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The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of
Education, Children's Services and Skills 2015/16

Education and Skills

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1 December 2016

Rt Hon. Justine Greening MP
Secretary of State for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London
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Dear Secretary of State

The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector 2015/16

I have pleasure in presenting my Annual Report to Parliament as Chief Inspector, as required by the Education and Inspections Act 2006. The report is underpinned by the findings of almost 25,000 inspections of schools, colleges and providers of early years and further education and skills. These inspections provide a unique evidence base for the conclusions we draw.

This report describes an education and skills system that has improved considerably over the past five years. In particular, it is children under the age of 11 who have benefited most. The extent to which high-quality education for younger children is more fairly distributed than in the past is a significant achievement.

My report also emphasises some of the challenges that remain. Secondary schools have improved but the gap between the North and Midlands and the rest of the country has not narrowed, in fact, it has widened slightly. The quality of technical and vocational education and training needs to improve if we are to meet the skills challenges of the future. Improvements in both these respects will contribute positively to the ongoing role that education plays in encouraging shared values across different communities.

My Annual Report both comments and reports on our evidence and findings on early years, schools and the further education and skills inspections this year. Copies will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses. I have also published a report on social care during the past year

As Chief Inspector, I have been absolutely committed to supporting improvement and raising standards for children and learners at the different stages of their education, and I hope this report reflects that commitment. I trust that this report will provide useful evidence to inform future policies aimed at securing the very best education for our children and learners.
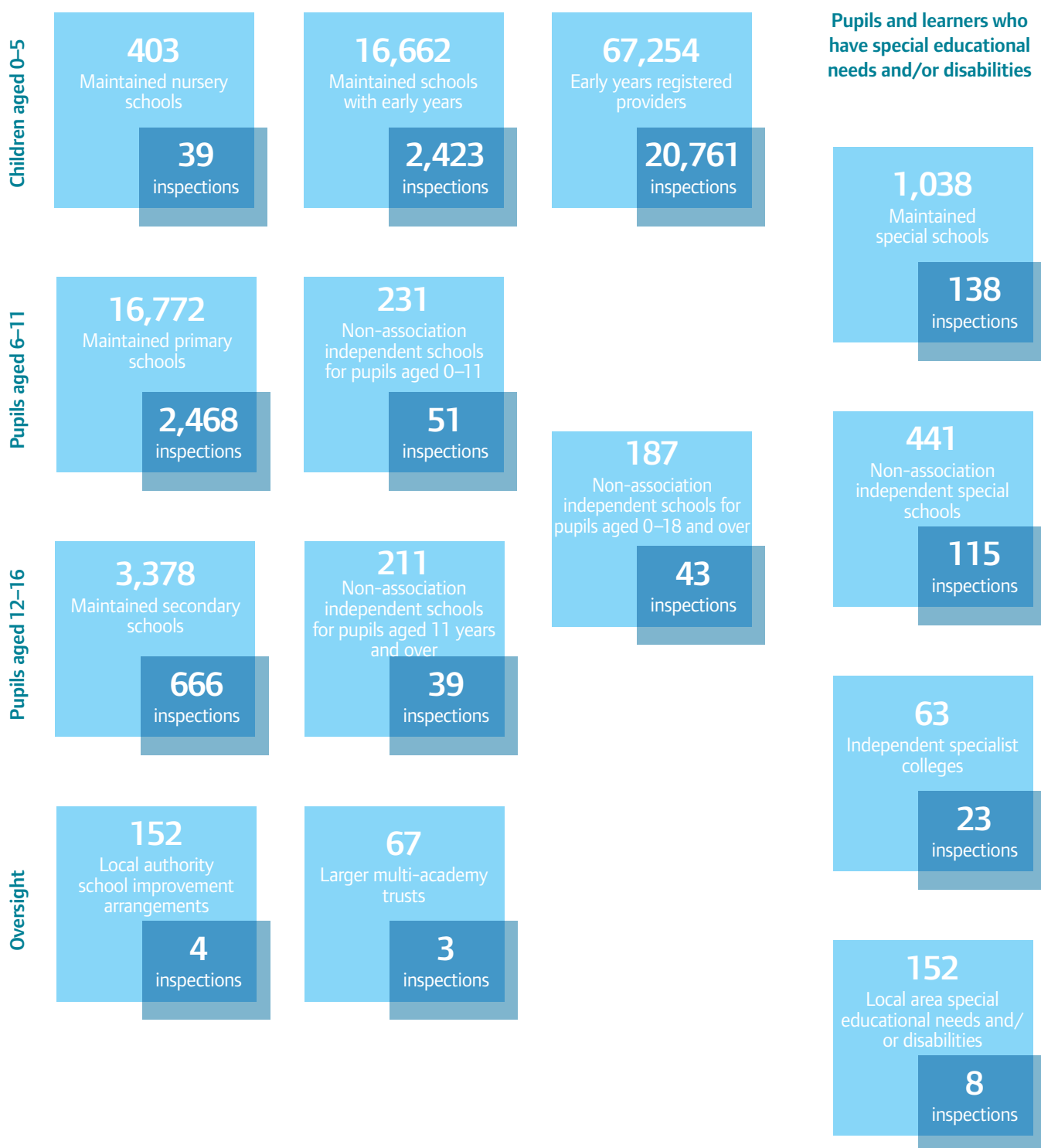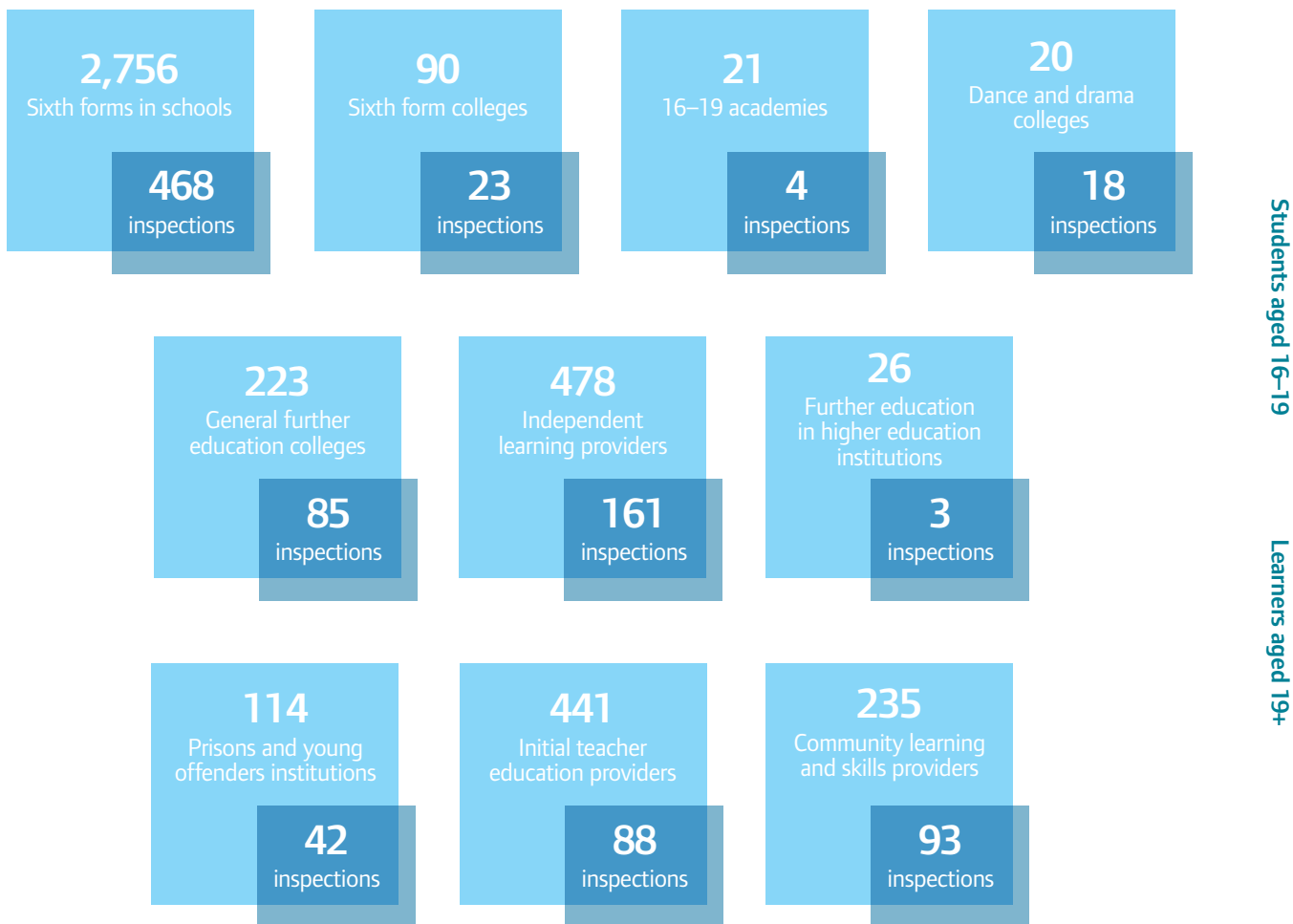
Yours sincerely

Sir Michael Wilshaw

Contents

Figure 1: Number of education and skills providers, and inspections carried out in 2015/16

Pupils and learners who have special educational needs and/or disabilities

Children aged 0–5

403
Maintained nursery schools
39
inspections

16,662
Maintained schools with early years
2,423
inspections

67,254
Early years registered providers
20,761
inspections

1,038
Maintained special schools
138
inspections

Pupils aged 6–11

16,772
Maintained primary schools
2,468
inspections

231
Non-association independent schools for pupils aged 0–11
51
inspections

187
Non-association independent schools for pupils aged 0–18 and over
43
inspections

441
Non-association independent special schools
115
inspections

Pupils aged 12–16

3,378
Maintained secondary schools
666
inspections

211
Non-association independent schools for pupils aged 11 years and over
39
inspections

63
Independent specialist colleges
23
inspections

Oversight

152
Local authority school improvement arrangements
4
inspections

67
Larger multi-academy trusts
3
inspections

152
Local area special educational needs and/or disabilities
8
inspections

1. The number of early years registered providers as at 31 August 2016. Includes inspections published by 30 September 2016.
2. The number of schools open as at 31 August 2016. Includes inspections published by 30 September 2016. The inspections covered in the 'Pupils aged 6–11' and 'Pupils aged 12–16' include full inspections and short inspections that did not convert to a full inspection. Inspections of sixth forms in schools and maintained schools with early years include full inspections only.
3. The total number of initial teacher education (ITE) age phase partnerships are based on partnerships rather than providers, and some providers may cover more than one age phase partnership. Includes partnerships open as at 30 June 2016. Partnerships with no trainees in 2015/16 are excluded.
4. The number of larger multi-academy trusts is based on trusts with more than eight schools as at 31 August 2016.

2,756 Sixth forms in schools	90 Sixth form colleges	21 16–19 academies	20 Dance and drama colleges
468 inspections	**23** inspections	**4** inspections	**18** inspections

223 General further education colleges	478 Independent learning providers	26 Further education in higher education institutions
85 inspections	**161** inspections	**3** inspections

114 Prisons and young offenders institutions	441 Initial teacher education providers	235 Community learning and skills providers
42 inspections	**88** inspections	**93** inspections

5. The number of colleges, 16–19 academies, independent learning providers, higher education institutions and community learning and skills providers that were open and funded as at 31 August 2016. For these providers, inspections include full inspections and short inspections that did not convert to a full inspection.

6. The number of inspections given for prisons and young offender institutions are for inspections published between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016.

7. General further education colleges include specialist further education colleges.

8. Independent learning providers include employer providers.

9. Ofsted has not inspected any National Careers Service contractors in 2015/16.

10. The number of inspections for 2015/16 includes inspections of providers that were either no longer active, ceased to be funded or were closed as at 31 August 2016.

Source: Ofsted, Department for Education, National College for Teaching and Leadership and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons

HMCI's commentary

Introduction

This is my fifth and final Annual Report as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector.

It has always been my belief that the most important question that any chief inspector must answer in an Annual Report on education and skills is whether things are getting better or worse. In my first commentary in 2011/12, I described performance as 'not good enough; must do better'.[1]

It is therefore with great pleasure that, five years later, I can report that our education system has done better. Parents are now much more likely to have access for their children to a good local nursery or school than when I first took up my post. There are 1.8 million more pupils attending good or outstanding maintained schools than in August 2010.[2]

During the same period, the government has introduced a more academic curriculum, more rigorous assessments and higher expected standards. Those working in the education system have, on the whole, responded well to these higher expectations, and education in this country is much nearer to being truly world class than it was.

