



**THIRD SPACE
LEARNING**

Ofsted Deep Dive: Secondary Maths

Preparation and discussion template to help
secondary school leaders prepare for maths deep
dive questions

SLT Guides

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What's in this resource and how do I use it?

The following questions are taken from those that have turned up most frequently in recent Ofsted Deep Dives, as provided to us by teachers from inspected schools, following the current Ofsted Education Inspection Framework.

Many of these questions apply across other subject areas; it is likely that you will be asked to respond to similar questions like these, with more or less emphasis depending on your school's context.

This document provides a framework for preparation and discussion. Use the Red Amber Green rating to rate your own readiness, and make sure that you have discussed or at least thought about the questions in each section. A record of your discussion notes and evidence will be useful when it comes to inspection day.



If you're looking for more general guidance regarding the 2019 Ofsted Framework and what it may mean for your school, including recommendations on designing and developing your curriculum:

Read: [all articles on Ofsted](#)¹

Ofsted deep dive questions

1. Schemes of Work/Curriculum

Questions	Discussed	Discussion Notes	RAG
How off the shelf is the scheme you use and how does it link to the National Curriculum?			
How do class teachers know what went before in previous years?			
What is your pedagogy in KS3 subjects?			
What schemes, if any, do you follow?			
How is your curriculum coverage progressive throughout the school?			
What are the strengths/areas of development in your subject?			
How do you promote British values in your curriculum?			
How do you engage parents in the curriculum or in maths?			

2. Progress

Questions	Discussed	Discussion Notes	RAG
How do you make sure that children who get 'stuck' feel supported in lessons? What is in place for these children?			
What is in place for the children who are stuck?			
How do you fill gaps in maths and decide on maths interventions?			
How do you know this is happening across the school? How do you assess and monitor it?			
How are end of term assessments fed back into teaching and learning?			
How do class teachers know what went before in previous years?			
How do you know there is progression throughout the school? How do you ensure coverage across all year groups?			
How do you ensure that all teachers build on prior knowledge if a topic is repeated? (E.g. adding fractions)			
How do you ensure that the students are GCSE ready?			

3. Interventions

Questions	Discussed	Discussion Notes	RAG
What interventions are carried out in school?			
How are gaps in learning filled?			
What do you do to support children who are struggling?			
Are the staff conducting interventions, subject specialists or support staff?			

4. CPD Provision

Questions	Discussed	Discussion Notes	RAG
What CPD provision do you have for staff?			
How do you support new staff?			
What CPD have staff had?			
How do you ensure teachers and TAs have the required subject knowledge?			
What do you do to ensure that your teachers and TAs have up to date subject knowledge?			
What training/support have you received?			

5. Pupil Premium

Questions	Discussed	Discussion Notes	RAG
How do you provide PPG for students?			
How do you improve pupils' cultural capital (and how do you ensure it)?			
What evidence do you have of the effectiveness of your PP spending?			
What kind of oversight does your school have to ensure effective PP spend?			

6. SEND

Questions	Discussed	Discussion Notes	RAG
How are SEND pupils supported?			
How do you plan to ensure good progress?			
How do you know this is happening across the school?			
How do you assess and monitor it?			
How do you know there is progression throughout the school?			

7. Workload & Well-being

Questions	Discussed	Discussion Notes	RAG
Do you feel supported (by curriculum leaders and senior leaders)?			
Do you feel you have been given all the tools you need to do this role?			
What support do you provide in a leadership role to ensure a good work life balance for staff?			
How do you support the teachers?			
How do you support new staff?			
What training/support have you received?			

8. Lesson Observations

Questions	Discussed	Discussion Notes	RAG
What will we see in the lesson observation?			
How will the lesson fit in with the overview for the subject and subject areas?			
If a teaching assistant is present, what would you expect them to do during the lesson?			
Is the correct vocabulary being used?			
Does the teacher's questioning encourage learning and enquiry?			
Is the teacher's subject knowledge good?			
Are the children learning new knowledge/ skills?			

9. Questions for Senior Leaders

Questions	Discussed	Discussion Notes	RAG
What are your strengths and weaknesses?			
Which objectives were embedded and revisited?			
When we walk around, what will we see being taught in maths?			
What support do you provide in a leadership role to ensure a good work life balance for staff?			
What do you do when a new child arrives?			

10. Questions for Subject Leaders

Questions	Discussed	Discussion Notes	RAG
What links are there between your subject and the rest of the curriculum?			
What resources do you have? Do you feel supported and that you have been given all the tools you need to do this role?			
How do you use the community, trips, visitors in your subject?			
What are the strengths/areas for development in your subject?			
What do staff think of your subject? What do children think of your subject?			
How are gaps bridged between each key stage?			
If all classes are mixed ability - how do you ensure challenge, if classes are in sets - how do you ensure lower sets are reaching their target grades, is there scope for students to change set throughout the year?			
How do we know where the gaps are?			
How is homework set?			
What's your vision for maths? What aspirations do you have for these children?			

11. Questions for Students

Questions	Discussed	Discussion Notes	RAG
Do you enjoy maths?			
Are you challenged in maths?			
Do you get help in maths?			
How do you know what you are learning today?			
What would you change about maths?			
How do you use maths in other subjects?			

12. Post-pandemic Questions

Questions	Discussed	Discussion Notes	RAG
How has the curriculum been affected by lockdown?			
How are you prioritising the key content?			
What was the home learning like in maths?			

References

¹ <https://thirdspacelearning.com/blog/ofsted-crib-sheets/>

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Further reading

Ofsted publishes research review on mathematics education - [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)




National curriculum in England: mathematics programmes of study - [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

Support for Secondary Teachers - [NCETM](https://www.ncetm.org.uk)




Improving Mathematics in Key Stages 2 and 3 - [EEF](https://www.eef.org.uk)

Do you have a group of pupils who need a boost in maths this term?

Each pupil could receive a personalised lesson every week from our specialist 1-to-1 maths tutors.

-  Raise attainment
-  Plug any gaps or misconceptions
-  Boost confidence

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