



**COVID-19: do we need to redefine the priorities for school inspections?**

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## 1. Introduction

The disruption to schooling as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic during the spring and summer in the northern hemisphere has necessitated changes in all aspects of school policy and practice, including the purpose, priorities and practices of Inspectorates of Education. ICSEI's Crisis Response in Education Network has chosen to discuss these issues with delegates from Inspectorates of Education around the world in a series of three webinars.

In the first webinar, held in June 2020, the focus was to understand if Inspectorates should 'inspect' schools and for what purpose. The outcomes of the webinar indicate a change in inspection purpose where, during the pandemic and school closures, 'support and improvement' and 'liaison' were at the forefront of the work of Inspectorates of Education. Delegates shared how these functions worked in practice with schools and headteachers and with national governments; illuminating their position as a 'middle tier' between practice and policymaking. Background information about the purposes of inspection (based on the work of De Grauwe, 2007; Davis and Martin, 2008) and the outcomes and discussions in the first webinar are detailed in full in Ehren et al (2020)<sup>2</sup>.

The second webinar focused on priorities for inspection as school systems begin to resume under a variety of operational scenarios in some of the represented countries. The discussion extended the themes explored in the first webinar and added more issues to the fore, including a more detailed discussion of the shift from a 'control' to a 'support' function for schools in the interim term, assessing quality in blended learning, understanding learning loss (particularly for vulnerable children), and the consideration of other evidence and methods for evaluating school quality beyond 'traditional' assessment data.

The discussion was foregrounded by a presentation by Beatriz Pont from the OECD, whose work currently focuses on how countries can design and implement COVID recovery strategies; strategies which include the work of Inspectorates of Education to ensure quality and equity in this period. This overarching view detailed how context, stakeholders, and smart policy design can improve implementation. Particularly, the presentation asked delegates to consider how inspectorates can reflect the new context for teaching and learning in their future work. In particular, delegates noted that the context of teaching and learning has proven to be variable within countries based on the access to IT tools for learners, the skills of teachers to adequately adapt curriculum or deliver new curriculum in an online space, and the home and community learning context to support distance learning. Second, the presentation proposed bringing new stakeholders into the process of inspection – including parents and learners themselves – to gather evidence on quality in the absence of traditional measures at present. And third, delegates were asked to (re)consider the vision of their country's education system and its priorities, as well as their organisation and its functions, in this new context.

This final consideration – that of creating and implementing a new vision for education systems in the next 12 to 18 months – directly aligns with the key questions considered in this webinar with inspectorates:

*What aspects of quality should inspectorates be prioritising post-pandemic? (Why?)*

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<sup>2</sup> Ehren, M.C.M., Chapman, C., and Montecinos, C. (2020). COVID-19: do we need to reimagine the purpose of school inspections? ICSEI internal report. Available at: <https://policyscotland.gla.ac.uk/covid-19-reimagining-school-inspections/>

*Are these different from the quality standards your inspectorate would evaluate before the pandemic? If so, how?*

These key questions were discussed by 37 delegates from academia and inspectorates from the following 13 countries:

Country	Roles represented
Belgium (Flanders)	Inspector (Primary); Inspector (Development office)
Chile	Inspector; Academic
England	Chief Inspector; Inspector
Germany	Research Associate, School Inspectorate
Ireland	Deputy Chief Inspector; Inspector
Malta	Education Officers (Quality Assurance)
Mexico	Inspector
Netherlands	Senior Inspector; Academic
Portugal	Inspector
Scotland	Head of Scrutiny; Inspector; Academic
Turkey	Inspector
Uruguay	Research Director, Inspectorate
Wales	Strategic Director, Inspectorate

The next sections detail further information on the change in inspection narrative from ‘control’ to ‘support and advice’ for schools and then continues to explain the changes in priorities of inspection.

## 2. The purpose of inspection

In the first webinar, delegates explained how inspections in the period of school closures had a significant focus on the liaison function between schools and national governments; that relationship was not as prominent in the discussions in this webinar (although they were present). This is primarily due to the phases of this crisis response: inspectorates are moving from monitoring schools’ responses to the pandemic (e.g. where they are struggling to move to online education and why and subsequently informing governments’ crisis response) to reconfiguring and restarting their inspection work when schools (partially) reopen. The inspection work builds on their existing roles and frameworks, but necessarily also includes newer roles and more concentrated work to navigate the relationships between schools, parents and learners in this period to understand and eventually assess educational quality in the current context.

