

The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles

Briefing for section 5 inspectors

This guidance is intended to help inspectors judge the impact of schools' work in helping pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles. It should be read in conjunction with *The evaluation schedule for schools*.

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Introduction

1. Inspectors should assess how well pupils develop a basic knowledge and understanding of health issues and apply this knowledge in their own lives. The evidence collected to help inspectors reach this judgement may also help inspectors in judging other outcomes, aspects of provision and leadership and management. For example, if a particular group of pupils does not understand health issues or shows great reluctance in applying their knowledge positively, inspectors will also need to consider the impact of this on care, guidance and support and on the school's promotion of equality of opportunity. Inspectors are not expected to judge whether pupils are healthy.

General guidance

2. Most schools promote healthy living, partly through their personal, social, health and economic education programmes but also through curriculum areas including physical education, science and design technology. Information from these, and where relevant other areas, about the impact of the provision on pupils' understanding of health issues and the impact on their lifestyles may provide useful evidence for inspectors. For example, observations of physical education lessons will provide an insight into the participation rates and quality of physical activity undertaken by pupils; scrutiny of science books may provide evidence on what the pupils know and understand about the impact of smoking on health; scrutiny of work in design and technology may provide evidence of pupils' understanding of healthy eating options.¹
3. Where inspectors judge that pupils' outcomes in respect to healthy lifestyles are in response to the school's provision, this will be reflected in their judgements about the effectiveness of that provision. For example, where there are too few pupils or specific groups of pupils participating in physical activity or where pupils do not understand the health risks posed by substance abuse, this evidence will help inspectors reach their judgement not only on the extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles but also on the quality of the curriculum and of care guidance and support.
4. Important sources of evidence for the judgement about the extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles, are Ofsted's pupils' and parents' surveys, carried out when the school has been notified of the inspection. These provide a general view of whether or not pupils are encouraged to adopt healthy active lifestyles. Inspectors can also investigate whether the school itself consults pupils, parents, staff and governors about health issues, particularly in relation to developing and applying policies and programmes for sex and relationships education and drug, alcohol and tobacco education. Evidence about such consultation, which may be indicated in the self-evaluation form (SEF) and

¹ By September 2011 all secondary schools must meet the requirement for pupils to develop cooking skills and be able to make healthy meals.

followed up through discussions with staff and pupils, may also contribute to judgements about the extent to which pupils contribute to the school community and how well the school engages with parents.

Potential areas for investigation

5. **The uptake of school meals:** Inspectors should note the uptake of school meals, which are based on national nutrition standards, and discuss this in the context of the school.² **The government targets and national figures for the uptake of school meals are available in separate guidance.**
6. Questions that might be asked are whether pupils and parents follow any guidance given about packed lunches and about what food and drink should be brought into school. Inspectors should not examine the contents of packed lunches but may wish to discuss this informally with pupils who bring them to school.
7. **Pupils' choice of food:** An important aspect of pupils' adoption of a healthy lifestyle is their choice of food. In considering school meals uptake and other healthy eating choices inspectors should be mindful of the choices that parents make for their children's food, both in school and at other times. Inspectors can consider whether pupils are aware of the potential positive and negative consequences of different foods and eating patterns. Inspectors will want to investigate whether pupils make healthy choices from the range of food and drink, including school lunches, provided in the school. This includes food and drink sold or provided as snacks and those choices provided by vending machines in the school.
8. **Physical activity:** Inspectors will want to find out what proportion of pupils undertakes high quality physical education each week, given the government's public service agreement target for two hours physical education and school sport for all 5–16 year olds. **The national figures are provided in separate guidance.** Inspectors will also find it helpful to ask what proportion of the pupils takes part in five hours of physical education and school sport each week (as set out in the physical education and school sports strategy for young people).
9. The following are examples of further questions which inspectors may find helpful with regard to pupils' adoption of physically healthy lifestyles.
 - Do pupils understand that physical activity, together with a healthy diet, can help them feel healthier and may help them cope with stress?
 - What are the take-up rates, for all groups of pupils, for activities that promote physical activity?

² The School Food Regulations are mandatory. Where a school has indicated that it is not fully compliant, inspectors should ask the school for evidence that it is working towards compliance in a systematic way. This evidence should be considered when making the judgement about governance.