Our education system has always served some very well, but access to an excellent education has long been a dividing line in this country. In some parts of our education and skills system, this is now changing. For the youngest children, we are now closer than we have ever been to an education system where your family background or where you live does not necessarily determine the quality of teaching you receive or the outcomes you achieve.

Education can make people and communities more resilient, and it can bring people together. However, there is also a risk that, when the quality of provision is uneven, education exacerbates divisions. Where opportunities and values are not shared, those who are excluded or isolated can become alienated and resentful.

I am confident that our education system can help the country become more successful, cohesive and prosperous. However, for this to succeed, we need:

- high standards in education in every part of the country
- technical and vocational education that equips young people to be competitive in the workforce
- shared values that transcend community differences.

In each of these areas, there has been progress. However, all the progress that has been made is at risk if the job is left incomplete.

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1. 'The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2011/12', Ofsted, 2012; www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-annual-report-of-her-majestys-chief-inspector-of-education-childrens-services-and-skills-201112.

2. The term 'maintained schools' is used throughout this report to refer to state-funded schools, which are either maintained by the local authority or are academies and free schools. Where text refers to local authority maintained schools only this is always specified in the text.

A high standard of education

Good early years education, particularly for children from low-income backgrounds, is crucial to longer-term academic success. In 2010/11, in some deprived areas of the country, less than half the early education provision available was good or outstanding.

The last five years have seen considerable change for the better:

- Across the country, 91% of early years providers are now good or outstanding: a 22 percentage point increase since 2010.

- The proportion of good and outstanding nurseries and pre-schools is now almost identical in the least and most deprived areas.

- This year, in every local authority area in the country, at least eight out of 10 childcare places are in registered providers of early education judged good or outstanding.

- In 2016, over two thirds of young children reached the government's 'good level of development' compared with just over a half in 2013.[3]

I previously reported that the gap between the most disadvantaged five-year-olds and their peers had narrowed far too slowly over the past seven years. Between 2014 and 2015, it suddenly narrowed and the gap is now 3.5 percentage points smaller than in 2007.

I have also seen dramatic improvements to the quality of primary schools during my time as Chief Inspector.

At their most recent inspection, 90% of primary schools were found to be good or outstanding. In my first Annual Report, that figure was 69%. This is a dramatic improvement and one that has particularly benefited young children in the most deprived areas of the country.

When I took up my post, there was a 24 percentage point gap in the proportion of good and outstanding primary schools with the most and least deprived pupils.[4] This year, that gap is nine percentage points.

These improvements can be seen in many of the local authority areas whose primary school performance I criticised in my first Annual Report. For example, in 2012, I highlighted the poor performance of Coventry's primary schools. Since then, as a result of the hard work and focus of Coventry's political and school leaders, the proportion of pupils attending a good or outstanding primary school in the city has more than doubled, from 42% of pupils to 93%.

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3. 'Early years foundation stage profile results: 2012 to 2013', Department for Education, 2013; www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-early-years-foundation-stage-profile.

4. HMCI took up post in January 2012. The inspection outcomes for each deprivation band were first published in Ofsted's Data View web tool in November 2012 and were based on inspections conducted by 31 August 2012. This initial dataset showed a gap of 24 percentage points. See chart in the 'Early years' chapter for further details. Deprivation bands are based on the home postcodes of the pupils, which are then used to create a score for the school.

The improvements to primary education in the most deprived parts of the country are reflected in the improved performance of children eligible for free school meals aged 11 and under in national tests.

- At age seven, key stage 1 tests have seen pupils eligible for free school meals gain ground against their peers in every subject. The greatest gains have been in reading, with a reduction in the difference between the two groups of six percentage points in five years.[5]

- At age 11, the benchmark of at least level 4 in reading, writing and mathematics was achieved by 66% of pupils eligible for free school meals in 2015, a rise from 59% in 2012.[6] This was a faster rise than their peers.

The gains for children under the age of 11 over the last five years are remarkable. Not only are well over a million more children benefiting from being in a good or outstanding primary school than in 2010, but quite consistently it has been the children and areas that are disadvantaged that have seen the most benefit.

What this demonstrates is that an education system that offers high standards to all is achievable. There is now a generation of children who have known nothing but high standards of education throughout nursery and primary. My concern is that they will encounter a weaker quality of education at secondary and be disillusioned by the loss of their early promise.

Last year, I highlighted the disproportionate number of secondary schools that are less than good in the North and Midlands, compared with the South and East of England. This year, the gap has widened slightly. More than a quarter of secondaries in the North and Midlands are still not good enough. This year, there are 13 local authority areas where every secondary school inspected is either good or outstanding, and all in London or the South East. However, there are 10 local authorities with 40% or more of pupils who are in secondary schools that are less than good, and where attainment and progress is below the national level on the key accountability measures, and all but three are in the North and Midlands.[7]

It is no coincidence that these regions also account for the largest proportion of schools with leadership problems. Nearly three quarters of secondary schools judged inadequate for leadership were in the North and Midlands.

There are some who hoped that a change in accountability measures would demonstrate that progress and attainment at secondary level in the North and Midlands were stronger than previously thought. That is not borne out by the results. Every region in the North and Midlands is below the national level on every major measure: Progress 8, Attainment 8 and achievement of the English Baccalaureate.[8]

5. 'Statistics: key stage 1', Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-key-stage-1.

6. 'Statistics: key stage 2', Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-key-stage-2.

7. In 2016 the 10 local authority areas are Blackpool, Bradford, Doncaster, Isle of Wight, Knowsley, Liverpool, Northumberland, South Gloucestershire, Stoke-on-Trent and Swindon. Last year 16 areas met the same criteria, and 13 of these were in the North and Midlands. The 16 areas were Barnsley, Blackpool, Bradford, Derbyshire, Doncaster, Hartlepool, Isle of Wight, Knowsley, Liverpool, Middlesbrough, Oldham, Salford, South Gloucestershire, Stoke-on-Trent, Swindon, and St Helens. Analysis is based on the government's accountability measures which applied used in the relevant year.

8. 'School performance: key stage 4 provisional results (2016)', Department for Education, October 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-performance-key-stage-4-provisional-results-2016.

The North West should be of particular concern: five years ago, it was among the stronger regions but improvement has stagnated.[9] The proportion of secondary schools that are good or outstanding has only increased by three percentage points in the North West since 2011.[10] In contrast, the increase nationally was 13 percentage points over the same period. Manchester and Liverpool continue to illustrate the problem. Three in 10 secondary schools in Manchester and five in 10 in Liverpool are less than good compared with one in 10 in inner London.

I have also previously raised concerns about the quality of education in those areas of the country that are geographically and economically isolated, many of which are coastal areas. In 2016, there were 77 constituency areas where less than 15% of pupils achieved the English Baccalaureate. Twenty-two of these areas were coastal constituencies.

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9.   Data View; www.gov.uk/government/publications/exploring-ofsted-inspection-data-with-data-view.
10. Data View; www.gov.uk/government/publications/exploring-ofsted-inspection-data-with-data-view.

The geographic divides within the country are more acute for some pupils than others. Last year I reported that the north/south divide affected pupils eligible for free school meals more than their peers. This year, it is clear that this is also true of the most able pupils, who are less likely to reach A/A* grades in their GCSEs in the North and Midlands. Furthermore, almost one in three pupils in the North and Midlands who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and who receive special educational needs support attend secondary schools that are less than good. This proportion is much higher than in the rest of the country.

Standards can only truly be considered high if they are high in every part of the country and for all pupils regardless of background or ability. For children under the age of 11, truly high standards have almost been achieved. Over the age of 11, there is still much to be done.

Capacity to deliver higher standards

Successive governments have introduced structural changes intended to raise standards. However, structural change is only successful if there are enough good people in the system and we can get them to work where they will make most difference.

The recruitment of primary trainees in recent years has been effective. However, there are signs that pressures in secondary recruitment are getting worse:

- Although 94% of all trainee places were filled this year, this high proportion is due to exceeding recruitment for primary teachers and masks the fact that only 82% of secondary training places were filled.

- In 2015/16, 15 out of 18 secondary subjects had unfilled places. In 2011/12, no subjects had unfilled places.

- The proportion of teachers leaving the sector in 2015 was at its highest for some years. This was partly offset by the increasing numbers returning to the profession. However, the overall effect was 2,500 fewer full-time equivalent secondary teachers in 2015 compared with 2014.

As a result, the recorded rate of vacancies and temporarily filled positions in schools has doubled since 2011. The National Audit Office has also reported that recruitment pressures have reduced the qualification levels of serving secondary teachers.[11] The latest data shows that 19 of the 30 secondary subjects had fewer teachers with relevant qualifications in 2015 than 2014.

There is now considerable evidence that it is those schools in isolated and deprived areas where educational standards are low that are losing out in the recruitment stakes.[12] Furthermore, the secondary pupil population – which has been in decline for the past few years – is set to grow.

Ofsted's regional directors have spoken to headteachers about the impact this is having in their areas. Headteachers in the North West, for example, have reported that there is an 'auction' for teachers, particularly around Greater Manchester, for hard to recruit subjects. In the South East, recruitment is proving difficult in secondary shortage subjects, particularly in non-selective schools in selective areas and those in isolated or relatively deprived parts of the region.

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11. 'Training new teachers', National Audit Office, 2016; www.nao.org.uk/training-new-teachers.
12. 'Social inequalities in access to teachers'. Social Market Foundation, 2016; www.smf.co.uk/publications/social-inequalities-in-access-to-teachers.

Worryingly, schools are also reporting that they are finding it difficult to recruit headteachers. Two fifths of governors say they find it hard to recruit to senior staff posts. Some multi-academy trusts (MATs) have shown that they can successfully grow their own leaders. The growth of strong MATs, however, is progressing too slowly to get better leaders in the deprived and isolated communities where they are most needed. As we have seen when we have looked at trusts that were underperforming, it is the quality of leadership that determines the performance of the trust. More good people to lead trusts are needed as much as more good leaders of schools.

The government has taken some action to address these concerns, including:

- the acknowledgement that recruitment must be reviewed geographically
- the proposal to set up a panel of schools that can be surveyed each year on their staffing issues
- the pilots of a National Teaching Service[13]
- a revised allocations methodology for 2017/18[14]
- targeted initiatives to boost leadership capacity in challenging areas and create career pathways for good leaders to work where they are most needed.

These are all at an early stage. Higher standards will depend on the success of this strategy. My advice to government now is to worry less about structures and to worry more about capacity. No structure will be effective if the leadership is poor or there are not enough good people in the classroom.

A competitive workforce

There is a consensus that the workforce of tomorrow will need to be more highly skilled to compete in the 'global skills race'.[15] One of the great achievements of the education and skills system has been the rise in the proportion of students going on to higher education. The proportion of the population with a degree in 2003 was 27%, rising to 38% in 2013. This is projected to rise to 47% by 2020.[16]

In 2015, 31% of 18-year-olds in England were accepted into a university place compared with 25% in 2006. Over the past 10 years, London, the North West and Yorkshire and Humber have each seen increases in the proportions of 18-year-olds going on to higher education of around 30%. Over the same period, 18-year-olds from the most disadvantaged areas in England have gained ground against those from the most advantaged areas in both the proportions going to higher education and the proportions going to those universities with the most demanding entry requirements.[17] Astonishingly, disadvantaged students in Inner London who completed a level 3 qualification at key stage 5 in 2014 were more likely to go on to university than their peers.[18]

13. 'National Teaching Service pilot gets underway', announcement by Department for Education and National College for Teaching and Leadership, January 2016: www.gov.uk/government/news/national-teaching-service-pilot-gets-underway.

14. 'ITT allocations methodology 2017 to 2018', National College for Teaching and Leadership, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/itt-requesting-places-and-allocations-methodology-2017-to-2018.

15. 'UK Skills levels and international competitiveness', UK Commission for Employment and Skills, 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-skills-levels-and-international-competitiveness-2014.

16. 'UK Skills levels and international competitiveness', UK Commission for Employment and Skills, 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-skills-levels-and-international-competitiveness-2014.

17. 'UCAS undergraduate end of cycle report', UCAS, 2015; www.ucas.com/corporate/data-and-analysis/ucas-undergraduate-releases/ucas-undergraduate-analysis-reports/ucas.

18. 'Key stage 5: national and local authority tables (including characteristics): SFR47/2016', LA (Disadv). Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/destinations-of-ks4-and-ks5-pupils-2015-provisional.