### 2.1 Moving from control to support/advisory functions with existing frameworks

Delegates in this session reaffirmed that inspections during school shutdowns and in the initial term of school re-openings (in whatever form the reopenings occur) will not be focussed on a strict control of schools and assigning ‘grades’ as before. In all countries represented there was an acknowledgement that it was neither appropriate nor feasible given the context of teaching and learning this year and that in the autumn the focus will still be on support and advisory functions.

This ‘support’ approach was critical in the beginning stages of the crisis. Schools were adapting as quickly as they could to online delivery of the curriculum and quickly implementing new plans to address oftentimes both the material and educational needs of vulnerable children. In some countries (such as England) inspectors were redeployed to local authority education teams in this phase, and in most others, inspectors were keeping in touch with headteachers in this phase for both pastoral

support and to gather evidence on school adaptations to inform national governments. Liaison at the time of school closure concentrated on informing government on how schools are moving to remote teaching/implementing blended models and where there are problems. Some Inspectorates also share practice across schools.

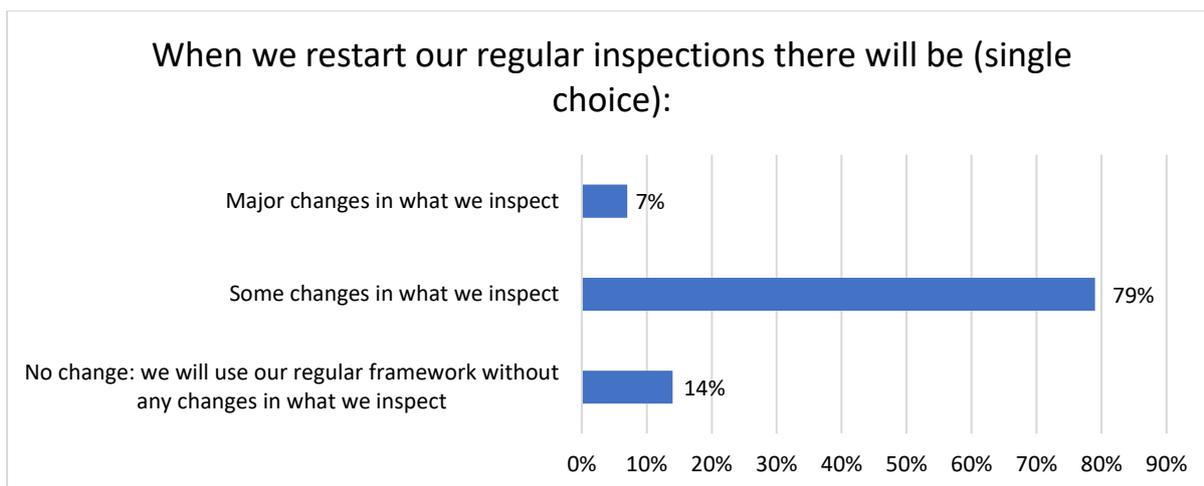
However, these initial engagements with schools in a support role slightly subsided as schools began to deliver learning and teaching in new forms and variations in the learning offerings began to emerge between schools. Follow up calls or visits with headteachers in this period, particularly with headteachers in schools that were identified as having issues, were more investigative and focused on improvement. Most delegates agreed that this second 'interim' phase is an opportunity for inspectors to focus on constructive dialogue and advisory functions, whether done via monitoring reports (as in the Netherlands and in Belgium) or in 'assurance visits' (as in England). This movement into an advisory function was echoed by Scottish participants, who noted that their PRAISE framework for school engagement will still be used but will do so to help to address issues and improvement rather than to assign grades. In both Scotland and Wales a movement to this supportive and advisory role is a continuation of their shift in focus pre-pandemic, but for other countries (e.g. Chile, Flanders) this was a distinct change in their role with schools.

More broadly, changes in the role of inspections in both the crisis period and interim period were viewed by many delegates as an opportunity to reframe and recalibrate the *narrative* of inspection. For some, approaching schools in this period with 'research questions' and 'constructive dialogue' rather than assessment criteria illustrates how inspectors are more able to consider new forms of evidence and inquiry to understand quality in the absence of traditional data.

