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| **Official Statistics Release** |
| Policy area: | Children’s social care inspections and outcomes  |
| Theme: | Education, children’s services and skills  |
| Published on: | 26 June 2012 |
| Coverage: | England |
| Period covered: | 1 January 2012 to 31 March 2012 |
| Status: | **PROVISIONAL**  |
| Issued by: | Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted)Aviation House125 KingswayLondonWC2B 6SE |
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| Link to official statistics release web page: | [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/official-statistics-children%E2%80%99s-social-care-inspections-and-outcomes](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/official-statistics-children%E2%80%99s-social-care-inspections-and-outcomes) |
| Publication medium: | Ofsted website |
| Publication frequency: |  |
| Next publication date: |  |

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Introduction

This official statistics release reports on children’s social care inspections that occurred between 1 January and 31 March 2012 under the Children Act 1989 or the Care Standards Act 2000. These statistics are based on provisional data and are subject to change.

**Key findings**

**Inspections and outcomes of children’s homes**

* The period 1 January to 31 March 2012 is the fourth quarter since the introduction of the new Ofsted framework for inspection of children’s homes. Provisional statistics indicate there were 86 full inspections of children’s homes during this period[[1]](#footnote-1).
* Between 1 January and 31 March 2012, 12 of these 86 homes were outstanding for their *Overall effectiveness*. 48 were good, 21 were satisfactory and five were inadequate.
* *Outcomes for children and young people* and *Quality of care* received the highest level of good or better inspection judgements: 64 and 65 respectively out of the 86 homes inspected.
* *Leadership and management* was the weakest of the sub-judgements, with 35 of the homes found to be either satisfactory (29), or inadequate (six), in this regard.
* The percentage of homes receiving a good or better *Overall effectiveness* judgement in the quarter was lower than in previous quarters and this might, in part, be due to the fact that almost 40% of the homes inspected were newly registered homes.
* During the January to March quarter there were more interim inspections – 1,326 compared to 189 in the previous quarter. Of these 1,326 interim inspections, 800 (60%) made good progress and 354 (27%) made satisfactory progress. However, 156 (12%) made inadequate progress. 16 (1%) did not receive an inspection outcome as children were not accommodated in the children’s home at the time of inspection.

* There were six full inspections of residential special schools, that have a children’s home registration due to providing accommodation for children in their care for more than 295 days per year. Four were good or better for *Overall effectiveness* with two satisfactory.
* There were two full inspections of secure children’s homes during the quarter January to March 2012. They were both good for overall effectiveness.
* For the year of inspection activity, between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2012, there were 1,892 full inspections of children’s homes. Twenty six percent were outstanding, 54% were good, 18% were satisfactory and 2% were inadequate (see Chart 1).
* Between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2012 the former government office regions with the highest percentage of good or better *Overall effectiveness* grades in children’s homes were the North West, West Midlands and South East (84%) while London had the lowest percentage with 70% (see Map 1).

**Inspections and outcomes of other social care provision**

* There were inspections of 10 local authority fostering services during the January to March quarter. Two were outstanding and eight were good for *Overall effectiveness*.
* Thirty inspections of independent fostering agencies took place during the quarter. 10 were outstanding; 12 were good; seven satisfactory and one inadequate.
* There were 23 inspections of local authority adoption services during the quarter. Five were outstanding, 11 were good, six were satisfactory and one was inadequate for *Overall effectiveness*.
* Five boarding schools wereinspected during the January to March quarter for the *Overall effectiveness* of care provided. One was good and four were inadequate.
* Fifty residential special schools were inspected during the quarter. 21 were outstanding, 24 were good and five were satisfactory. These schools are residential special schools that are not registered as children’s homes.
* Five further education colleges providing residential accommodation were inspected in this quarter. Four were outstanding and one was good for *Overall effectiveness*.
* Two further education colleges providing residential accommodation were inspected as part of a live pilot inspections carried out under the proposed framework for inspections due to be introduced in September 2012. Both providers were judged outstanding for *Overall effectiveness*.

**Impact of revisions on key findings of previous release**

* Final data covering the period 1 October to 31 December 2011 have been released and can be found on the Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/official-statistics-children%E2%80%99s-social-care-inspections-and-outcomes](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/official-statistics-children%E2%80%99s-social-care-inspections-and-outcomes)
* The revision of statistics relating to the 1 October to 31 December 2011 quarter from ‘provisional’ to ‘final’ status includes inspection outcomes relating to a further 52 social care full inspections. These consist of an additional: 29 full and 11 interim inspections of children’s homes, including residential special schools registered as children’s homes; two residential special schools; one residential family centre; one independent fostering service; two local authority fostering services; two local authority adoption agencies; one adoption support agency; and three boarding schools.