These achievements, however, only benefit a minority of the population. More will need to be done to ensure that all young people are equipped with the skills they will need to compete in the local workforce, let alone the global one. The country is facing serious knowledge and skills gaps that threaten the competitiveness of our economy. The UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) surveyed employers in 2015 and reported that almost a quarter of vacancies in the country are now in areas of skills shortages, representing over 200,000 jobs.[19]

These skill shortages will not be met by reliance on the country's universities. UKCES reports that 'the highest density of skill-shortage vacancies was recorded in respect of skilled trades posts'.[20] The pay for skilled trades can be good: in 2016, the top 10% of full-time jobs in skilled metal, electrical, electronic trades in the UK paid over £45,000 a year. The average[21] pay for these trades was around £30,000 a year, an increase of 3.2% on the previous year. This was higher than the average pay in culture, media and sports, which are industries that are often accorded greater esteem.[22]

Machine operatives are increasingly in short supply for skills reasons, as are skilled trade roles such as chefs, metal working production, maintenance fitters, vehicle technicians, mechanics and electricians. The top four sectors with the highest proportion of vacancies affected by skill shortages were: electricity, gas and water; construction; transport and communications; and manufacturing.[23]

The difference in the quality of academic and technical pathways can be seen in the varying quality of study programmes for students aged 16 to 19:

● Students who go on to do A levels are most likely to experience good teaching and be given more demanding work that improves their capacity to understand complex ideas and concepts. Once accepted on an A-level course, less than 10% do not successfully achieve their qualifications.[24]

● Students who go on to study technical or vocational level 3 courses, normally in general further education (FE) colleges,[25] are much more likely to experience teaching that is not good enough and be given undemanding work. The relevance of their study for future career paths is sometimes not clear, with large proportions of students on courses that are not linked directly to local or national skills shortages. Fifteen per cent of all level 3 qualifications taken in general FE colleges are not successfully achieved.[26]

19. 'UKCES Employer Skills Survey 2015: UK report', UK Commission for Employment and Skills, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/ukces-employer-skills-survey-2015-uk-report.

20. 'UKCES Employer Skills Survey 2015: UK report', UK Commission for Employment and Skills, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/ukces-employer-skills-survey-2015-uk-report.

21. This reflects the median.

22. 'Data set: Occupation (2 digit SOC) – ASHE: Table 2', Office for National Statistics, 2016; www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/datasets/occupation2digitsocashetable2.

23. 'UKCES Employer Skills Survey 2015: UK report', UK Commission for Employment and Skills, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/ukces-employer-skills-survey-2015-uk-report.

24. 'National statistics: SFA: national achievement rates tables 2014 to 2015: open data CSV files', Skills Funding Agency, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sfa-national-achievement-rates-tables-2014-to-2015-open-data-csv-files.

25. 'National statistics: Participation in education, training and employment: 2015', Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/participation-in-education-training-and-employment-2015.

26. 'National statistics: SFA: national achievement rates tables 2014 to 2015: open data CSV files', Skills Funding Agency, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sfa-national-achievement-rates-tables-2014-to-2015-open-data-csv-files.

- Students who did not secure a full level 2 qualification (GCSE or equivalent) at secondary school are likely to go on to study programmes at levels 1 and 2. These students are almost all in general FE colleges, where they make up 42% of learners on study programmes.[27] These students are likely to experience education that is simply not good enough. Although it should be a priority, work experience features too little. Many will be required to study English and mathematics, and very few go on to secure a higher grade. Around one in four qualifications taken at level 1 or 2 within a general FE college are not achieved.[28]

Indeed, the overall performance of general FE colleges continues to decline. There are good and outstanding colleges, but for the second year in a row, the proportion has fallen, from 77% in 2015 to 71% in 2016. General FE colleges continue to struggle to meet all of the requirements of the study programmes for 16 to 19 year olds. What's more, half the colleges inspected this year had leadership and management that was less than good, which raises questions about whether they are equipped to manage improvement, within inevitable financial constraints, on the scale that is required. Area reviews, reforms to apprenticeships and the 'Post-16 skills plan', following Lord Sainsbury's review, are all very significant projects that will see a fundamental changes made to the further education and skills system. With both performance concerns and ongoing large-scale changes to the system, again this year many general FE colleges face a period of continuing turmoil.

University technical colleges have the potential to bridge the divide in quality between academic and technical study. Unfortunately, this potential has yet to be fully realised. Only a small number have been inspected, but outcomes are uneven. Out of the 15 inspected to date, one was judged outstanding, seven were good, five required improvement and two were inadequate. Some are also struggling to recruit pupils at age 14 and are finding it difficult to appoint teachers with the relevant industry experience. Two have already closed,[29] unable to overcome these barriers.

The government's response to these challenges in recent years has been to seek to increase both the quality and number of apprenticeships. There have been some improvements this year. The proportion of apprenticeship programmes judged good or outstanding was 12 percentage points higher than last year. However, inspectors have continued to find that too few apprenticeships deliver professional, up-to-date knowledge and skills in the sectors that need them most and too many are of poor quality. Though proportions have risen, 37% of the apprenticeship programmes we inspected this year were found to be less than good, affecting around 90,000 apprentices.[30]

The government is taking steps to address these concerns, not least by engaging employers in the design and delivery of apprenticeships. The future 'passporting' of funding to employers should also make a difference, as long as the right support mechanisms are in place for small businesses. The proposed measures set out earlier this year to transform post-16 technical education in response to the Sainsbury review recommendations are also very welcome.[31]

27. 'National statistics: Participation in education, training and employment: 2015', Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/participation-in-education-training-and-employment-2015.

28. 'National statistics: SFA: national achievement rates tables 2014 to 2015: open data CSV files', Skills Funding Agency, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sfa-national-achievement-rates-tables-2014-to-2015-open-data-csv-files.

29. Based on schools open as at 31 August 2016, in line with Ofsted's official statistics.

30. Learner numbers from 'Statistical data set: FE data library: local authority tables', Skills Funding Agency, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-local-authority-tables. Providers matched by UK provider reference number to the Ofsted further education and skills provider types.

31. 'Post-16 skills plan and independent report on technical education', Department for Education and Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/post-16-skills-plan-and-independent-report-on-technical-education.

It remains to be seen, though, whether this will prove another false dawn. The great barrier to meeting the country's technical knowledge and skills shortages is the poor esteem and status given to technical and vocational education. While our international competitors such as Germany, Norway and Switzerland have greater parity between technical and academic routes, we continue to struggle to guide young people into high quality alternatives to higher education.

There is a vicious cycle here: poor esteem means it is harder to attract the best people to deliver, develop and challenge the system. Without the best people, the quality of education is lower and esteem suffers further. It is the responsibility of both schools and employers to communicate clearly that technical and specialist skills are valuable, and that technical expertise can secure good pay, good progression and status in society.

As a nation, we are at a crossroads. We can intervene to inject the system with the vision, skills and energy it needs, or we can be content with the status quo and the consequences of that failure. It is a significant step forward now full responsibility for further and higher education and skills has been brought together in the Department for Education. It remains to be seen whether this can be the turning point that finally places the technical needs of the country on a par with academic achievement. With the prospect of an imminent departure from the European Union, and a potentially seismic shift in how skills are drawn into the workforce, this cannot come too soon.

A common set of values

There is another successful aspect to our school system that has largely gone unnoticed. Many are concerned – rightly – about the underperformance of White British pupils eligible for free school meals. In 2015, this group again had the lowest attainment compared with pupils eligible for free school meals from any other ethnicity. By contrast, children of immigrants have in recent years done remarkably well.

This trend is now so ingrained that it is assumed that children of immigrants always outperform other pupils, but in most of Europe, that is not the case. In many countries, they do worse than children of non-immigrants do.

In fact, the UK is unusual among many other countries for the high performance of its immigrant pupils. In the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) international reading test, our non-immigrant pupils performed close to the average, at a similar level to the USA, Austria, Italy and Sweden. But in most other countries, first generation immigrants performed less well. In Sweden, immigrant pupils scored almost 100 points lower than their non-immigrant peers. In the UK, there was virtually no gap.

Schools are great forces for social cohesion. Whatever cultural tensions exist outside of school, race and religion are not barriers within them. In the main, schools aim for all children to be taught equally and for all children to benefit equally.

We forget to notice what an incredible achievement this is: that schools are the places where different communities integrate.

However, we cannot take this for granted. It must always be clear that what we require from schools are both high academic standards and a commitment to uphold the values that bind society together. That is why we have placed an increasing emphasis over the last few years on whether schools are promoting British values.

I am pleased to report that in the vast majority of inspections we have carried out, we have found that schools – both faith and non-faith – are preparing their pupils well for life in modern, multi-cultural Britain, promoting the values of tolerance, respect and open-mindedness towards others.

There have, however, been some notable exceptions. Over the last couple of years, there has been a focus on a number of state-funded schools in Birmingham at the centre of the so-called 'Trojan horse' episode. In 2014, Ofsted found that there had been a concerted campaign by some people to impose a narrow faith-based ideology on these schools and to alter their character and ethos. Since then,[32] the schools in question have undergone changes of leadership and governance and are now generally improving.

The challenges remain, however. When I met a group of headteachers in the city earlier this year, they told me that there continues to be a minority of people in the community who want to destabilise these schools. It is vital that local political and educational leaders fully support these headteachers in resisting any attempt to sow suspicion, insularity and division. We also need to be concerned about those children who are being deliberately kept out of mainstream schools altogether. These children are being hidden away from local authorities and other agencies in unregistered schools. Many of these institutions operate on the cusp of the law, exploiting the freedom parents have to home-educate their children.

In the worst cases, inspectors have found children in the kind of squalid conditions you would have thought no longer existed in 21st century Britain. Many of these unregistered schools are associated with particular faith groups. Children are taught a restricted faith-based curriculum and are often left woefully unprepared for modern life. Some are also left at greater risk of exposure to indoctrination, radicalisation and extremism. Local authorities, the police, Ofsted and the Department for Education need to continue to work closely together to identify such institutions and ensure that they comply with the law or are closed down.

What cases like these have taught us is that local leaders cannot ignore what is happening within their communities. We cannot predict where problems arising from a breakdown in community relations might occur in the future. However, we ought to be able to rely on those in positions of authority to spot where schools are at risk and to take appropriate action quickly.

We know there are towns and cities across the country where community cohesion has been fragile in the past. I have spoken to political and community leaders in some of these places, a number of which are also struggling with low educational standards. I have sometimes been shocked by the level of complacency I have encountered. We need them to be vigilant and to intervene swiftly when risks to cohesion – either in schools or in the wider community – arise.

Achieving a strong and cohesive society takes more than a commitment to shared values, important as these are. It is also dependent on people feeling that they have an equal stake in society and an equal opportunity to make the best of their talents and get on in life. The best way – indeed the only way – we can do this is by ensuring that we have an education system that works for everyone, regardless of their background, their ethnic and cultural origin, their postcode and whether their abilities lead them on an academic or technical pathway to future achievement and employment.

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32. Advice note provided on academies and maintained schools in Birmingham to the Secretary of State for Education, Rt Hon Michael Gove MP – 9 June 2014', Ofsted, July 2014; www.gov.uk/government/publications/first-monitoring-visits-to-academies-and-maintained-schools-subject-to-special-measures-in-birmingham.

Conclusion

Our education system is not yet world class, but some aspects are much closer than they have ever been. It would be wrong to look at this picture and conclude we need a radical rethink. The solutions are within our grasp, but we need to learn from the remarkable improvements of the past few years, and address the challenges to capacity.

I have been proud to serve as the head of an institution that has been such an influential contributor to the essential task of raising educational standards. I look forward to watching my successor work with ministers and the government to uphold this organisation's strong track record of using accountability to improve the education and skills – and therefore the life chances – of the next generation.

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Executive summary

- Education for children below the age of 11 is stronger than ever. The fact that there are more good and outstanding primary schools, nurseries, pre-schools and childminders is creating a more level playing field for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

- Education for children above the age of 11 has improved, but not everywhere. The North and Midlands are dropping further behind the rest of the country. The progress of the most able children and provision for those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are both particularly affected by this divide.

- Education from age 11 to 19 is strongest for pupils studying an academic curriculum aimed at university entrance. For pupils not destined for university, particularly those who don't achieve well by age 16, there are fewer high-quality options available that lead to good qualifications and destinations.

- For the sixth year in a row, **the proportion of good and outstanding nurseries, pre-schools and childminders has risen and is now at 91%.** These improvements have benefited the deprived areas of the country most of all. The proportion of good and outstanding nurseries is now almost the same in the most deprived areas of the country compared to the least deprived.