### 3. Priorities for inspection

The webinar also discussed the intention of inspectorates to change their priorities in the coming term and what those priorities would be, and new considerations when assessing quality and what inspections might look like in practice in both the interim and longer-term (the focus of the third and final webinar in this series).

Many participants (e.g. Ireland, Belgium, England) noted that while the *function* and the *outcome* of an inspection has been modified in this interim period, their inspectorates will still be using the same inspection frameworks as before to guide their work. If existing frameworks and processes are broad enough, adaptations can be made to include new lines of investigation such as blended learning and wellbeing. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) Amanda Spielman, presented Ofsted's response to the pandemic and the ways their framework was revised in 2019 following long periods of consultation, trial and testing; this framework will continue to underpin the work of inspectors on 'assurance' visits beginning in September (in the more advisory role) and will be returned to when inspections resume in 2021. Given that existing frameworks are based on evidence and rigorous research on school quality, it is important that inspectorates use them or adapt them as school systems move from crisis to recovery. The majority of delegates (79%) shared via a webinar poll question that there will be some changes to what is inspected when 'regular' inspections resume, with 14% noting that there will be no changes to what is inspected.



Discussions amongst delegates focussed on what priorities will be taken forward in inspection activities in both the interim period (where ‘regular’ inspections are somewhat halted) and when regular inspections resume in the next 12 to 18 months. Feedback from delegates after the discussions via a poll confirmed that their Inspectorates are aiming to add or incorporate standards in the following areas (delegates selected all that applied):

Area being added to regular inspection framework	Percentage of delegates
The quality of blended models of online/in-school teaching	67%
The teaching and learning of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds	63%
The quality of online teaching	48%
The wellbeing of pupils	48%
The quality of formative assessments	30%
The wellbeing of staff	22%
The teaching and learning of socio-emotional skills	19%

We further describe each of these areas below. ‘Learning loss’ and how to assess quality (particularly curriculum and including voices of parents and pupils in inspections) came up as a separate topic in the discussions and are added to the description below.

### 3.1 Blended learning and online teaching:

While the issue of assessing blended learning was introduced in the first webinar, this topic was a more prominent area of focus for delegates in this session. During school shutdowns the shift to online learning was unprecedented and brought with it a variety of challenges based on the school system context. For delegates and their Inspectorates, assessing the adaptation to online or (eventually) blended learning involves both *looking back* on the school shutdown phase and considering key issues in the next phase. At the time of this webinar (July 2020) and of this writing (August 2020), there is variation in school re-opening plans which are dependent on virus suppression. Some school systems have been or are planning to begin next term with full time in-person instruction (e.g. Scotland and

England) while others will be operating in a blended form of learning. Inspectors in a variety of different school reopening contexts, however, will be planning for blended learning and how to assess its impact in the next period.

#### Looking back: flexible responses

Through the initial phase of evidence gathering from schools and liaising with national governments there was a distinct focus of assessing how the system ensured access to online learning, particularly for vulnerable children. Looking back, inspectors are assessing how well the system responded in this period and are continuing to assess if these systems are still working to ensure access (e.g. in Mexico and Uruguay). In many countries there was little uniformity both within and among schools of online teaching and learning. In Malta the lack of uniformity in how online instruction was delivered was a problem that emerged early: in some cases, each teacher chose to engage with students using a different technology (i.e. Zoom, Teams, Skype). Although that issue was identified early on, discussions are still underway to determine how this can be solved for teachers and students; e.g. how to determine whether students can be more meaningfully engaged in online lessons (particularly if their video is turned off).

What became clear from both the presentation from Ofsted and group discussions was that in many countries schools and headteachers were given great flexibility in how online learning and teaching would be delivered. Many inspectorates in the shutdown period worked with other system colleagues to capture teacher practices in online learning and made these practice examples public for ongoing professional learning (e.g. Scotland). Gathering this evidence helped inspectors determine if teachers moved in-person lessons online using the same lesson plans or if different methods for curriculum delivery were created in this period. This type of evidence gathering helped to highlight some of the innovations from individual teachers.