* The main changes to the key findings of the previous release are listed below.
* There were 735 full inspections of children’s homes, excluding residential special schools registered as children’s homes, during the 1 October to 31 December 2011 quarter. The original published figure was 708 and therefore an additional 27 children’s homes inspection reports for full inspections that took place in this period have been published since 31 December 2011.
* An additional 23 children’s homes received good or better full inspection outcomes for their *Overall effectiveness*.

# Methodology

The data in the release are from inspections undertaken between 1 January 2012 and 31 March 2012.

Statistics relating to inspections in the most recent quarter are provisional and include inspections in the period where the inspection report was published within one month of the end of the quarter. If an inspection report is published later than one month after the end of the quarter in which the inspection took place, that inspection will be included in the final release of the statistics.

Inspections and outcomes of provider settings that are not currently active are included in this statistical release and are reflected in the underlying data within the comma separated values (csv) and Excel files as ‘resigned’. Revisions are published in line with Ofsted’s revisions policy for official statistics. For more information about the policy, please visit the Ofsted website or access the policy via the following link:<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/statistical-notice-ofsted-revisions-policy-for-official-statistics>.

For more information on how Ofsted regulates and inspects children’s social care, please go to the Ofsted website:[www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-by/Care-and-local-services/Children-s-social-care](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Forms-and-guidance/Browse-all-by/Care-and-local-services/Children-s-social-care).

Please note that Ofsted has not inspected local authority private fostering services between 1 January and 31 March 2012. These inspections are conducted at the request of the Secretary of State. Ofsted has agreed with the Secretary of State that it will inspect a further 12 private fostering services in 2012/13.

In its inspection of social care services, Ofsted must take account of national minimum standards published by government. All Ofsted inspection of adoption and fostering services since 1 April 2011 took account of new national minimum standards in the inspection framework. Inspection outcomes from 1 April 2011 may not therefore be directly comparable with those where previous national minimum standards applied.

Where possible, Ofsted integrates inspection of education in boarding schools and residential special schools with inspection of care. Where such an integrated inspection has happened, for technical reasons the outcomes of the care inspection is not included in this release. Integrated inspections of boarding schools and residential special schools welfare and education are reported in the Ofsted statistical first release for either maintained or independent schools, depending on which sector the school is in. We will review our methodology to determine how to include these inspection outcomes in official statistics releases in future.

Due to the requirements of the registration of voluntary adoption agencies Ofsted very occasionally has to carry out inspections of voluntary adoption agency offices based in Wales (currently there are three such offices). This release only reports on inspections in England and therefore any Welsh inspections will not be included in the data.

**Additional information**

All the tables and charts shown in this release, along with additional analysis by month and at regional and local authority level, are available in Excel format on the Ofsted website in the same location as this document. Underlying data are also available in Excel and csv formats.

# Chart 1: Overall effectiveness of children’s homes (including secure children’s homes) inspected from 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2012, by financial year (provisional)1,2,3

Percentages of children’s homes



Introduction of the new framework for the inspection of children's homes

*Source: Ofsted inspections*

1. Percentages are rounded and may not add to exactly 100.

2. Children's homes exclude residential special schools that care for pupils for more than 295 days per year and are therefore registered as children's homes.

3. Inspections since the inspection framework change on 1 April 2011 include only full inspections, inspections prior to 1 April 2011 include both interim and full inspection.

# Chart 2: Overall effectiveness of children’s homes (including secure children’s homes) inspected between 1 April 2007 and 31 March 2012 by quarter (provisional)1,2,3

Percentage of children’s homes



Introduction of the new framework for the inspection of children's homes

 *Source: Ofsted inspections*

1. Percentages are rounded and may not add to exactly 100.

2. Children's homes exclude residential special schools that care for pupils for more than 295 days per year and are therefore registered as children's homes.

3. Inspections since the inspection framework change on 1 April 2011 include only full inspections, inspections prior to 1 April 2011 include both interim and full inspection.

Table 1: Number of children’s social care inspections carried out between 1 January 2012 and 31 March 2012, by inspection type (provisional)



1. Residential schools that care for pupils for more than 295 days per year must register as children’s homes.

Table 2: Overall effectiveness of children’s social care providers at full inspections between 1 January 2012 and 31 March 2012 (provisional)



1. Residential schools that care for pupils for more than 295 days per year must register as children’s homes.

Table 3a: Full inspection outcomes of children's homes (excluding secure children’s homes and residential special schools caring for pupils for more than 295 days per year) inspected between 1 January 2012 and 31 March 2012 (provisional)**1,2**



1. These figures include children’s homes run by the local authority, and those that are run by private, independent or voluntary organisations located in the local authority area.