- **The gap has started to narrow between children eligible for free school meals and their peers reaching a good level of development by the age of five.** The largest reduction has occurred in the past year. Take-up of funded early education for disadvantaged two-year-olds has increased. Two-year-olds who require funded places need the highest quality provision and yet there are still 6,000 disadvantaged children aged two in inadequate nurseries.

- The proportion of **good and outstanding primary schools has risen from 69% to 90% in five years**. The focus on reading and systematic synthetic phonics has been a particular strength. The successful emphasis on reading, writing, spelling and grammar, however, is sometimes resulting in a narrower curriculum.

- **Improvements in primary school quality have disproportionately benefited the most deprived pupils in the country,** and the local authority areas with the lowest proportions of pupils in good and outstanding schools. The reading ability of pupils eligible for free school meals at age seven in 2015 was six percentage points closer to the level of their peers than five years ago.

- Transition from primary to secondary school continues to be a point where some pupils begin to fall behind. **There can be mistrust between primary and secondary schools around transition.** This contributes to a failure to share information about assessment and the curriculum, or to fully understand it when it is shared.

- Secondary schools have improved and 78% are now good or outstanding. However, **secondary schools in the North and Midlands are still behind the rest of the country.** The proportion of pupils who achieved highly by the end of primary school who went on to achieve A/A* in their GCSEs in the North and Midlands was six percentage points lower than in the rest of the country. Almost a third of secondary pupils in receipt of special educational needs support in the North and Midlands are in schools that are less than good.

- **Pressures on the supply of secondary teachers have not abated.** Fifteen of the 18 curriculum subjects had unfilled training places this year. There are 2,500 fewer secondary school teachers than last year and the secondary pupil population is set to rise in coming years. Schools that have improved this year did so by focusing on the professional development of teachers and middle leaders. They drew heavily on external sources of support, including high-performing local schools, which are now in greater supply in some parts of the country than others.

- **Schools have successfully increased the proportions of pupils going on to complete the academic qualifications needed to be accepted into university.** However, for those pupils going directly into the workforce, it is only a minority of schools that are prioritising giving them a solid preparation for the world of work. University technical colleges should be a clear route for pupils focused on a technical or vocational pathway, but barriers to teacher and pupil recruitment mean that the performance of these schools to date has been variable.

- **Academic level 3 study programmes were working well regardless of where they were provided,** particularly where there were large numbers of A-level students. In small school sixth forms where the number of A–level students was too low to enable the school to offer specialist teaching across a broad curriculum, provision was less successful. Technical and vocational level 3 study programmes and those below level 3 were not working as well.

- **The proportion of good or outstanding general FE colleges has declined from 77% in 2015 to 71% this year.** Full-time students are required to retake English and/or mathematics where they did not secure a C grade at age 16. For general FE colleges, this has resulted in an increase of 156% in the number of students studying GCSE English over the last three years. Many colleges have struggled to recruit enough teachers in English or mathematics.

- **The supply does not meet demand for high quality apprenticeships at level 3, with available data showing around nine applicants for every vacancy.** There are some signs of improvement in the quality of apprenticeships and schools are doing more to raise awareness of apprenticeships as an option.

- **In some parts of the country, fewer than 40% of pupils in receipt of special educational needs support are progressing well.** Local areas are tracking the progress of these pupils less systematically, compared to pupils with statements or education, health and care plans. However, local areas are becoming more accurate in their identification of children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, the proportion of pupils identified as needing special educational needs support is at the lowest point in almost a decade.

- **Sixty–five per cent of prisons and young offender institutions have learning and skills and work activities that are not good enough.** This is the least successful aspect of our education and skills system, by a wide margin. Many prisoners have primary school-level reading ability. Successful completion of English and mathematics qualifications are nine percentage points lower this year compared with four years ago.

- Most providers are safe places for children and young people of all ages. However, **on occasion leaders and managers did not regard the safety of children as a high enough priority, other than to satisfy external scrutiny.** In other cases where safeguarding was found inadequate this year, it was because leaders and managers were ignorant of what was required. This was sometimes because they had extended the reach of what they were delivering without finding out what the implications would be for the pupils or learners involved.

- **In the independent schools that we inspect, 12% of those serving primary aged pupils and 15% of those serving secondary aged pupils are inadequate.** The proportion of good and outstanding schools has declined in both phases two years in a row. In schools that declined, leaders and managers had not kept on top of the quality of teaching or up to date about how to keep children safe.

- **The scale of unsafe practice being uncovered in providers suspected of operating illegally is a serious concern.** However, local authorities have become more alert to the need to identify potentially illegal or unsafe practice. In cases where problems have been identified, local authorities have intervened quickly to make sure children in their areas were kept safe.

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Early years

1. The quality of early years provision continues to rise. Between 2012 and 2016, Ofsted completed over 80,000 inspections of early years registered providers. Ninety-one per cent of all active early years providers are now good or outstanding, an increase of 22 percentage points since 2010.

Figure 2: Proportion of early years registered providers judged good or outstanding for overall effectiveness, at their most recent inspection, 2010 to 2016
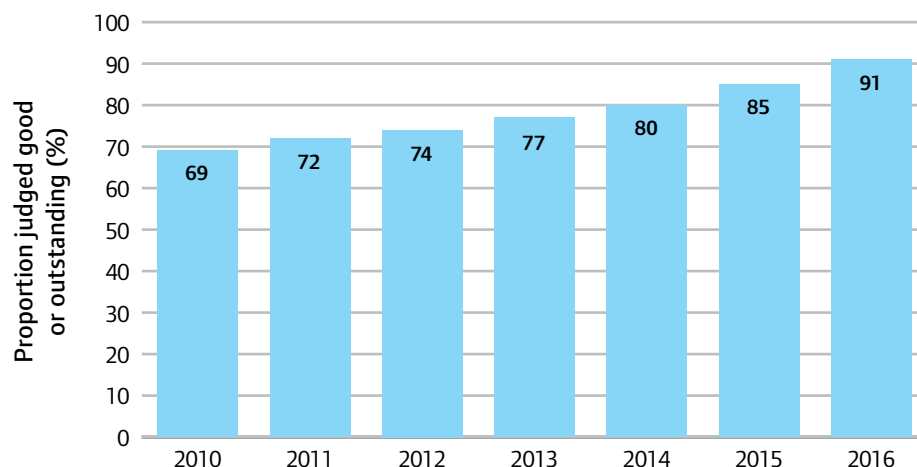
1. Data refers to the judgement of 'How well does the setting meet the needs of children in the early years foundation stage?' from the EYFS framework that began in September 2008 and the subsequent 'overall effectiveness' judgement.
2. Data refers to the providers' most recent inspection judgement as at 31 August each year for providers active on the Early Years Register as at 31 August each year.
Source: Ofsted

2. Inspection outcomes are high in all types of early years provision. The proportion of providers judged good or outstanding is higher in private and voluntary nurseries or pre-schools[33] (95%) than it is for childminders (89%). The quality of early years provision in maintained schools is similarly high. Not all maintained schools with early years provision have a current early years judgement.[34] However, based on those that have been inspected to date and previous overall effectiveness judgements, we estimate the proportion of schools with good or outstanding early years provision to be around 94%. Maintained nursery schools continue to have the highest proportions judged good or outstanding. All but one of the 403 maintained nursery schools were judged good or outstanding at their most recent inspection, with a high proportion of outstanding providers. However, maintained nursery schools make up a very small proportion of the sector, providing for only around 44,000 pupils nationally compared with 959,000 in primary schools or 1,282,000 places in the childminding, private and voluntary nursery and pre-school sectors.
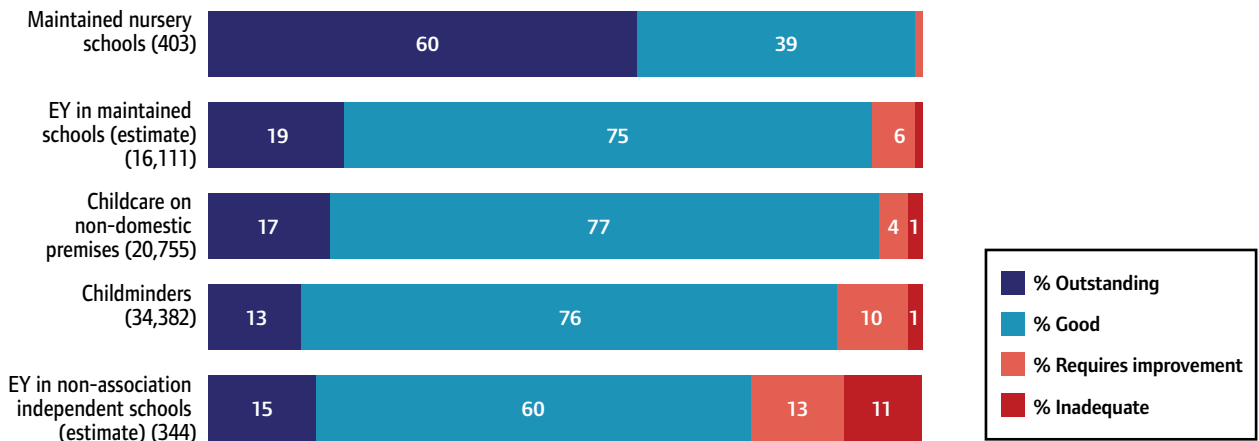
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33. Private and voluntary nurseries and pre-schools are registered as non-domestic providers.

34. The current framework for school inspection now includes a separate judgement on the quality of early years provision. Between January 2012 and August 2014, this was not the case and therefore schools inspected during that period do not hold a current judgement for early years.

3. Non-association independent schools[35] have the highest proportion of early years provision that is judged less than good. Based on those that have been inspected to date and previous overall effectiveness judgements, we estimate that in 25% of independent schools with early years provision, this provision is less than good. This year, almost one in five of these schools were judged inadequate for their early years provision. The weaknesses in these schools usually relate to the whole school and are not specific to the early years. Leaders in these independent schools often showed a lack of rigour in monitoring provision generally and in carrying out required checks on staff or the premises, including in early years.

Figure 3: Inspection outcomes of early years provision at their most recent inspection, as at 31 August 2016

Number of providers in brackets

|	% Outstanding	% Good	% Requires improvement	% Inadequate
Maintained nursery schools (403)	60	39		
EY in maintained schools (estimate) (16,111)	19	75	6	
Childcare on non-domestic premises (20,755)	17	77	4	1
Childminders (34,382)	13	76	10	1
EY in non-association independent schools (estimate) (344)	15	60	13	11

1. For maintained nursery schools data refers to the most recent overall effectiveness inspection judgement as at 31 August 2016, published by 30 September 2016.
2. Early years judgements in maintained schools and in non-association independent schools were not made in inspections between January 2012 and August 2014. For schools inspected in this period the estimate therefore uses the overall effectiveness grade for the school as a proxy for an EY judgement. If the most recent inspection of the school was a short inspection in 2015/16 that confirmed that the school was still good/outstanding overall, then it is assumed that the EY provision is also good/outstanding. This good/outstanding grade is therefore used for the estimate.
3. For childcare on non-domestic premises and childminders, data refers to the judgement of 'How well does the setting meet the needs of children in the early years foundation stage?' from the EYFS framework that began in September 2008 and the subsequent 'overall effectiveness' judgement, as at 31 August 2016, published by 30 September 2016.
4. Childminders and providers of childcare on non-domestic premises that are not on the Early Years Register are not included.
5. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.
Source: Ofsted

35. We inspect schools within the independent sector that are not part of one of the associations linked to the Independent Schools Inspectorate or the Schools Inspection Service. These non-association schools vary widely in their character and include a high proportion of faith schools and special schools.

4. This improvement in early years quality has been widely distributed across the country. In every local authority in England this year, at least four out of five childcare places will be in early years registered provision that is judged good or outstanding. The proportion of good and outstanding nurseries and pre-schools is now almost identical in the least deprived areas compared with the most deprived, the difference having decreased by seven percentage points in four years. This is a major step forward from past years where we repeatedly raised concerns about serious variations in quality between less and more deprived areas. The difference between the proportions of good and outstanding providers in the least deprived areas compared with the most deprived has decreased by five percentage points in four years for childminders and by 15 percentage points in four years for primary schools.