Although this flexibility allowed for individual teachers to innovate, there was a distinct concern that this lack of uniformity, processes and standards resulted in wide variations in quality of online teaching and learning. Delegates noted that variations in quality are due to, for example, the IT skills of teachers themselves (a potentially new area for professional learning and upskilling), access to IT resources for teachers in their homes, and the ability for children to access and engage with online methods for sustained periods of time.

#### Looking forward to the next term: developing ways to assess blended learning

Now that many countries have more developed systems for the delivery of blended learning and most have worked through issues of access, the task for many inspectors in the next phase is to develop ways to assess blended learning. This is the largest change to inspection noted by delegates. Many inspectors in the webinar noted that they are still working through creating indicators for assessing quality of blended learning, and in early July no school system had developed published indicators.

Although many inspectors in the webinar noted that they are gathering practical evidence from schools and teachers on example lessons and curriculum delivered online, there seemed to be less engagement with the *research evidence* on blended learning methods and outcomes that could be used to create indicators for inspection. Delegates from Ofsted noted that they were undertaking a systematic review of research on blended learning and its assessment. A consideration of practical evidence, existing research evidence and new evidence from parents and learners in the initial period of online learning can help inform the development of indicators for assessing quality in this area.

### 3.2 Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds

The shift in teaching and learning to online delivery exposed vulnerabilities for children based on, for example, their socioeconomic status, home life, socio-emotional and learning needs. As noted above, the adaptations schools made for home learning were dependent on the ability for learners to access the internet reliably and have IT equipment, and in most countries school systems worked to provide some form of teaching and learning for students who do not have IT access (e.g. national TV outlets in Mexico). The challenges of digital delivery for vulnerable children, though admirably overcome in many country contexts, will continue to be an area of focus for inspection in the coming year.

Delegates also noted a distinct focus on assessing how children with additional support/educational needs can engage with learning in this blended style, noted by delegates from Flanders as a key addition in their inspection framework. These learners in particular may need not just educational support but behavioural and social care support that may have been inaccessible at home during the lockdown period. These support services may still be interrupted if schools do not go back full time in-person, so inspectorates may need to consider how these learners will be able to be adequately supported at home for the longer term and how to assess the quality of this support.

### 3.3 Wellbeing

Research and practice evidence being published about country lockdowns and school closures continues to assert the negative impact that this period has had on the health and wellbeing of children and young people. The disruption to pupil's lives with their peers in schools, radically altered daily routine, and insecurity about the future will mean that schools will be working with pupils in various states of unease and mental health concerns. Children from challenging home environments and those interacting with social services before the period of lockdown may be coming back to school with more pressing needs than before, and children previously unconnected to services may be in greater need of support. There was also a feeling amongst delegates that wellbeing curriculum can be enhanced as a response to the challenges brought on by the pandemic for students. Inspectors on this webinar (e.g Ireland, Scotland, Wales) noted that many will be adding to or enhancing their inspection frameworks to assess pupil wellbeing, school wellbeing support, and the teaching of wellbeing via socio-emotional skills in the coming months.

### 3.4 Formative assessment

Without formal examinations and 'regular' inspection activities, the value of formative assessment of pupils from their teachers has come to the fore. Teachers will have had to think of new ways to assess student progress via online delivery methods during school shutdowns, and in a blended learning context these types of assessments will likely continue. These assessments will also be a more notable way for schools to assess the impact of blended learning and make course corrections if needed. Wales and Scotland are working together on a framework for understanding quality in blended learning via formative assessment.

If formative assessments will comprise a larger part of the assessment of school quality overall, inspectorates will need to consider more formal standards for incorporating these types of assessments into their inspection frameworks and activities. Will school systems need to introduce new uniform standards for formative assessment during the year for blended learning? How will the results of these assessments help shape teaching and learning online and offline?

Delegates also raised the issue of school self-evaluation of student and school progress in this period in the absence of the 'traditional' data used for inspection. This issue was raised as a potential option

in Flanders but the Ministry of Education rejected this proposal as it would cause further administrative work for schools. This highlights the balancing act of inspectorates in this period as they consider adapted processes to assess quality while considering the challenges facing school administrators.

