

Policy statement for inspecting academy schools, including free schools, from September 2012

1. This statement sets out how Ofsted will normally inspect all types of Academy schools. Broadly there are two types of academy schools:¹
 - converter academies – existing schools that have been approved to convert to become an academy
 - sponsor-led academies – new schools including Free Schools², Studio Schools and University Technical Colleges.
2. When an academy school is established it has a new legal status and is a new school.
3. Inspection arrangements for converter academies are determined by the inspection history of their predecessor school.
4. Sponsor-led academies that opened **on or after** 1 September 2011, including Free Schools, Studio Schools and University Technical Colleges will be inspected within two years of opening³.
5. Ofsted will conduct section 8 monitoring inspections of any academies whose predecessor schools were in a category of concern at the time of their conversion to academy status.
6. Academy schools will be subject to the same arrangements for inspection frequency as maintained schools.
7. These principles do not prejudice the Chief Inspector's discretionary power to conduct an inspection at any time under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 to 'inspect any school in England in circumstances where he is not required to do so by section 5...' of the Act

¹ There is no legal difference between the two types of academy, albeit that in practice they are treated differently and may be formed by different routes.

² Free Schools that were formerly independent schools are not led by a sponsor.

³ 16-19 academies and 16-19 free schools are inspected under the Common Inspection Framework for Further Education and Skills.

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