- Where appropriate, what proportion of pupils walk or ride safely to school?
 - Are pupils:
 - able to work and play in an appropriate environment with regard to, for example, comfortable levels of light and temperature in classrooms?
 - required to carry heavy bags unnecessarily?
 - able to use furniture, equipment including physical education apparatus which are appropriate to their age and stage of physical development to enable them to avoid physical discomfort such as back pain?
10. **Sex and relationships related issues:** Inspectors will want to investigate pupils' understanding and knowledge of issues, relevant to their age, pertaining to sex and relationships. Secondary school pupils should be aware of the dangers of sexually transmitted infection (STI) and auto-immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS). Inspectors should also consider pupils' knowledge and understanding in these areas in the context of the approach to sex and relationship education taken by the school. This is because governing bodies have the right to determine their school's approach to sex and relationship education, to ensure that this can be delivered in line with the context, values and ethos of the school.
 11. **Pupils' mental and emotional health:** Inspectors are not required to determine the state of the pupils' mental and emotional health. However inspectors can, through discussion with pupils, ascertain their understanding of the factors which may damage these aspects of their health and those which can bring about improvements. For example, inspectors may investigate whether pupils, relevant to their age and cognitive ability, are able to recognise the signs of stress and mental ill health and act on them either through preventative measures or accessing confidential advice and support. Inspectors should be mindful of the links between evidence which may be relevant to pupils' safety and behaviour, such as that on bullying, which may also have an impact on pupils' mental and emotional health.
 12. Inspectors might also consider how well pupils respond to the school's use of social and emotional aspects of learning materials to develop pupils' social and emotional understanding and skills. Many schools have records and analysis of the impact of social and emotional aspects of learning on both groups of pupils and individuals.
 13. **Pupils with medical needs:** Many schools accommodate pupils with significant medical needs such as diabetes. Inspectors will need to consider whether these pupils, in the context of their particular needs, understand the factors that impact on their health and can apply them to their lifestyle. This may contribute to the evidence in a case study of one or more potentially vulnerable pupils and will also provide some insight into the school's care, guidance and support arrangements.

14. **Awards:** Schools are often keen to present evidence of the Healthy Schools Award and/or Activemark. Inspectors can consider this evidence for indications of positive outcomes and pupil participation.

Annex: Further information

Statutory requirements for sex and relationships education

1. The 1996 Education Act requires that:
 - sex and relationship education elements in the national curriculum science order across all key stages are mandatory for all pupils in primary and secondary schools
 - all schools must have an up-to-date policy that describes the content and organisation of sex and relationship education outside the science order. It is the governors' responsibility to ensure a policy is developed and made available to parents
 - governing bodies have the right to determine their school's approach to sex and relationship education, to ensure that it can be delivered in line with the context, values and ethos of the school
 - primary schools should have a policy that describes the sex and relationship education provided or gives a statement of the decision not to provide sex and relationship education except for science order
 - secondary schools are required as a minimum to provide sex and relationship education which includes information about STIs and AIDS.
2. Sex and relationship education guidance 2000 is supported in legislation by the Learning and Skills Act 2000. This requires that young people:
 - should learn about the nature of marriage and the importance of family life for bringing up children
 - are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate having regard to the age and religious and cultural background; and that:
 - parents have the right to withdraw their children from sex and relationship education, outside the science order (although less than 1% do)
 - all Ofsted inspections will cover the establishment, implementation and monitoring of sex and relationship education policies and practice will be surveyed in a significant number of schools.
3. The following references and links provide more detailed information on many of the issues related to pupils' adoption of healthy lifestyles.

Guidance on sex and relationship education and drug and alcohol education is being reviewed:

www.teachernet.gov.uk/_preview/index.cfm?node=9933&intContent=57749

www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/healthyliving/drugsandalcohol/

www.healthyschools.gov.uk

This is the website for the National Healthy Schools Programme.

Time for change? Personal, social and health education (HMI 070049), Ofsted, 2007

Drug education in schools (HMI 2392), Ofsted, 2005

Healthy schools, healthy children? The contribution of education to pupils' health and well-being (HMI 2563), Ofsted, 2006

Assessment guidance can be downloaded from the QCA's website at:
www.qcda.gov.uk

The Schools Health Education Unit: www.sheu.org.uk

The updated school furniture website (see below) was launched by the Schools Minister in 2009. It was originally funded and jointly launched in 2002 by the then Department for Education and Skills (DfES), Counties Furniture Group (CFG) and the Furniture Industry Research Association (FIRA) as a co-operative project in response to the growing concern amongst schools and parents of back pain in children, caused in part by poor size-matching of furniture (such as heights of chairs not matching heights of children or desks).

www.schoolfurniture.uk.com