### 3.5 Assessing educational quality

The new context of teaching and learning in this period has necessitated a rethinking of 'educational quality' more broadly, according to participants. Questions on how to assess the quality of learning that took place over the previous term abound, particularly as the 'normal' modes of assessment were halted altogether (in the case of most exams). School systems are aiming to learn lessons from this period to inform quality indicators for blended learning in the future. In addition to the discussions around formative assessment (see 2.4), participants also discussed the curriculum and voices of parents and pupils as potential new or reframed priorities for inspection.

#### 3.5.1 Curriculum

The changes to inspectors' work have also further illuminated a (some say necessary) turn back towards a focus on curriculum rather than pupil progress via examinations. For some inspectorates this focus is an extension of a shift in their framework already towards curriculum; in Wales, for example, their 'regular' inspection activities were already planned to be halted in the 2020/2021 school year following the introduction of new curriculum and Ofsted's new 2019 framework places a greater focus on assessing curriculum implementation. Other countries, however, may need to drastically shift their work towards an assessment of curriculum in the coming months.

#### 3.5.2 Voices of children and their parents

In the last few months of school disruption, parents have had to take a large active role in their child's learning. The success of learning at home is shaped by the ability of parents to engage with their children and teachers in the online space, their own literacy and skills, and, for some, the ability to juggle home learning while also working themselves. Many parents will therefore have a strong understanding of how their child is engaging with learning online and can provide insights to inspectorates on the quality of teaching and learning. Because there were very little assessment criteria for blended learning for schools and teachers when the shift to online learning began, many Inspectorates are considering how to incorporate the voices of parents in their assessment of schools during lockdown but in ongoing inspection. Some inspectorates (eg. Ireland & Flanders) are increasing their focus on parent voice in interim inspections. Strengthening the relationship between parents and schools is a process that needs to be carefully managed to ensure students are learning at home in the next period – one way to build trust between schools and parents is to elevate their voices and evidence from this unique period into inspection activities.

Schools and school systems can also consider building on existing mechanisms or creating new mechanisms to elevate the voices of pupils themselves. In many school systems there was a stated desire in policy documents to elevate student voice pre-pandemic: this crisis may provide an opportunity for systems to develop processes to make these policy aims a reality in practice.

### 3.6 Learning Loss

It was anticipated early in this crisis that engagement with online and blended learning through the shutdown period would be shaped by a variety of contextual and household factors. Therefore, the scale of learning loss will vary amongst pupils. Nearly all delegates noted that a key priority as inspections restart is working with schools to understand the extent of learning loss amongst their pupils (particularly vulnerable pupils noted above). In some country contexts this work will align

primarily with an advice and improvement function rather than a 'control' function, particularly as inspectorates in some countries may be working with schools to develop plans to mitigate learning loss in the coming term. Learning loss likely occurred for most students in this period (although this is not yet quantified, see next section), given emerging evidence that most students on average engaged with learning for very little time per week.

Delegates noted two aspects of learning loss for inspectorates to consider in the next period: learning loss based on the portion of curriculum that was not taught during shutdown, and learning loss based on the change to the habit of learning. Learning loss from missing aspects of the curriculum is being addressed variably in different countries and can generally be assessed using standard tools of assessment as inspectorates and schools return. Understanding changes to the habit of learning and attitudes to learning is, however, an aspect of learning that may not currently be captured in existing frameworks. Representatives from Scotland noted this nuance, and a Flanders participant noted an interest in her inspectorate on understanding children's 'self-regulated' learning. Finally delegates also indicated that we might need to widen our view of this period as one only of 'loss', as pupils may have gained new skills, particularly in using technology, and some students may have been better served by learning individually. For most delegates, however, there was distinct concern about how they can be used in an improvement role as schools consider how to mitigate learning loss in the next term and eventually assess the success of these learning recovery strategies.

#### 4. Concluding remarks and questions for webinar 3

The second webinar highlighted a number of key priorities for inspectorates. We have detailed these in the previous sections of the report. While common priorities were identified, national contexts, cultures, values and beliefs means that inspectorates are likely to adopt a range of approaches and practices to address these priorities. The emerging nature of inspection practices is the focus of the third webinar in this series and the following questions might serve as a stimulus for discussion:

- Should there be a return to previous inspection cycles/practices? If so, when should this happen?
- What new practices are required to optimise 'inspection for improvement' in the post-COVID-19 era?
- How might inspectorates undertake an assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on equity and social justice, a so called 'equity audit'?
- What indicators of wellbeing will inspectorates need to develop in the post-COVID-19 era?
- What indicators might be developed to assess the quality of blended and online learning?
- How can the voices of all stakeholders inform the development of new practices in the post-COVID-19 era?

