8 April 2019

Meg Hillier MP
Chair
Public Accounts Committee
House of Commons
Westminster
SW1A 0AA

Dear Meg,

Thank you for your letter dated 12 March 2019. I note your comments on school funding and will of course, share the results of our research into school funding when it is released. By early October I will also be able to share information with you about what we have found this academic year on potential off-rolling.

Responses to your other questions are listed below.

**Outstanding schools**

Outstanding mainstream primary and secondary schools are exempt from routine inspections but may be inspected if Ofsted have cause for concern. As you are aware, we can inspect up to 10% of outstanding schools each year.

The table below shows all inspections conducted and reports published between September 2018 and the end of February 2019, and in each of the preceding three academic years.

The table includes full section 5 inspections and section 8 inspections which were not deemed full inspections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of schools inspected</th>
<th>Number of exempt schools inspected as a proportion of all exempt schools at the beginning of the academic year (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018/19 (up to 28 February 2019)</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016/17</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015/16</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Short inspections

In our new education inspection framework, we are proposing that section 8 inspections of good schools (currently known as 'short inspections') will be two days in length and inspectors will arrive the afternoon before the inspection to conduct on site preparation with the school leaders. This means that we will provide formal notification of the inspection no later than 10am on the day before the inspection. We are then proposing that the lead inspector will arrive on site no earlier that 12.30pm that day. The inspection will then formally begin the following day. These proposals are subject to the current consultation on the new framework, which ended on 5 April 2019.

Deferral of inspections

In its report on Learndirect, the Public Accounts Committee recommended that Ofsted ‘develop a specific deferral policy for commercial providers to ensure that learners’ interests always take priority’. We felt it was important to keep one consistent deferral policy for all our education providers, however, we did make some amends to our current deferral policy to ensure clarity over how we consider commercial issues during the deferral process.

The policy now makes clear that ‘Ofsted would never defer an inspection for commercial reasons’.

However, because the deferral policy covers all our education inspections, not only further education and skills, and because apart from the minor update noted above the policy remained substantially the same, we decided to keep the original publication date.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely

Amanda Spielman

Amanda Spielman
Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector

1 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/deferring-ofsted-inspections