



## **Response to Ofsted framework. April 2019**

We support the new judgement on the 'quality of education', as it places an increased emphasis on how young people learn. We hope the new judgement will provide a renewed focus on the acquisition and retention of knowledge, and the application of this knowledge for skills development. We commend the use of education research evidence to inform the new framework, and the explicit mention of workload, critical to retaining good teachers. To further improve the 'quality of education' judgement, we recommend that:

### **1. There should be consistent references to all core subjects throughout the framework.**

While we support the new focus for inspection on schools delivering a broad and balanced curriculum, the higher number of references to literacy and phonics in the grade descriptors is at odds with this intent. There is a risk that primary schools will think that reading and phonics are Ofsted's main priority to the exclusion of mathematics or science. Wellcome and Ofsted's own research shows there is a lack of emphasis on science in some primary schools [1, 2].

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### **2. The impact of school culture on teacher professional learning should be included in the judgement.**

We believe that the framework will drive an increased need for high quality, subject-specific professional development for all teachers. Ofsted have rightly raised the profile of using educational research evidence to guide curriculum development, as well as the importance of connecting new and existing knowledge to develop understanding and skills, while managing misconceptions. Based on our own work on education and neuroscience [3] and Wellcome's CPD challenge pilot [4], we know that teachers will need significant support to interpret research evidence appropriately and implement it successfully in the classroom.

We commend Ofsted's recognition that there will be an increased need, under the new framework, for school leaders to support teachers teaching outside their main area of expertise but this should not be at the expense of all teachers receiving high quality, subject-specific CPD.

1. <https://wellcome.ac.uk/sites/default/files/state-of-the-nation-report-of-uk-science-education.pdf>
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/intention-and-substance-primary-school-science-curriculum-research>
3. <https://wellcome.ac.uk/what-we-do/our-work/understanding-learning-education-and-neuroscience>
4. <https://www.shu.ac.uk/about-us/academic-departments/institute-of-education/research/projects/the-wellcome-cpd-challenge>