Figure 4: Proportion of providers judged good or outstanding for overall effectiveness at their most recent inspection, by deprivation, 2012 and 2016
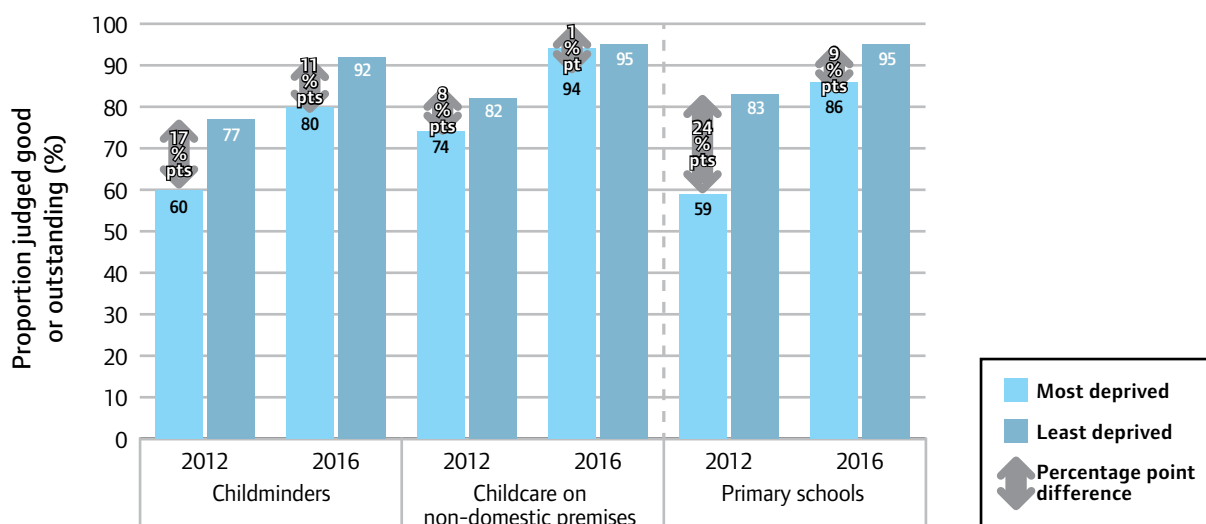
1. Data includes all maintained primary schools, not only those with early years provision.
2. Most deprived and least deprived areas are based on the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) quintile of the provider or the area in which the pupils live.
3. Data refers to the providers' most recent overall effectiveness inspection judgement as at 31 August 2016 or 31 August 2012.
4. Percentage point differences may not sum due to rounding.
Source: Ofsted

The best early education

5. Fifteen per cent of early years registered providers were found to be outstanding at their most recent inspection. Outstanding providers[36] are meticulous in monitoring children's learning and development and identifying next steps. They inspire children's curiosity and enthusiasm to learn, so that even children whose special educational needs might have made them wary of new experiences become 'have a go' learners. These providers are very focused on preparing children for transition to school in terms of knowledge, skills and understanding, and attitudes to learning. They work extremely well with parents and other agencies and schools to secure children's well-being, their readiness for school and respect for others.

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36. This is based on a review of 134 reports of early years registered providers and maintained nursery schools judged outstanding during 2015/16.

> At **Fairytales Day Nursery** in Hertfordshire, teaching is inspirational. For example, staff in the nursery room create exceptional activities that build on children's engagement with stories, such as making 'potions' to retell a story about a witch. Staff plan meticulously and ensure that science experiments also maximise the opportunities for mathematical development. Staff carefully map younger children's interests to build a daily plan for each child.
>
> Children enjoy stimulating activities each day. For example, babies compare wet and dry cornflour while pre-school children create and 'trap' clouds that they make inside jars. Children create extensive displays to reflect their favourite storybooks. Pre-school children show advanced confidence and competence and write captions for their displays. Pre-school children demonstrate a sophisticated knowledge of space and planets. Having investigated a solar eclipse, they further this by learning about and investigating gravity and space. Staff use imaginative methods to help children to become socially aware. Popular storybooks are used to illustrate positive ways to behave. Children give their favourite characters positive attitudes, such as trying hard or being kind.

6.   Detailed understanding of young children's development and careful recording of their learning are also identified as features of a number of outstanding childminders. Highly effective partnerships with parents mean that the parents are clear about their child's strengths, next steps and progress towards being ready for school.

> This **outstanding childminder in Hampshire** checks on children's progress thoroughly to help identify opportunities to challenge and extend children's individual learning needs. She has a comprehensive knowledge of children's stages of development, gained through observation of their play. She pays extremely close attention to checking their learning, so she can address any gaps in their learning and development. All information about children's achievement is shared with parents to keep them fully informed and involved with their children's learning. The childminder provides children with an extensive variety of activities, which keeps them highly stimulated and engaged.

Outcomes for children in early years

7.   In 2016, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development was 69.3%, an increase of three percentage points since 2015. This rate of improvement is not as rapid as in the previous two years. However, overall, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development has risen by 17.6 percentage points since 2013.

8.   In each of the last three years, each region in England has seen an increase in the percentage of children achieving a good level of development. The North East has shown the largest improvement. The difference between the best-performing and the worst-performing region has reduced from 10.4 percentage points in 2013 to 6.3 percentage points in 2016. All but four local authorities in England have seen improvements in the percentage of children achieving a good level of development in the past year.

Table 1: Proportion of children achieving a good level of development by gender, 2014 to 2016

	All pupils	Boys	Girls	Boy/Girl difference
2016	69.3%	62.1%	76.8%	14.7 percentage points
2015	66.3%	58.6%	74.3%	15.6 percentage points
2014	60.4%	52.4%	68.7%	16.3 percentage points

1. Children are defined as having reached a "good level of development" (GLD) at the end of the EYFS if they achieve at least the expected level in the early learning goals in the prime areas of learning (personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language) and in the specific areas of mathematics and literacy.

Source: Department for Education

9. Girls continue to outpace boys at this age, though the gap between the sexes is narrowing. Over twice as many boys as girls are identified as requiring special educational needs support in early years. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs (or an education, health and care plan) who attained a good level of development increased by one percentage point last year. However, this was still only 4% of these children.

10. Many children enter early years provision with development that is weaker than their peers. The most common areas identified where children's development lags behind are:

● communication, language and listening skills

● personal development

● behaviour.

11. Attainment on entry for these areas is weakest in our most deprived communities.[37] The strongest settings, wherever they are located, have particular strengths in helping children accelerate their communication, language and personal and social development. As a result, in these settings, children's confidence in communicating their ideas and attitudes to learning and to others is strengthened considerably and their readiness for school is significantly enhanced. Individual settings know that particular groups of children are vulnerable to underachievement. However, not all have proactive strategies and plans in place to ensure that these gaps do not become wider.

12. For children of this age, the ability to communicate is linked closely with their behaviour. Children whose communication, language and listening skills are underdeveloped often have restricted ways of communicating their needs and wants, which may reveal themselves in behaviour that is perceived as negative or immature.

13. In the great majority of early years settings, behaviour is very good. Staff who manage difficult behaviour well often also have skilful ways to interact with young children and develop their language and social skills. However, where behaviour is reported as requiring improvement, this is often linked to a lack of stimulating activities or low levels of challenge in the activities available. In addition, staff are sometimes said to manage behaviour inconsistently or not to have high enough standards and expectations.

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37. 'Teaching and play in the early years: a balancing act', Ofsted, 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-and-play-in-the-early-years-a-balancing-act.

14. Every year, a small number of young children are permanently excluded from schools for serious misbehaviour. Last year, 30 were excluded from their schools in this way. The number of younger children who were given fixed period exclusions each year has been increasing steadily. While proportions of children remain very small – less than 1% – this is an increase of over 1,000 exclusions a year compared with five years ago.

Figure 5: Fixed period exclusions for children aged four and under, 2009/10 to 2014/15
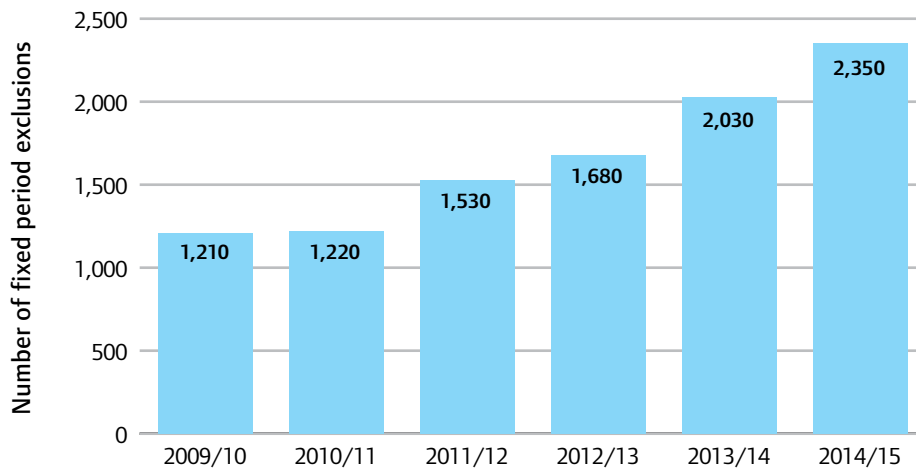
1. Age is as at the start of the academic year, which is calculated from the pupil's date of birth, supplied via the school census.
2. Permanent exclusions are not included and individual children may receive more than one fixed period exclusion.
Source: Department for Education

15. A small number of local authorities have alternative provision[38] that can serve this younger age group, with the intention that such early intervention will support the child's engagement, cooperation and progress and enable them to return to mainstream provision as soon as possible.

16. In the coming year, we will be asking our inspectors to collect more evidence about behaviour, including around listening skills, preparedness for learning and relationships in early years and about some of these alternative provisions. The aim will be to understand better how the early years contribute to a good foundation for behaviour and attitudes to learning in later school life. This includes what successful schools and settings do that helps stabilise children's behaviour and attitudes, should they enter the provision with problems.

38. Alternative provision includes pupil referral units, free schools and other arrangements; where there is no state-funded alternative provision school to provide an education for these children, other suitable alternative education must still be put in place.

Disadvantage

17. Last year's Annual Report raised concerns about the gap between the proportion of children eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving a good level of development. Though proportions achieving a good level of development were rising for both groups of children, the gap showed very little reduction over many years.

18. As of this year, the difference between children eligible for free school meals and their peers is clearly diminishing. It is now 3.5 percentage points narrower than in 2007. The largest reduction has occurred in the past year. There was a change of methodology in how outcomes were reported in 2012 that made the good level of a development a tougher test. The overall trend of improvement is still apparent.

Figure 6: Proportion of children achieving a good level of development, by eligibility for free school meals, 2007 to 2015
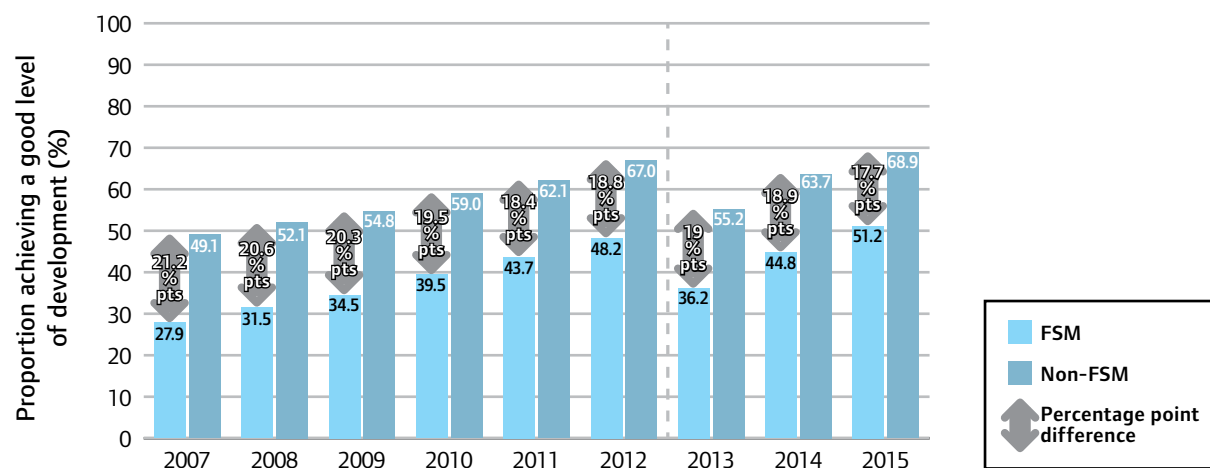
1. The line between 2012 and 2013 represents a change in the early years foundation stage profile (EYFSP) methodology. New methodology applies for the assessments carried out since 2013.
2. Children are defined as having reached a "good level of development" (GLD) at the end of the EYFS if they achieve at least the expected level in the early learning goals in the prime areas of learning (personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language) and in the specific areas of mathematics and literacy.

