

Vanessa Ward

Vanessa joined ISI in February 2021 in this newly merged role. After graduating from the University of Edinburgh with MA (Hons) in English Literature, Vanessa attended the College of Law in London and Guildford before qualifying as a solicitor with first class honours. She practised for a number of years in London, specialising in commercial and media law.

Having retrained as a teacher, her career in education leadership includes the headship of one of the highest performing state schools in the UK. While a headteacher, Vanessa was a member and elected vice-chair of the local authority schools forum. Vanessa joined Ofsted as one of Her Majesty's Inspectors Education (HMI), where she led inspections in both the state and independent sectors. Vanessa was seconded to the newly-formed Unregistered Schools Taskforce, which conducted criminal investigations into illegal educational provision.

Vanessa also has commercial experience building a successful education consultancy practice supporting school improvement. She has combined this with her work as a School Improvement Partner (SIP) for Achieving for Children in Richmond and Kingston local authorities, while continuing her work with Ofsted as an Ofsted Inspector. Vanessa has also served on a school governing body as both foundation and parent governor, including chairing the governors' personnel committee.