2. Not all full children's homes inspected were judged for all sub-judgements.

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# Table 3b: Full inspection outcomes of secure children’s homes inspected between 1 January 2012 and 31 March 2012 (provisional)1



1. These figures include those secure children's homes figures run by the local authority, and those that are run by private, independent or voluntary organisations located in the local authority area.

# Table 3c: Full inspection outcomes of residential special schools caring for pupils for more than 295 days per year inspected between 1 January 2012 and 31 March 2012 (provisional)1,2



1. These figures include those schools run by the local authority, and those that are run by private, independent or voluntary organisations located in the local authority area.

2. Residential special schools that care for pupils for more than 295 days per year must register as children’s homes.

# Table 3d: Interim inspection outcomes of all children’s homes inspected between 1 January 2012 and 31 March 2012 (provisional)1,2,3



1. These figures include homes run by the local authority, and those that are run by private, independent or voluntary organisations located in the local authority area.

2. Percentages are rounded and may not add to exactly 100.

3. At an interim inspection, progress is judged based on requirements and recommendations made following the last full inspection.

4. Children’s homes not accommodating children at the time of their interim inspection received no judgement.

5. Residential special schools that care for pupils for more than 295 days per year must register as children’s homes.

Table 3e: Inspection outcomes of local authority fostering services inspected between 1 January 2012 and 31 March 2012 (provisional)

 

Table 3f: Inspection outcomes of independent fostering services inspected between 1 January 2012 and 31 March 2012 (provisional)



Table 3g: Inspection outcomes of local authority adoption agencies inspected between 1 January 2012 and 31 March 2012 (provisional)



Table 3h: Inspection outcomes of voluntary adoption agencies inspected between 1 January 2012 and 31 March 2012 (provisional)1



1. During the quarter Ofsted carried out the inspection of two voluntary adoption agency offices based in Wales. This release covers inspections in England only and therefore the Welsh

inspections are not included in the data.

Table 3i: Inspection outcomes of residential family centres inspected between 1 January 2012 and 31 March 2012 (provisional)



# Table 3j: Inspection outcomes of residential special schools inspected between 1 January 2012 and 31 March 2012 (provisional)1,2



1. These are residential special schools that are *not* registered as children’s homes.

2. These data refer to standalone welfare inspections only. Integrated inspections of residential special schools welfare and education are reported in the Ofsted statistical first release for either maintained or independent schools, depending on which sector the school is in.

Table 3k: Inspection outcomes of boarding schools inspected between 1 January 2012 and 31 March 2012 (provisional)1



1. These data refer to standalone welfare inspections only. Integrated inspections of boarding schools welfare and education are reported in the Ofsted statistical first release for either maintained or independent schools, depending on which sector the school is in.Table 3l: Inspection outcomes of care in further education colleges with residential accommodation inspected between 1 January 2012 and 31 March 2012 (provisional)1



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|  1. Two additional further education colleges providing residential accommodation were inspected as part of a live pilot inspections carried out under the proposed framework for inspections due to be introduced in September 2012. These can be found in Table 3m. |
|

Table 3m: Pilot inspection outcomes of care in further education colleges with residential accommodation inspected between 1 January 2012 and 31 March 2012 (provisional)1



 *Source: Ofsted inspections*

1. The pilot inspections were conducted in colleges who were due an inspection and had volunteered to be inspected under the pilot arrangements.

# Map 1: Children's homes (including secure children’s homes) receiving a good or better overall effectiveness judgement at full inspection, by former Government Office Region, since 1 April 2011



# Map 2: Children's homes (including secure children’s homes)receiving a satisfactory or lower overall effectiveness judgement at full inspection, by former Government Office Region, since 1 April 2011

 Glossary

**Adoption agencies**

The focus of all adoption agencies is on placing children successfully into adoptive families who the agency recruits, assesses, prepares and supports, so they will meet the children’s needs and enable them to develop and achieve throughout their lives. The services maintained by local authorities are described in section 3(1) of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. Local authorities place children with adoptive families recruited and approved by themselves, by other local authorities or by voluntary adoption agencies who must register with Ofsted. Adoption agencies may also provide birth records, counselling and intermediary services to adoptees and birth relatives.