## Appendix: Country specific approaches and priorities

Country	Inspection activity and priorities for inspection
Belgium (Flanders)	<p>Inspectorate is planning for different scenarios, calling these 'green', 'red' and 'orange'. The same framework will be used in all scenarios but, in the red and orange scenario's including shorter visits (1 or 2 days instead of one week for school visits) and only looking at a small set of standards. The standards in the red and orange scenario will include an evaluation of how the school is teaching/supporting vulnerable children and the organizational capacity of the school. The Inspectorate will choose 3 out of the regular 7 standards and is still working on the tools to be used in these inspections and how to measure these standards. The framework and the standards remain the same, only <i>how</i> information is collected will be different. Within the standards the Inspectorate would have to look at different practices though, such as how students are accessing online learning, how feedback is provided online, where teaching is becoming more individualized.</p> <p>In the first phase the Flemish inspectorate surveyed all schools with follow-up visits/interviews of a sample of school leaders. This monitoring has provided the Inspectorate of Education with an understanding of how schools are adapting their teaching and learning and what best practice looks like, and they are using the information to inform the next phase of inspection to evaluate new approaches to teaching and learning, but within the regular framework.</p> <p>The main challenge for the Flemish Inspectorate is how to collect information when school visits and regular ways of triangulating information are not possible. The Inspectorate is considering the types of documents they will ask from schools (given that the Ministry has said that administrative burden needs to be limited and the Inspectorate is not allowed to ask for a school self-evaluation), and whether/how to do online interviews with parents and students. Delegates noted additional areas for quality inspection on learning of vulnerable students (including those with additional support needs) and how children are engaging with blended learning (including how children are learning).</p>
Chile	<p>Quality Agency is currently rethinking their inspection framework, but unsure when regular inspections will restart. They will use the regular standards as these are set in law. However, how the agency will approach schools and measure the standards will change. For example, the questions to schools will change and the agency is also going to be less judgmental and use a more dialogic approach to come to an agreement with schools on what they need and what the best way to improve is.</p> <p>The next phase of inspection, when schools reopen and inspections restart will be informed by the first monitoring phase which included a 3-stage approach of evaluating current practice in schools and providing them with guidance (see first paper). The focus will be on the teaching and learning and to understand the variation between schools in how they ensured continuation of teaching during the closure. The agency will continue (as was developed in the 3-stage approach) to provide the schools who need support with guidance and practical tools they can use in their teaching. The agency is, by law required to visit/inspect weak schools so they will concentrate on the schools that are not providing a high quality level of teaching.</p>

