are doing on the curriculum but which isn't yet complete. This has helped schools to achieve or maintain a 'good' judgement which otherwise might have been judged 'RI'.</p> <p>As noted in a recent Ofsted blog and following ASCL's recommendation, Ofsted has extended the transition arrangements for a further year to July 2021.</p>
<p>Outstanding exemption</p>	<p>ASCL Council called for the removal of the exemption from inspection for outstanding mainstream schools. The Department for Education has subsequently launched a consultation on this issue.</p>

Deep dives	ASCL General Secretary Geoff Barton wrote to HMCI Amanda Spielman seeking - and receiving - assurance that school leaders can attend deep dive meetings with curriculum leaders and that inspector training will address inspectors' tone during inspection.
Progress 8 scores through collaboration	ASCL has been instrumental in encouraging schools to collaborate using their data. In the 2019 Autumn update, Ofsted singled out the work ASCL had done and recognised that large scale school/school collaboration results for P8 could be used in inspections at the school's request.
Removal of 'floor' and 'coasting'	ASCL was instrumental in lobbying for the removal of the highly pejorative concepts of 'floor' and 'coasting'
Progress 8 outliers	ASCL Deputy Director of Policy Duncan Baldwin made the case consistently to the DfE that outliers distorted a school's Progress 8 scores. For example, one student with a statistically implausible score could wipe out the good progress of a dozen pupils. The DfE introduced adjusted scores in 2018 as a result.
The need to compare like with like	<p>Both Ofsted and the DfE have been guilty of using flawed statistical comparison. In particular, the inspection data summary report (IDSR) and Analyse School Performance (ASP) have in the past compared the progress scores of disadvantaged pupils with their non disadvantaged peers.</p> <p>Lobbying by ASCL has resulted in improved functionality in ASP so that you can compare 'apples with apples', ie use the equivalent comparator. This anomaly has also been removed from IDSR.</p> <p>Moreover, following ASCL pressure, subject level transition matrices have been published by the DfE which show, in addition to overall performance, the performance broken down by gender, disadvantage and EAL. This proves the DfE believes those comparisons are valid.</p>

February 2020

www.ascl.org.uk/ASCLInfluence