



**Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP**  
Secretary of State

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**Secondment of Ofsted employees and Ofsted Inspectors to private providers**

I understand that it is your wish, whilst routine inspection activity is suspended due to the current pandemic, to second Ofsted employees (including Her Majesty's Inspectors) and allocate Ofsted contracted staff (including Ofsted Inspectors) for a temporary period to support other government departments, local authorities and private education and care providers (including schools, early years providers and children's homes). I confirm that I support your wish to do this, as it will assist those agencies who are working hard to provide support where it is most needed. I believe it is the best use of your resources during the pandemic.

You already have the legal power to provide assistance in this way to other public authorities under para 8 of Schedule 13 to the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Public authority is defined under para 2 of Schedule 13. However, this does not include private providers of education or care.

Therefore, I am using my power under section 118(4) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to assign an additional function to you. At present I envisage that this function will be assigned for the duration of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The additional function is:

That you provide advice or assistance to service providers that you register, inspect or regulate, and other government departments and their agencies as appropriate, for the purpose of enabling them to operate effectively during the period when routine inspections have been paused temporarily as a consequence of the coronavirus pandemic.

In terms of prioritising and allocating your resource, I would ask that you work

with REACT, the Regional Education and Children Teams that we have jointly set up and of which your Regional Directors are part. These teams will enable us to identify which authorities or providers need specific support and prioritise resource where they are needed most, particularly for vulnerable children.

To avoid any doubt, I confirm that, because of the assignment of this additional function, you will be able to enter into arrangements with contracted inspectors to provide advice or assistance to the education and care providers using your existing power under para 11(1) of Schedule 12 to the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

I am copying this letter to the Education Select Committee and the National Audit Office for information.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G. Williamson', with a large circular flourish at the end.

**Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP**  
**Secretary of State for Education**