Source: Department for Education

19. There are variations at local authority level in the gap between the proportion of children eligible for free school meals who achieve a good level of development and their peers. **Hammersmith and Fulham** and **Southend on Sea** have seen large decreases in the gap alongside improvements for all children. In Hammersmith and Fulham, the gap has virtually closed, having decreased from 18 percentage points in 2013 to one percentage point in 2015. The local authority with the largest increase in the gap is **Blackburn with Darwen**, having widened by 10 percentage points. The gap in attainment between children who are eligible for free school meals and their peers has increased in 44 local authorities.

20. A coordinated approach is needed to close the gap in development between children from low-income families and their peers. This must ensure that children most in need of high-quality early education are able to access it. In 2016, we published a report on how local authorities and early years providers support disadvantaged families.[39] The survey found that:

   ● the range of local children's services was not integrated

   ● there was not enough definition of or understanding about disadvantage

   ● specific targets to improve outcomes for the most disadvantaged were lacking.

21. The report concluded that many local authorities and health professionals were not clear about who is accountable for improving the rate of development of children in deprived areas in order to close the gap between them and their more affluent peers. Not all local authorities had shared plans for improving the health and education outcomes for this group of children. Local authorities and health trusts often emphasise joint working and express their determination to improve education and health outcomes. However, there is not enough shared strategic planning. There is also too little accountability to check that information-sharing and interventions are effective in reducing the impact of disadvantage early enough.

22. The government has put measures in place to try to address the impact of disadvantage. One of these is funded provision for certain groups of two-year-olds.[40] Until recently, the take-up of such provision has been slow. However, between January 2015 and January 2016 the percentage of eligible two-year-olds in funded childcare increased by 10 percentage points to 68%. This meant that almost 10,000 more disadvantaged two-year-olds were benefiting from funded early learning.

23. Inspection evidence shows that outstanding providers are consistently mindful of supporting disadvantaged children. They know that they must ensure that these children have the resources and experiences to make at least similar, and if possible even better, progress than their peers.

Tunstall Nursery School in Croydon has improved from requires improvement to outstanding. Staff assess children's progress comprehensively and record their findings accurately so that the children's progress can be plotted clearly. At the end of each session, staff plan highly effectively for the next day's activities. They take the children's interest in the activities as their starting points and then plan how to extend their learning. Disadvantaged children are known to staff and are given high-quality support. This enables them not just to hold their own with other children, but, more often than not, to make stronger progress. Children make extremely rapid progress in gaining knowledge and learning social, language and number skills. This is because activities are challenging and cover a wide range of knowledge and skills.

39. 'Unknown children – destined for disadvantage?', Ofsted, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/helping-disadvantaged-young-children-ofsted-thematic-report.
40. 'Free childcare and education for 2 to 4-year-olds'; www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs/free-childcare-and-education-for-2-to-4-year-olds.

24. Two-year-olds are more likely to be in a funded childcare place in inadequate provision than three- and four-year-olds (4% compared with 2%). There were over 6,000 funded two-year-olds in inadequate provision last year. Inspection evidence shows clearly why attending inadequate provision is likely to further disadvantage children who are already behind. In one setting in the West Midlands, for example, our inspectors reported:

> Leaders do not make effective use of meetings with staff, quality assurance observations or training, to drive up the quality of care, learning and development that children receive. Staff do not know how best to support children's learning. They do not plan challenging and interesting activities to support children's learning and development across all areas. Staff's observations and assessments of children's learning are poor. Children make limited progress and gaps in their learning remain. Staff recruitment arrangements are not rigorous enough. Leaders have made staff appointments accepting poor written references. Communication with parents is not well supported by the key person system. Not all staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the child protection procedures. Children's records contain inaccurate information about individual children's medication and dietary requirements. Risk assessments are not used effectively to identify obvious hazards seen both indoors and out.

As a result of these weaknesses, the setting received an overall effectiveness judgement of inadequate.

Early years funding

25. In April 2015, the early years pupil premium was introduced to provide funding for three- and four-year-old children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Around 76,000 three-year-olds and around 31,000 four-year-olds in early education were eligible for the funding as at January 2016. Inspection reports this year identified some strong practice, in particular providers' use of the premium.

> The manager uses the early years pupil premium funding to provide one-to-one support for those children who are not reaching the range of development typical for their age. This helps them to make more rapid progress and catch up quickly in readiness for later learning in school.

> Additional government funding is used very well to ensure that disadvantaged pupils are given an equal chance to thrive and take part in all the school has to offer. The money has been spent employing a 'project worker' whose role is to support these children academically and break down any barriers to learning. Children entitled to early years pupil premium funding perform just as well as their peers. Well-focused support using this funding has ensured that there are no significant gaps in attainment between this group of children and others in the nursery.

> All children make good progress. The nursery has developed effective partnerships with local schools. They work together to identify gaps in children's learning on entry to Reception class. For example, schools identified that children needed further support to listen and pay attention. In response, the nursery has used the early years pupil premium funding to provide activities targeted at supporting these skills. Children now make faster progress in this area and are better prepared for the next stage of their learning.
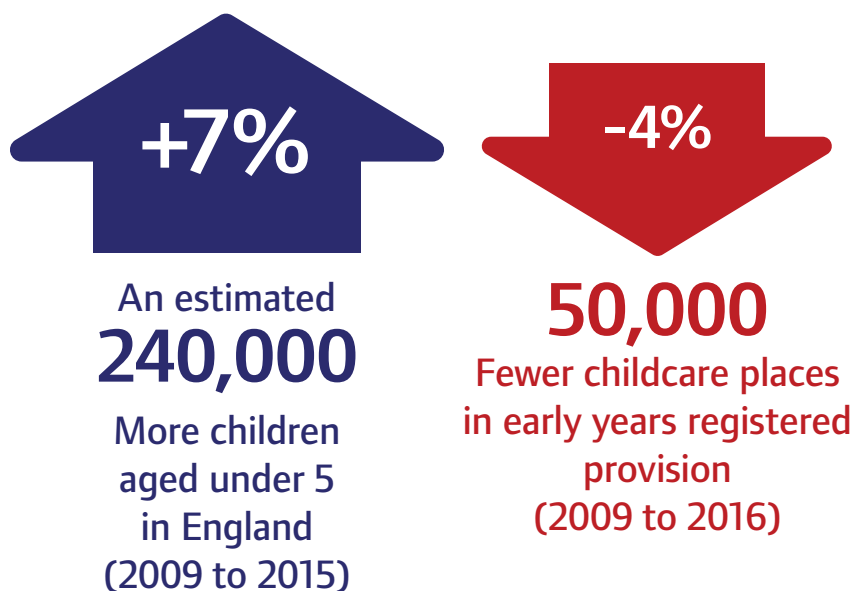
26. Our thematic report 'Unknown children – destined for disadvantage?'[41] highlighted that some providers find the application system for the early years pupil premium too complex. Some are unclear about what evidence they might provide to show successful use of the funding. The current consultation on changes to early years funding[42] includes proposals to combat some of the complexity of funding arrangements. We will continue during early years inspections to focus on the impact of the pupil premium funding over the coming year.

27. From September 2017, all three- and four-year-olds whose parents or guardians each work 16 hours or more per week and earn under £100,000 per year will be entitled to 30 hours per week of free childcare and education in England. This is double the current entitlement of 15 hours. Pilots in several local authority areas are now underway to test this before it is fully put into practice.

28. However, professionals in the early years sector have expressed concerns about whether there will be sufficient high-quality places to meet the numbers of funded children. The National Day Nurseries Association reports that 89% of private, voluntary and independent nurseries are currently making a loss when providing funded places for 15 hours per week. Given the impact of the introduction of the national living wage, many providers are concerned that funded 30-hour places would not be viable for them and therefore they may not offer them.

29. This concern is being expressed in the context of a growing child population relative to the numbers of places available. The number of early years places in the sector has not increased in line with the growth in the child population in recent years. There are now almost 240,000 more children aged four years or under in England than in 2009. In the registered sector, the number of places available has declined by over 50,000 places since 2009. Although there are now over 100,000 more children under five in early years provision within maintained schools, these places are not available to the youngest children and only to a very small proportion of two-year-olds.[43]

41. 'Unknown children – destined for disadvantage?', Ofsted, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/helping-disadvantaged-young-children-ofsted-thematic-report.

42. 'Early years funding: changes to funding for 3- and 4-year-olds', Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/consultations/early-years-funding-changes-to-funding-for-3-and-4-year-olds.

43. Statistics: school and pupil numbers, Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-school-and-pupil-numbers.

Figure 7: Changes in the population of under-fives and in early years places over time

+7%

An estimated
240,000
More children
aged under 5
in England
(2009 to 2015)

–4%

50,000
Fewer childcare places
in early years registered
provision
(2009 to 2016)

1. Population estimates are as at 30 June each year and for 2009 are rounded to the nearest 100.
2. Places in early years registered provision at 30 September 2009 and 31 August 2016. Data shows places available for children under eight, not just the early years age range.
Sources: Office for National Statistics, Department for Education and Ofsted

30. The concerns around funding and capacity being expressed by the sector are acknowledged in the recently published government consultation response to the 30 hours free childcare entitlement. This indicates that:

> 'many respondents raised issues about the level of funding for the extended entitlement and concerns about the impact on provider sustainability. We have already announced increased annual investment of £1bn for the early years entitlements within the ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant by 2019–20. This includes £300m per year from 2017–18 to uplift the average funding rate paid to providers. We are also committed to introducing an early years national funding formula so that funding is distributed more fairly across the country, and have made clear our intention to maximise the amount of funding which reaches frontline early years providers.'[44]

31. The government, local authorities and providers must plan further to ensure that enough funded places are available. They need to make sure the children of parents who cannot afford to supplement the funding do not miss out. This extended provision has the potential to further narrow the gap for disadvantaged children, providing there is capacity in the system to deliver it.

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44. '30-hour free childcare entitlement', Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/consultations/30-hour-free-childcare-entitlement.

Early education workforce

32. In our 2015 thematic report 'Teaching and play in the early years – a balancing act',[45] we highlighted how disadvantaged children need to spend more time interacting with adults than their better-off peers if they are to make good progress in their development. In some settings visited, disadvantaged two-year-olds spend up to 100% of their time with adults, who work alongside them, teaching them how to play and engage with the people and world around them. A report by the Nuffield Foundation in 2014 identified that the strength of a more qualified workforce lies in them being better equipped to cater successfully for children at 'greater risk of language and behavioural problems.'[46]

33. There is some evidence that the qualification level of the early years workforce has improved. In 2010, the Nutbrown report found that around 75% of the workforce had a level 3 qualification or above, although not necessarily one relevant to early years. Our inspection evidence shows that around 75% of staff in nurseries and pre-schools now have relevant qualifications at level 3 or above.[47] In addition, the proportion of private and voluntary providers employing at least one member of staff with early years practitioner or qualified teacher status has risen from 35% in 2011 to 48% in 2016.

34. More than a tenth of early years staff working in nurseries and pre-schools had no relevant early years qualifications at any level. Compared with many other developed countries,[48] England's workforce has a low proportion of graduates, outside of the maintained sector.

Figure 8: Highest relevant qualification level of each member of staff working in childcare on non-domestic premises, as at 31 August 2016
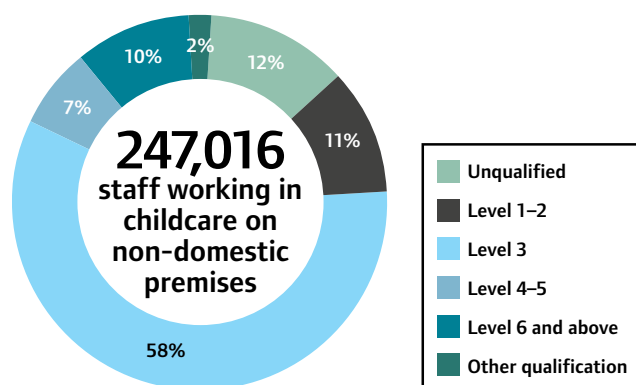
1. Data includes providers of childcare on non-domestic premises that were active as at 31 August 2016 and where staff qualification information is recorded.
2. Staff qualification information has only been included where it was recorded against the following criteria: staff with Early Years Professional/ Early Years Teacher (EYP/EYT) status, staff with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), staff with a qualification level 8 through to level 1. A levels are an example of a level 3 qualification.
3. Each staff member is counted once for their highest relevant qualification. Qualifications information is administrative data from Ofsted's inspection and regulation processes, data is only updated at inspection, but errors and omissions in recording and entering the data manually may affect the quality of the source data.

