🧭 Overview of the Governor Training – Understanding Changes to Ofsted Inspections

- Purpose: Explain the **new Ofsted inspection framework**, reduce anxiety, and clarify expectations for governors.
- Emphasis: Inspectors assess the **school overall**, not individual governors—but governors' understanding of the school is important.
- Inspections typically happen **every ~4 years** (earlier if concerns arise).

🔄 Key Changes in the Ofsted Framework

- ❌ **No overall single grade** anymore.
- ✅ Judgements are made **separately across areas** using a **"secure fit" model** (must meet all criteria).
- 🔍 Greater focus on:
  - **Consistency across the school**
  - **Case studies and learning walks**
  - **Use of data to support findings**
- 📄 Inspectors rely on **existing evidence** (no new paperwork expected).

🗓️ What Inspections Look Like

- Short notice: usually **1 day (up to 3 days max)**.
- Typically a **2-day inspection**.
- Process:
  1. Notification call + discussion with headteacher
  2. Evidence gathering (lessons, data, meetings)
  3. Meeting with governors
  4. Feedback at end of Day 2

📊 Areas Schools Are Judged On

There are **9 evaluation areas**, including:

- Safeguarding (met / not met – most critical)
- Inclusion (new focus area)
- Curriculum & teaching
- Achievement
- Attendance & behaviour

- Personal development & wellbeing
- Leadership & governance
- Plus EYFS / Sixth form (where applicable)

Grading scale:

- **Exceptional → Strong → Secure → Improving → Attention needed → Causing concern → Urgent improvement**

👉 Important: **Safeguarding is the key threshold**—if not met, overall outcomes are limited.

🎯 Key Themes in Inspections

- **Inclusion is central** (especially SEND and disadvantaged pupils).
- Focus on **bottom 20% / least advantaged pupils**.
- Strong emphasis on:
    - **Early reading**
    - **Attendance**
    - **Wellbeing (pupils and staff)**

📈 Role of Data

Governors must:

- Understand school data (not just the data governor).
- Be familiar with:
    - **IDSR (Inspection Data Summary Report)**
    - **Self-Evaluation Form (SEF)**
- Be able to:
    - Explain trends over **3 years**
    - Tell the **story behind the data**
    - Show how data informs improvement priorities

🤦 Role of Governors in Inspection

Inspectors expect governors to:

- Know the school well
- Provide **strategic oversight** (not operational detail)
- Show:
    - **Challenge and support**

    - Understanding of priorities
    - Awareness of strengths & weaknesses
- Evidence comes from:
    - Minutes
    - Visits
    - Discussions with leaders

💡 Practical Advice for Governors

Before Inspection

- Know your:
    - Data
    - School priorities
    - SEF and improvement plan
- Ensure documentation and minutes show **challenge and impact**
- Prepare who will answer specific topics
- Consider a **mock Ofsted**

During Inspection

- Be confident and **authentic (not rehearsed)**
- Expect the question: **"How do you know?"**
- Use evidence:
    - Visits
    - Reports
    - First-hand experience
- Stay **strategic** (not operational)
- Refer to notes if needed

After Inspection

- Support leadership with next steps and action plans
- Recognise staff effort (inspection is intense)

🗣️ Insights from Real Inspections

- Meetings with governors are typically **~1 hour**.
- Inspectors:

    - Look closely at **body language and confidence**
    - May ask **unexpected or niche questions**
- Experiences vary widely between schools.
- Strong preparation and **clear evidence** make a big difference.
- Emotional impact on staff can be significant after inspection.

⚠️ **Common Pitfalls**

- Confusing **strategic vs operational roles**
- Not being able to evidence claims
- Weak understanding of data
- Inconsistent messages between governors and leaders

✅ **Key Takeaways**

- **Safeguarding and inclusion are critical priorities**
- Governors must be **well-informed and evidence-based**
- Inspections focus on **consistency, data, and real practice**
- Confidence comes from **knowing your school deeply**
- Authentic, strategic contributions are more important than perfect answers