

COUNTRY PROFILE

Country name: England

Structure of inspectorate

Ofsted is the **national inspectorate for England**. Ofsted inspects, regulates and reports on education and children's social care across **eight regions**.

Age of inspectorate

The **Education (Schools) Act 1992** created Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) a non-ministerial government department). Ofsted's role was extended to include teachers' education in 1994, early years in 2001, colleges in 2001; all further education and skills in 2007, inspection and regulation of children's social care in 2007.

Size*

Ofsted directly employed inspectors: 788

Contracted Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) (these are current headteachers or college principals): 2000

Administrative, professional and technical employed staff: 939

*Numbers correct as at September 2019

Remits

Ofsted **inspects** schools, special schools, non-association independent schools, early years and childcare, children's social care services, post 16 colleges, further education and skills providers, services for children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, initial teacher education, education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. Ofsted also **regulates** a range of early years and children's social care services.

Please note, this profile will focus mainly on school inspection. To find out about inspection and regulation of other remit areas (as detailed in above paragraph) please refer to further reading list at the end of this document.

Unit of inspection

Ofsted inspects individual schools, early years settings, colleges, and other types of educational institutions.

Ofsted has also conducted 'focused inspections' of academies within multi-academy trusts and produced inspection outcome letters with findings and recommendations.

Ofsted does not inspect individual teachers or subject departments.

Ofsted inspects local authority services for children in need of help and protection, children in care, care leavers and separately, children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What is your strapline?

Raising standards, improving lives

Relationship with government

Ofsted is a **non-ministerial** government department and is headed by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI). It is **independent and impartial**; and reports to parliamentary select committees, publishes HMCI's Annual Report, is subject to parliamentary questions and produces an Annual Report and Accounts (ARA). The ARA sets out what Ofsted has achieved with the funding provided by Parliament

Accountability

Ofsted's **inspection work is underpinned by legislation** in the Education Act 2005, Education and Inspections Act 2006, Childcare Act 2006, Education and Skills Act 2008, Care Standards Act 2000 and The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

Evaluation process [for school inspections]

Self-evaluation

Ofsted does not require school self-evaluation to be graded or provided in a specific format. Any assessment that is provided should be part of the education providers business processes and not generated solely for inspection purposes.

What do you examine during inspection?

Education inspectors gather evidence by:

- observing lessons/training/teaching
- scrutinising pupils' or learners' work
- discussions with pupils, learners, teachers, staff and leaders
- scrutinising data, records and documentation
- looking at safeguarding, equality and inclusion
- looking at quality of any alternative provision
- seeking views of parents, carers and other stakeholders

- sampling 'deep dive' of a subject area.

Do you have an inspection framework? Is this a quality or compliance model?

The **education inspection framework (EIF)** sets out how Ofsted inspects schools, further education and skills providers, non-association independent schools and registered early years settings. It sets out the principles that apply to inspection and the main judgements that inspectors make when conducting inspections.

EIF inspections may take the form of a monitoring visit or a full or short inspection. **Full inspections** result in a **graded 'overall effectiveness' judgement** based on evaluating the education provision on the following areas using a **four-point scale**:

- Quality of education (by evaluating intent, implementation and impact of the curriculum)
- Personal development
- Behaviour and attitudes
- Leadership and management

Ofsted inspects **schools** under section 5 or section 8 of the Education Act 2005:

- 'section 8' – short inspections of schools that were judged good at their previous inspection and that are not the subject of concern. The school remains 'good' unless we find otherwise on inspection
- 'section 5' (full) inspections of all other schools
 - Currently less than 'good'
 - Already flagged as declining

Inspection time and resource

School inspections do not last longer than two days and usually given half a day's notice of inspection, unless the inspection is unannounced.

The **size of the inspection team** will vary according to the size and nature of the school: 1-2 inspectors for primary, 3-5 for secondary.

Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and **Ofsted Inspectors** (who in most cases are serving school leaders who inspect for Ofsted for an agreed number of days each year) carry out the inspections. All inspectors have been trained to, and assessed against, Ofsted's standards.

HMI are directly employed by Ofsted to lead a range of inspection and improvement activity. Required qualifications/experience include:

- teaching qualification

- 'at least five years' leadership experience in education at a senior level'
- 'must be able to draw on experiences of leading good and outstanding provision'.