Source: Ofsted

45. 'Teaching and play in the early years: a balancing act?', Ofsted, 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-and-play-in-the-early-years-a-balancing-act.
46. 'Quality and inequality: do three- and four-year-olds in deprived areas experience lower quality early years provision?', Nuffield Foundation, 2014; www.nuffieldfoundation.org/news/disadvantaged-three-and-four-year-olds-losing-out-good-quality-nursery-provision.
47. Qualification data collected at inspection and represents data collected on over 247,000 individual members of staff.
48. 'More great childcare: raising quality and giving parents more choice', Department for Education, 2013; www.gov.uk/government/publications/more-great-childcare-raising-quality-and-giving-parents-more-choice.

35. Higher qualifications mean better quality of provision for all children, but our data suggests that its effects are most marked in areas of highest deprivation. In these areas, settings led by a member of staff qualified to at least early years professional (EYP) level and with a high proportion of staff qualified to at least level 3 are more likely to be good or outstanding. A recent report from Save the Children similarly emphasises the importance of highly qualified early years staff, particularly for certain groups of children whose development is at risk.[49]

36. There is also evidence that early years workers in outstanding or good provision are likely to be paid more than those in provision that requires improvement or is inadequate.[50] This happens in all of England's regions and is most pronounced in London, the West Midlands, the East Midlands and the South East. The dominance of young workers and apprentices contributes to the overall low pay in the early years and childcare workforce. This is because statutory minimum wage rates are lower for the under 21s and apprentices.

37. Steps to increase the levels of qualifications available in early years resulted in the introduction of early years teacher status (EYTS) in 2013. Government funding is available to support providers and trainees. The government is developing an early years workforce strategy that will set out how they will help employers to attract, retain and develop staff. The purpose of the strategy is to support staff to reach their potential and to make sure that children benefit from the knowledge, skills and experience of a well-qualified workforce.

38. From April 2015, Ofsted's initial teacher education (ITE) inspections have included inspections of EYTS programmes. Ten early years ITE providers have been inspected so far, of which eight are currently good and two require improvement.[51]

39. Strengths and weaknesses vary across these ITE providers. In three provisions judged good but with outstanding leadership and management this year, common strengths can be seen. The passion, commitment and hard work of leaders and managers in developing the courses were commended and also the ways in which they worked with providers to improve the quality of early years provision locally and regionally. The combined efforts of all leaders and managers resulted in greater consistency and accountability. Trainees and schools were clear as to what was expected of them. Trainees' progress was tracked clearly and rigorously.

40. In provision that was not yet good, there were common areas for development, such as the need to develop quality assurance procedures to ensure trainees' entitlement and reduce inconsistencies, for example in the quality of trainees' assessment. The quality of mentoring and target setting that trainees receive needed to be enhanced to support their professional development.

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49. 'Untapped potential: how England's nursery lottery is failing too many children', Save the Children, 2016; www.savethechildren.org.uk/2016-11/new-report-highlights-acute-shortage-nursery-teachers-across-england.

50. 'In for a pound: the relationship between staff wages and Ofsted grades in group-based childcare provision', Family and Childcare Trust, 2016; www.familyandchildcaretrust.org/%C2%A31-hour-wage-increase-makes-good-nurseries-outstanding-new-research-finds.

51. Two of these eight good providers were judged to require improvement in autumn 2015 but improved to good at a subsequent inspection, later in the year. The two providers that currently require improvement were judged to require improvement at both of their inspections in 2015/16.

41. Responses to our trainee questionnaire show that trainees are generally positive about their training experience and particularly about the expertise of university tutors and the support and guidance they provide. However, some trainees raised concerns about:

- their employment prospects
- placements and the quality of training and mentoring they receive, particularly in phonics and special educational needs and/or disabilities.

42. Within the sector, there are wider concerns. Providers report that they are finding it difficult to recruit and retain trainees because of a lack of understanding about EYTS and how it is perceived in relation to qualified teacher status by potential applicants, trainees and employers.[52] As a consequence, early years ITE programmes are not always viable. Development of the early years workforce is a key government priority and a new early years workforce strategy is due to be introduced in 2017.

Transition to primary

43. In April 2014, we published our early years survey report 'Are you ready? Good practice in school readiness'.[53] This looked at how the most successful early years providers ensure that disadvantaged children are ready for school. There is no formally agreed definition of 'school readiness'. However, where schools and feeder settings had developed partnerships to support transition, they were more likely to have developed a mutual understanding of what was expected in children's readiness. They helped both parents and children in identifying the right schools. They supported them through transition, with keyworkers often accompanying families to school visits.

44. Some of the providers visited for the 2014 review have been re-inspected this year and all have retained a good or outstanding rating. Readiness for school and support for transition remain a strong feature of these provisions. Receiving schools acknowledge this support as enabling children to both settle quickly and to move forward smoothly in their learning and development.

45. This year, inspectors from Ofsted's East Midlands regional team visited a range of education providers to look at their transition arrangements. Much of the transition support across all phases focused on helping children adjust to the new environment. In early years, adjusting socially and supporting families to find the right school for each child also featured strongly. Less emphasis was placed on curriculum continuity and on sharing information about children's current levels of understanding and knowledge. However, in some clusters, receiving schools and transferring settings did work closely together. They offered a range of parental and mutual support. This focused on providing information, forming positive relationships and helping families to make choices and to understand the routines, culture and ethos of the schools. Some schools and settings offered training to parents on school readiness and managing children's behaviour.

52. 'Speech: we are in a golden age of childcare', Department for Education and Sam Gyimah MP, 2015; www.gov.uk/government/speeches/sam-gyimah-we-are-in-a-golden-age-of-childcare.

53. 'Are you ready? Good practice in school readiness', Ofsted, 2014; www.gov.uk/government/publications/are-you-ready-good-practice-in-school-readiness.

Chuter Ede School was judged outstanding in 2013. It is part of the Newark partnership of schools and works with six pre-school providers. Outcomes for vulnerable groups are historically strong in terms of progress and attainment. Senior leaders acknowledged that even more can be done to raise outcomes at the end of the early years foundation stage and key stage 1.

Inspectors found that the school had a clear vision of what transition should look like. Parents were encouraged to make several visits with their children before the start of term. A booklet called 'My new school' is shared with all children. Early years staff visit each home and encourage parents to fill in a 'hopes and aspirations' booklet about their child. A formal meeting is arranged with parents to help them to support school readiness. This has resulted in 'Ready, steady, go', a document now adopted by the Newark partnership. Key workers visit children in their pre-school setting. They meet with the pre-school staff to gather detailed information about children's interests, learning and personal development. Baseline information is also gathered in the first weeks of term to help inform groups and identify any immediate interventions needed. This information is moderated with other schools and settings in the cluster. Pre-school providers are invited to visit in the term following transition to see their alumni. They discuss how things have gone and any modifications that might support groups or individuals even more in future transitions.

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Primary education

46. Over the past six years, the landscape of primary provision has changed dramatically. At the end of August 2016, 90% of primary schools held a judgement of either good or outstanding, representing better chances of a high-quality, state-funded education for 1.3 million more pupils.

Figure 9: Proportion of primary schools judged good or outstanding for overall effectiveness at their most recent inspection, 2011 to 2016
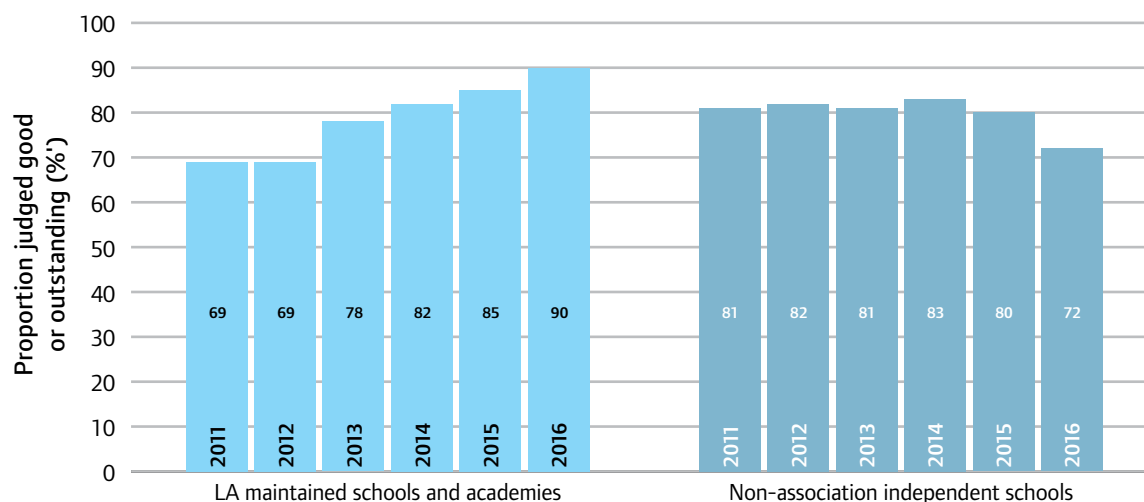
1. Based on inspections conducted by 31 August 2016 where the report was published by 30 September 2016.
2. Non-association independent schools are considered to cater for pupils of primary school age if the statutory high age which the school is registered for is 11 or under. Data excludes special schools. All through schools which cater for both the primary and secondary school age groups are excluded here but are included in the secondary school chart.
Source: Ofsted

47. The overwhelming majority of schools serving primary aged children that we inspect are maintained schools. As at 31 August 2016, there were 16,772 maintained primary schools. We also inspect the 231 independent schools for primary aged pupils that are not part of an association. Half of these independent schools have a faith ethos. The long-established independent schools with international reputations are generally members of an association and therefore not inspected by us.

48. It is our practice to report on the 'most recent' inspection of all schools, to give a picture of standards nationally. However, not all schools have been inspected in recent years. It is government policy and the law that once a primary or secondary local authority maintained school or academy is judged to be an outstanding school it becomes exempt from routine inspection. There are therefore a growing number of schools where the most recent inspection judgement for that school was given up to nine years ago.

Figure 10: The most recent inspection outcomes for all primary schools, grouped by the year in which the school's most recent inspection took place
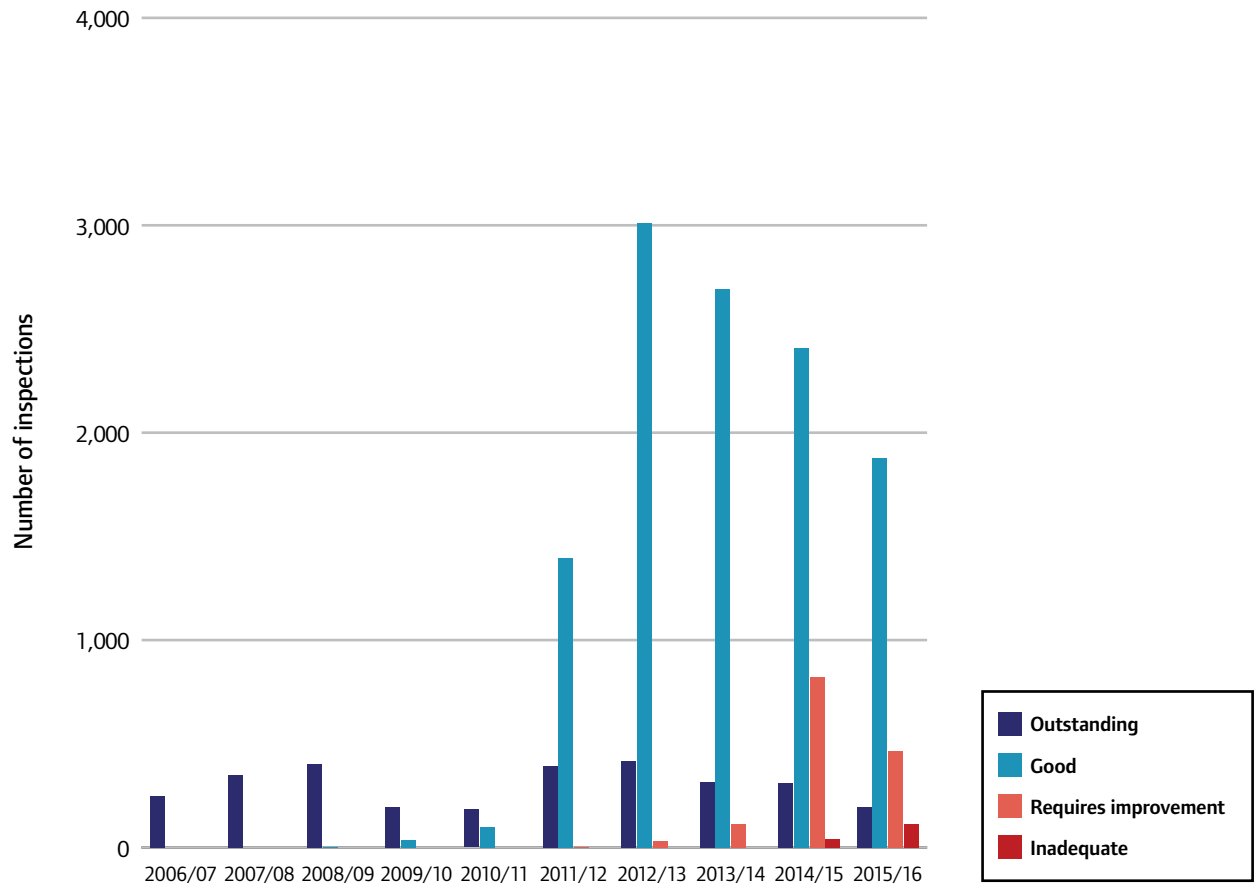
1. Schools that have had a short inspection more recently than their last full inspection are shown under the year of their short inspection.
2. There are 39 good schools whose last inspection was in 2009 or 2010, because the school has had a change of status. Their next inspection will take place within three years of the change of status.

