

Reporting requirements for early years inspectors

Key principles of report writing

Reports should:

- tell the story of what it is like for a child at this setting
- be written in short sentences, using clear, simple language so that everyone can understand them
- use Tahoma size 12 font
- use correct grammar, punctuation and spelling and be free from jargon
- be written in bullet points or prose where required in the template
- spell out the most important findings, key strengths and weaknesses and make clear recommendations for improvement
- avoid using phrases directly from the handbook, inspection criteria and grade descriptors or the statutory framework
- take care not to identify children where numbers are small.

Summary of key findings for parents (the front page)

Inspectors must:

- write in bullets
- make sure this section fits on the front page
- include enough detail to explain why the setting's overall effectiveness has been judged as outstanding/good/requires improvement/inadequate
- evaluate the four judgements: 'leadership and management', 'teaching, learning and assessment', 'personal development, behaviour and welfare' and 'outcomes for children'
- include key strengths and weaknesses
- ensure that weaknesses in the key judgements lead to what the setting needs to do to improve
- be clear why a good setting is not yet outstanding.



What the setting needs to do to improve

Inspectors must:

- use the appropriate heading(s) in the template depending on the seriousness of the weaknesses
- liaise with the Applications, Regulatory and Contact (ARC) team where appropriate
- raise actions where there have been breaches of legal requirements
- insert areas for improvement that are drawn from the most significant weaknesses and spell out clearly what needs to improve
- avoid simply repeating statutory requirements
- be clear what needs to be done to meet the requirements of the Childcare Register where appropriate
- write actions and recommendations in a style that is easy for everyone to understand and that can easily be 'measured' at the next inspection/monitoring visit.

Inspection activities

- List the activities and the sources of evidence.
- State if this inspection was carried out following the risk assessment process only where concerns are well founded and reported on.

Inspection findings

Inspectors must:

- fit this section on one page unless the setting is judged inadequate and requires more detail to explain why this judgement has been reached.

Inspectors must report on:

- how well leaders and managers understand and implement statutory and other government requirements
- the impact of teaching on all children's outcomes, including those from different groups (giving examples where appropriate)
- how well children are prepared for school or the next stage in their learning
- any variations in the learning and outcomes of different groups of children
- the effectiveness of care practices and their impact on children's confidence and self-motivation as well as their physical and emotional well-being
- the impact of the setting's partnership with parents (and, as appropriate, with other settings, and external agencies)

- the effectiveness of supervision and training for staff to improve teaching, including the impact of staff qualifications
- the rigour with which leaders check and review the quality of provision and children's progress and use the information to set high expectations and drive improvement
- the effectiveness of safeguarding
- any non-compliance or breaches of requirements
- any findings that relate to concerns that triggered the inspection following the risk assessment process.

Note: with the exception of safeguarding, which must be reported under leadership and management, these 'musts' can be reported anywhere in the report including on the front page. There is no need to repeat findings in different sections.

Information about the setting – (short paragraph) should include:

- date of initial registration
- location, where appropriate, and opening times
- organisation and links with other settings, including schools where appropriate
- whether the setting receives specific funding
- staffing levels and qualifications
- any specific educational philosophy.

Reports will be deemed 'not fit for publication' if:

- there is a mismatch between grade and text
- one of the reporting requirements is omitted
- the summary of key findings contradict reporting elsewhere in the report
- the report contains spelling, grammar and punctuation errors
- the report implies that Ofsted has a preference for a particular model or style of practice.