England	<p>Ofsted will be conducting ‘assurance visits’ to schools beginning in September, with the aim for normal inspection activities to resume in January 2021. In the interim period much of the focus of these assurance will be aiming to answer the question, ‘Is the school system getting back on it’s feet?’; information from schools about the barriers to this process will then be shared for parents and then in reports for national government. Ofsted will aim to only go into schools physically that have safeguarding issues or issues with leadership breakdown: the rest of this activity will aim to be conducted remotely.</p> <p>Their framework was recently revised after a long process of research and consultation so the inspectorate will not be reconsidering a new framework in a major way. The new framework puts a more significant focus on curriculum which will prove to be more important in this period. However, delegates noted that there will be additional priorities in the coming period on assessing the impact of learning loss, wellbeing and the challenges faced by vulnerable pupils.</p> <p>Although English schools will be going back full time and in-person, the research unit at Ofsted have been working on a systematic review of research on blended learning and its assessment. This is in recognition that blended learning may have to return at some point this year dependent on the public health context.</p>
Germany (Hamburg)	<p>Schools reopened in Hamburg in April, but teaching happened in smaller groups. Thus, students were in school only between 1/5 and ½ of the regular time. In this time the school inspectorate conducted a survey on learning in the future (see results below). Now schools are open again in normal group size. Classes of the same age are pooled to one cohort. Students of different cohorts have to keep distance. Schools try to separate different cohorts as much as possible with different methods, e.g. cohort specific starting time, entrances, sections of classrooms and break times, to minimize the extend of possible outspreads. Students and teachers have to wear masks when they are outside the classroom or cannot keep distance.</p> <p>Hamburg suspended regular inspection until February 2021. Seven schools want to finish inspection which was distrusted by school closure. For these schools the school inspectorate slightly adapted the procedures to the current situation, however, the general objectives remained the same. On the one hand, they developed a hygiene concept for the inspection, which includes rules for wearing masks, keeping distance and for example mixing different cohorts as little as possible when observing lessons. On the other hand, they adapted their methods slightly with the aim to react on the current situation but still capture an overall picture of the school. For instance, aspects which cannot be seen or asked in lesson observation due to distance rules will be asked additionally in interviews. Questionnaires now include an entrance sentence where parents, teachers and students are asked to also consider the time before under regular routines to avoid a conflict if the situation under COVID-19 changed the picture of the school in specific aspects. If participants in the interviews talk mainly about the time since school closure, they will be asked about the situation before. This serves as a comparison horizon which will be helpful for a sensitive presentation of the results. Thus, the general mind-set of the inspectorate is, that although schools were disrupted by the pandemic, specific standards measured by the inspectorate should be fulfilled. Overall, most standards measured by the inspectorate are quite stable, e.g. cooperation between teachers, school leadership, or school developing concepts. With these seven schools the adaptations will be tested and possibly adjust after gaining experience. The adaptations are also very flexible to react on changing orders from the public authority.</p>

Ireland	<p>Current activity (July 2020) focused on contacting schools to review their spring semester (looking back) to identify best practices and areas of concern. Based on these conversations the Inspectorates published an FAQ to respond to these concerns. In September initially schools will be asked to focus on wellbeing, and teaching assessments and learning. The school is to focus on one of those areas and the inspectors will work with the schools to support their work in relation to those issues. A support and advisory role will therefore remain prominent. The inspectorate will be using the same framework and is currently looking at which elements will be best suited for constructive dialogue with schools as they reopen. Delegates noted additional elements to the framework in wellbeing, blended learning and the voice of parents. The latter element was already present in their framework but will be highlighted further in the upcoming period.</p>
Malta	<p>In Malta, the lack of uniformity in how online instruction was delivered was a problem that emerged early: in some cases, each teacher chose to engage with students using a different technology (i.e. Zoom, Teams, Skype). This issue was identified early on and discussions are still underway to determine how this can be solved for teachers and students. Questions are still being raised on how to determine whether students were meaningfully engaging in online lessons (particularly if their video was turned off). Malta's inspection framework was drafted during the mandatory closure of schools and it is envisaged that it will be implemented when the COVID situation settles down. Currently Education Officers are ensuring that Educational Institutions (0 – 3 years), which have reopened since June 2020, are complying with the National Standards and those issued by the Department of Health. They are also discussing their role in schools when they reopen in September. Malta has worked on developing guidelines for schools, educators and parents on online/blended teaching/learning and are planning to incorporate indicators which allow them to measure the quality of blended models. Given the challenges of online delivery in the spring, there is a distinct concern for learning loss for vulnerable pupils.</p>
Mexico	<p>Inspectors are assessing how well the system responded in this period and are continuing to assess if these systems are still working to ensure access of online tools. Although the inspection processes will be in a more distinct advisory phase, there will be a focus on ensuring schools are reaching pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.</p>
Netherlands	<p>The Dutch Inspectorate normally inspects school boards and particularly how they govern and assure the quality of their schools.</p> <p><u>Covid-19 monitor</u></p> <p>During the time schools were closed due to Covid-19, the Dutch inspectorate of education decided to collect information from both school boards and school leaders about the way they were handling the situation. In the second phase of the interview questions were mainly focused on restarting and partial reopening of the schools and how schools monitored the performances and well-being of their students. Inspectors gathered information about ideas and plans on organizing the actual reopening of schools. They also gathered information about what choices school leaders and governors would make regarding to the curriculum; which subjects they were able to teach online and which subjects ( such as PE) were virtually impossible to teach online. Another topic they questioned, was how they were planning to trace possible learning gaps of students. Last but not least, inspectors asked them to share 'lessons learned'.</p>