Ofsted Inspectors are contracted by Ofsted. They are usually current headteachers and commonly undertake less complex inspections.

Frequency of inspections

Ofsted uses **risk assessment** to ensure that its approach to inspection is proportionate and so that it can focus its efforts where it can have the greatest impact.

Schools are inspected every three to five years. Until September 2021, schools **judged to be outstanding** in their overall effectiveness at their most recent inspection have been **exempt** from inspection. However, exempt schools have still been subject to risk assessment.

Schools **judged to be good** at their previous inspection will normally receive a section 8 inspection approximately **every four years**.

A school judged as **requires improvement** at its last inspection is inspected again, under section 5, within a 30 months.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is **judged to be inadequate** will be deemed to be in a formal category of concern.

Ofsted inspects all newly opened schools in the first three years after they open.

A provider **judged to require improvement** at their most recent inspection will normally have a full re-inspection within 12 to 30 months of its previous inspection.

Ofsted will monitor providers **judged as inadequate** and re-inspect them within 15 months of publication of their last full inspection report.

Main business

Ofsted **regulates and registers** range of early years and children's social care services but not schools. It checks that people, premises and the services provided are suitable to care for children and young people. Ofsted issues licences to childcare and children's social care providers that meet the required standards. If Ofsted finds that providers are not meeting the required standards, it will use **enforcement powers** to ensure that they make the necessary improvements. If they are unable to meet the required standards, Ofsted will act in the interests of the children and young people in their care and suspend or cancel their registration.

For **further information** about regulation and enforcement powers, please refer to further reading at the end of this document.

Consequences of inspection

Reporting

Ofsted provides an **inspection report for every provider** it inspects, which is published on the website. Purpose of publishing reports of inspection findings is so that they can be used to **improve** the overall quality of education, training and care, so that **informed choices** can be made by those who use them (e.g. parents, carers, learners, etc), and decisions made by those **who fund them**.

Grade

Ofsted grades schools against a **four-point** grading scale:

- grade 1: outstanding
- grade 2: good
- grade 3: requires improvement
- grade 4: inadequate.

What happens following an inspection?

Grade 1 (outstanding): no further inspection scheduled (**currently exempt**). Likely to be asked to support weaker schools nationally or to take them on as new academies.

Grade 2 (good): schools normally receive a section 8 inspection approximately every four years.

Grade 3 (requires improvement): schools are inspected no later than 30 months after the inspection which judged them requires improvement.

Grade 4: (inadequate): Can be placed into category of **special measures** or **serious weaknesses**. Inadequate maintained schools subject to directive academy orders, will receive a monitoring inspection after nine months. If an academy is judged inadequate government policy is that the academy will be re-brokered into a multi-academy trust (MAT) or may be put in a new MAT if it is already part of a MAT. Inadequate academies not subject to re-brokering receive regular monitoring.

Knowledge sharing

HMCI and directors publish **commentaries** and use **social media** to share findings on specific topics or to **update stakeholders** on inspection practice. Ofsted **collects and reports** on evidence and research in different ways, including statistical analysis, surveys and thematic inspections on specific areas of interest. The **Annual Report** publication highlights important findings and trends, and sets out priorities for the coming year.

What is the stated purpose of your inspectorate?

Ofsted inspects and regulates to promote high standards in education and skills for learners of all ages, and in the care of children and young people, thereby raising standards and improving lives.

Links and sources for further information and reading

[Ofsted website home page](#)
[About Ofsted](#)

Inspection documents and guidance by remit area:

- [Early years](#) (nursery, kindergarten, childminder, etc. for children aged 0–8)
- [Schools](#) (nursery, primary, secondary, special for children and pupils aged 3–18)
- [Providers of initial teacher education](#)
- [Further education and skills](#) (colleges, vocational, apprenticeships for students aged 16+, adult learning, education in prisons, etc.)
- [Independent schools](#) (also known as private)
- [Social care](#) (children’s homes, adoption and fostering, boarding schools, residential family centres, local authority children's services, etc.)

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[Ofsted inspection reports](#)
[Education inspection framework](#)
[Annual Reports](#)
[Ofsted corporate Annual Reports and Accounts](#)
[Ofsted strategy: 2017 to 2022](#)
[Research at Ofsted](#)
[HMI recruitment website](#)
[Ofsted Inspector website](#)
[Ofsted on Twitter](#)
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[Ofsted slideshare published presentations](#)