**Adoption support agencies**

Adoption support agencies are defined by section 8 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 and provide services to anyone touched by adoption and are registered with Ofsted. This includes counselling and help for children and adults to gain information about their adoption or to trace birth relatives. Adoption support agencies can be either organisations or individuals, and may be contracted by a local authority to provide support services.

**Boarding schools**

Ofsted inspects boarding (welfare) in all maintained boarding schools and in a minority of independent boarding schools. The independent schools in which Ofsted inspects the boarding but not the education, are those that are members of the Bridge Schools Inspectorate or Schools Inspection Service. Ofsted does not inspect welfare or education in independent schools which are members of an association that is affiliated to, or a member of, the Independent Schools Council.

**Children’s homes**

A children’s home is defined in section 1 of the Care Standards Act 2000, and is an establishment that provides care and accommodation wholly or mainly for children. Children’s homes vary in size and nature. They fulfil a range of purposes designed to meet the different needs of those children and young people who are assessed as needing a residential care placement. Some homes, for example, provide short breaks which are needed to help support children and their family. Some residential special schools are registered as children’s homes because boarders are resident for more than 295 days per year.

**Fostering services**

Local authority fostering services are defined by section 4 of the Care Standards Act 2000. Local authority fostering services and independent fostering agencies recruit, prepare, assess, train and support foster carers. Independent fostering agencies (IFAs) are private companies or charities, who are registered with Ofsted and provide placements to children and young people with foster carers approved by them. IFAs work closely with Local Authorities to deliver these placements.

**Local authority private fostering services**

Private fostering is legally defined by section 66 of the Children Act 1989 as an arrangement that occurs when a child who is under 16 (or 18 for a child with learning difficulties and/or disabilities) is cared for in their own home by someone other than their parent or a close relative for 28 consecutive days or more; or children who stay in boarding schools during the holidays for 14 days or more (Children Act 1989 schedule 8 para 9 (i)). A private foster carer may be a friend of the family or the child’s friend’s parents or someone who is not previously known to the family. The Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005 require parents and private foster carers to give the local authority advance notice of a private fostering arrangement. It also places specific duties on local authorities with responsibilities for children’s services. It is these duties and responsibilities that Ofsted inspects.

**Residential family centres**

Residential family centres are defined in section 4(2) of the Care Standards Act 2000 as establishments at which: a) accommodation is provided for children and their parents; b) the parents’ capacity to respond to the children’s needs and to safeguard their welfare is monitored and assessed; and c) the parents are given such advice, guidance and counselling is considered necessary.

**Residential accommodation in further education colleges**

The care provision of further education colleges that provide, or arrange, residential accommodation for one or more students under the age of 18 years. Ofsted inspects these colleges under section 87 of the children act 1989.

**Residential special schools**

Residential special schools are defined in section 59 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. They vary in size and nature. The sector includes large non-maintained special schools which make provision for very specific needs and take children as full boarders from all over the country, to smaller more local providers catering for children with a range of different special needs and disabilities who may be resident at the school only during the week. Some residential special schools are registered as children’s homes because boarders are resident for more than 295 days per year. There are also a small number of independent residential special schools who also tend to cater for children with very specialist needs.

**Secure children’s homes**

Secure children’s homes are defined by section 25 of the 1989 children act. They accommodate children and young people who are remanded or have been sentenced for committing a criminal offence. They also accommodate children and young people who are placed there by a court because their behaviour is deemed to present a significant and immediate threat to their safety or the safety of others, unless they are placed in a secure environment. Ofsted inspections are conducted in accordance with the Care Standards Act 2000 and judgements in reports are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004. The criteria are the same as those used to inspect non-secure children’s homes.

**Secure training centres**

Secure Training Centres are defined by section 43(1) (d) of the Prison Act 1952. Ofsted has the power to inspect under section 146 Education and Inspections Act 2006 and inspects both the care and educational provision for children in four secure training centres. They accommodate young people between the ages of 12 and 17 who have been remanded or sentenced by the courts. The centres are under contract to the Youth Justice Board, which monitors their compliance with requirements. Ofsted does not regulate secure training centres but has an agreement with the Youth Justice Board to inspect care twice a year and education once a year.

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1. A new inspection framework for children’s homes was introduced in April 2011. Previously children’s homes had two inspections during the year that assessed the same outcomes. Under the new framework they are subject to a full (which usually happens first) and interim inspection each year. These inspections report on different inspection outcomes and are not directly comparable <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/framework-for-inspection-of-childrens-homes-for-inspections-31-march-2012>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)