	<p>So far, there have been two rounds of calls and a third round will take place in October.</p> <p><u>Adjustments and current supervision in the Netherlands</u>  Regular supervision has been largely adjusted. It is still unclear how long this form of supervision will continue. Most supervisory activities are now carried out remotely. Only a limited number of inspections will take place on site. Moreover, the board inspections that were planned have also been limited as much as possible. However, in some cases (in which inspectors expect remote inspection will not be sufficient), regular on site inspection visits will take place. Normally we also conduct a number of so called ‘thematic inspections’; most of these have now been put on hold.</p>
Portugal	<p>Inspectorate has been focused on the evaluating the quality of online provision. They used the regular framework, and particularly standards on ‘teaching and learning’ but adapted this to online teaching, particularly to evaluate how distance teaching and learning is organized and delivered and the outcomes of this. Schools were asked to evaluate this internally at first and provide the Inspectorate with information which they complemented with evaluation visits to a sample of 100 schools. These evaluations will comprise a national report.</p> <p>For next year, the Inspectorate is preparing for three scenarios: 1) in-situ teaching where schools go back to normal, 2) distance learning only, 3) blended modes (in-situ with online). In the case of the second scenario the Inspectorate will consolidate the current changes to the framework and add indicators on how to best support children who are not accessing online learning/are vulnerable. The traditional framework for in-situ teaching will also be used to evaluate the third scenario (blended modes of teaching and learning) but specific adaptations of the indicators/data collection still need to be developed (including how children are supported and measuring the outcomes of online/blended teaching). The largest question to be answered in the coming period is how to measure the outcomes of online/blended models of teaching and learning.</p>
Scotland	<p>The inspectorate has continued in an advisory function led by their PRAISE framework for school engagement; in this case it will be used to help to address issues and improvement rather than to assign grades. Many inspectorates in the shutdown period worked with other system colleagues to capture teacher practices in online learning and made these practice examples public for ongoing professional learning (e.g. Scotland). In the autumn inspection will continue to work in an advisory capacity rather than grading schools. In the coming period additional elements of the framework will include a stronger focus on wellbeing (of students and teachers); assessing the needs of vulnerable pupils and how the school is addressing those needs; and understanding quality in blended learning via formative assessment. This latter issue is being address via a collaboration with inspectorates in Wales to create a framework for assessing quality in blended learning.</p>
Turkey	<p>Distance education began on 31 August 2020. On September 21, face-to-face education will begin in classrooms recommended by the Science Board in a phased and diluted manner. in the 2019-2020 academic year, students (primary school, middle school and high school) will show their grades in the first semester as end - of-year grades. There were no online exams for these levels in pandemic period.</p>

	<p>Inspectorates are now on duty to support provincial directorates of National Education but have not been inspecting/visiting schools in this period. They are working provincial directorates of National Education to understand what schools need to be reopening in August, what problems they are currently facing and what they need from the Ministry and the state to safely open. There will be concern about the of students learning level because they have distance education in the second education period. There is no any real control mechanism to measure their real ' attainment and feedback in this period.</p>
Uruguay	<p>Schools were closed after only being open for one week at the start of the new school year; they are now reopening for smaller classes and groups. Prior to the pandemic there was already huge investment in platforms/IT but access varies greatly across socio-economic indicators and a major challenge was/is reaching all of the students who need it. Activity is focused on liaison function, primarily, to capture what is currently being done in schools in order to provide information to policy-makers.</p>
Wales	<p>Estyn will continue in their advisory and improvement role in the upcoming school year as was originally planned pre-COVID due to a change in the curriculum nationally. When schools reopen, Estyn will ask schools how they have engaged with learners during the closure of the school and how they have continued teaching and learning. They will also be looking at the approach to remote and blended learning and how they have evaluated their models and adapted their approach in collaboration/engagement with parents and other stakeholders, given that Estyn has received complaints from parents who are not satisfied with some schools' offer of online/blended teaching. They are working with the Scottish inspectorate on developing a framework to assess online/blended learning. Estyn will not do individual school inspections (these had already been suspended for a year to allow for the development of the new framework), but particularly collect information for national monitoring.</p>