Source: Ofsted

49. The ongoing improvement in the quality of primary schools has had the most benefit in areas of the country that needed it most. In August 2012, only 59% of primary schools with the highest proportion of pupils from deprived areas[54] were judged good or better. This was 24 percentage points lower than the schools with pupils from the most affluent areas. Now, in August 2016, there is still an imbalance, but the gap is much smaller. Eighty-six per cent of primary schools with the highest proportions of disadvantaged pupils are now good or outstanding, an increase of 27 percentage points. The gap is now 9 percentage points, so it has more than halved in only four years.

50. This effect is concentrated in those areas that were least well served by the provision of primary schools. In 2011/12, we published the proportions of good and outstanding primary schools in every local authority in England. There were 23 local authorities where fewer than 60% of pupils attended a good or outstanding primary school. Of these 23 areas, all have seen increases, and

54. This is based on the 20% of schools with the highest IDACI scores (which reflect the deprivation of the area where each pupil lives).

only two have seen increases below the level seen nationally.[55] In some areas the change has been dramatic: for example, the proportion of pupils attending a good or outstanding primary school in Coventry has more than doubled.

Table 2: Improvement in the proportion of pupils in good or outstanding schools by local authority area, 2012 to 2016

Local authority	% of pupils in good or outstanding primary schools 2016	% of pupils in good or outstanding primary schools 2012	Change from 2012 (%pts)
Coventry	93	42	▲ 51
Telford and Wrekin	95	53	▲ 42
Hackney	96	56	▲ 41
Thurrock	89	49	▲ 40
Waltham Forest	96	56	▲ 40
Tameside	93	57	▲ 37
Haringey	95	58	▲ 36
Bristol	93	58	▲ 36
Derby	78	43	▲ 35
Wakefield	87	52	▲ 34
Reading	87	53	▲ 34
Shropshire	93	59	▲ 34
Kent	88	55	▲ 33
Sandwell	90	57	▲ 33
Portsmouth	86	53	▲ 32
Medway	84	54	▲ 30
East Riding of Yorkshire	84	55	▲ 28
Norfolk	86	59	▲ 27
Wolverhampton	78	53	▲ 25
Oxfordshire	84	59	▲ 25
Northamptonshire	82	59	▲ 23
North East Lincolnshire	71	56	▲ 15
Walsall	73	59	▲ 14

Improvement above the national level

Improvement below the national level

1. Based on inspections conducted by 31 August 2016 where the report was published by 30 September 2016.
Source: Ofsted

55. During this period, weaker schools have been inspected more frequently than higher performing ones. The weakest areas of the country have therefore had more opportunities to demonstrate improvement. However, this would have had no effect unless improvement was taking place. Data is also affected by local authority schools closing and the sponsor-led academies that replace them not being included in the data until their first inspection as an academy. This affects different local authority areas to different levels, and at different points in time.

Outcomes at the end of primary school

51.   As part of changes to the national curriculum, assessment and testing in primary school, the expectations for pupils at the end of key stage 2 have been raised. A new more challenging national curriculum was introduced in 2014. In 2016, pupils were assessed using new externally marked tests and interim frameworks for teacher assessment. Results are no longer reported as levels: each pupil receives their test results as a scaled score and teacher assessments based on the standards in the interim framework. The expected standard in the tests is a scaled score of 100 or above. The results for primary schools in 2016 appear lower than in 2015, but data is not comparable across the two years. This is because the tests are different and reflect the extent to which expectations for what pupils should achieve by the end of primary school are considerably higher than the year before.

52.   In 2015, the proportion of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in reading, writing and mathematics ranged from 78% in Yorkshire and the Humber, to 84% in London. In 2016, 52% of pupils nationally reached the new and more challenging expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, and 5% reached a high standard. The highest performing region was again London with 57%, and the lowest performing regions were Yorkshire and the Humber and the West Midlands, at 49%. The spread between the lowest performing regions and the highest was wider than in 2015.

53.   Attainment at the new expected standard is highest in spelling, punctuation and grammar, at 72%, while 70% of pupils reached the expected standard in mathematics, and 66% in reading. In writing, 73% of pupils were assessed by teachers as working at the expected standard: a little higher than in any of the tested subjects.

54.   As in previous years, girls did better than boys in reading, writing and mathematics combined. Fifty-six per cent of girls achieve the expected standard in all of reading, writing and mathematics compared to 49% of boys. The gap between girls and boys is larger than that seen in previous years.

Disadvantage

55.   One of the strengths of primary provision has been the impact of better teaching on the learning of pupils who are eligible for free school meals. The trend over the past seven years has been for a slow but progressive narrowing of the gap in attainment between these pupils and their peers. At key stage 1, the attainment gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers narrowed in all subjects from 2010 to 2015, with the greatest improvement between the two groups of pupils in reading. In reading, the gap has narrowed by six percentage points over the same period.

56.   In 2014, the key stage 1 curriculum underwent a number of changes. In 2016, the first cohort of pupils taught under the new system reached Year 2, with a new set of tests being administered, which again raised the expected standard of achievement. As in key stage 2, the data for 2016 is therefore not comparable with previous years. By 2015, the attainment gaps between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers had reduced to 10, 13, eight and 10 percentage points for reading, writing, mathematics and science respectively. In 2016, the percentage point gaps in the new framework for these subjects were 17, 18, 18 and 15.

57. Similar improvements have been observed at key stage 2 where the gap has also narrowed. At age 11, the benchmark of at least Level 4 in reading, writing and mathematics was achieved by 66% of pupils eligible for free school meals, a rise of seven percentage points between 2012 and 2015. This was a faster rise than their peers, at five percentage points.[56]

Figure 11: Difference in the key stage 1 attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals and other pupils, 2010 to 2015
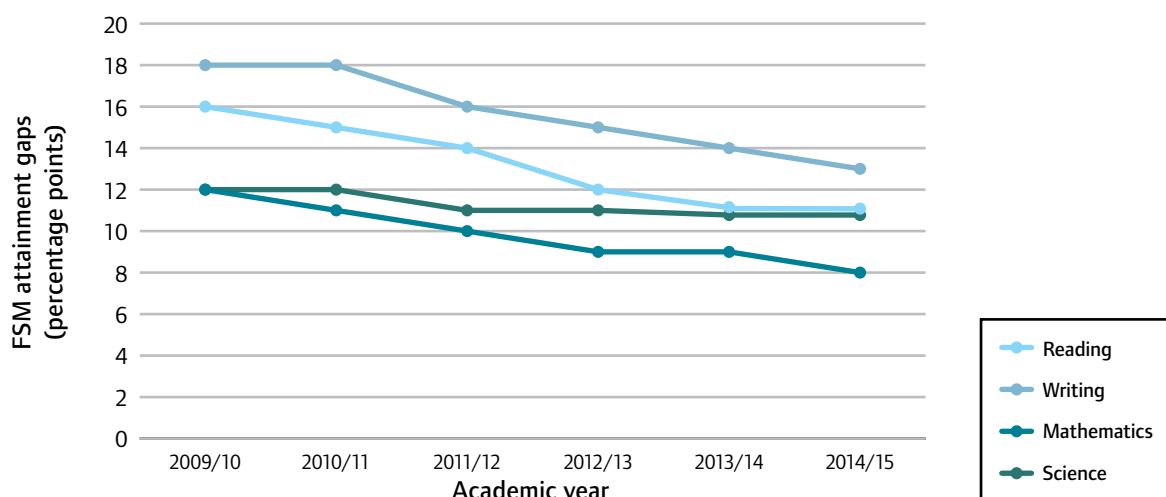
Attainment is defined as achieving Level 2 and above at key stage 1.
Source: Department for Education

58. A feature of this improvement for pupils eligible for free school meals has been the focus on reading and literacy across the curriculum, including the use of phonics. While a systematic approach to teaching early reading through phonics has been in use in schools for many years, the widespread teaching of systematic, synthetic phonics as a body of knowledge, as expected by the national curriculum, is more recent. To assess its success, the national phonics screening check was introduced in 2012. Between 2013 and 2016, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard at the end of Year 1 rose by 12 percentage points, and the difference between disadvantaged pupils and their peers reduced by three percentage points.

59. Evidence from inspection indicates that where a school ensures that they are following a systematic, synthetic approach to learning to read, pupils become confident and fluent readers quickly. Inspectors have found that the hallmarks of effective phonics teaching include:[57]

- a commitment, from leadership down to teaching staff, that phonics is the prime approach to recognising words and the quickest route to learning to read and enjoying books

- a systematic approach to learning sounds and their written representations that builds progressively from the simple to the complex

- consistent application and practise of word recognition through the regular reading of appropriately challenging books, especially for disadvantaged pupils

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56. 'Statistics: key stage 2, Department for Education', 2016; www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-key-stage-2.

57. This is based on iterative findings from inspection reports and multiple thematic reports ('Reading by six' (2010), 'Ready to read' (2014), 'Teaching and play: a balancing act' (2015)) and reflects the training given to inspectors on effective practice.

- an approach to assessment that allows leaders and teachers to know where a pupil is at in their journey towards learning to read, and what still needs to be covered to ensure that they are ready to read

- frequent opportunity to link reading and spelling, including the development of pupils' handwriting through an early focus on correct letter formation.

Curriculum

60. A new national curriculum for primary pupils was introduced in 2014, with pupils aged 11 taking new standardised tests for the first time in 2016. These tests, covering reading, grammar and spelling, writing and mathematics, were designed to be significantly more challenging than previous tests. The new national curriculum introduced many concepts to pupils years earlier than the curriculum it replaced.

At **Lady Seaward's Church of England Primary School**, inspectors found that pupils of all ages are offered a broad and well-considered curriculum that balances academic rigour and wider curriculum experiences. The school places a strong emphasis on academic study to high standards in English, mathematics and science, but also a wide array of sporting and musical clubs, supplemented by the cleverly thought-out enrichment programme. Parents, pupils and staff are overwhelmingly impressed by pupils' gains in confidence and aptitude developed through, for example, the technical theatre workshop programme producing the nativity play and working at the Northcott Theatre in Exeter. Funding to increase pupils' participation in physical activity and improve their performance in physical education and sport is used well. A large proportion of pupils take part in competitive sports. The range of activities and clubs, including badminton and archery, is very broad.

The curriculum provides an excellent foundation for pupils' appreciation of British values with a blend of national experiences, such as trips to Parliament, and local culture. Visits to places of worship and hearing visitors from Brazil explaining cultural art techniques contribute significantly to pupils' cultural understanding.

61. The underlying importance of literacy means that reading, writing, spelling and grammar remain of the utmost importance in the primary curriculum. However, this clear emphasis, which has been embraced successfully by the vast majority of primary schools, can create a risk that the curriculum becomes narrowed.

62. This year, evidence from inspections and feedback from teachers, parents and pupils highlighted a number of concerns about the science and foreign languages curricula in primary schools.[58] The pupils spoken to told inspectors that they enjoyed studying science and typically had the opportunity to learn a foreign language. However, both subjects sometimes suffered because not enough time was available for in-depth study. None of the schools visited spent more than

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58. For science, this is based on evidence from risk-assessed inspections of 234 primary schools. For foreign languages, this is based on evidence from inspections of 106 primary schools, and views from 215 parents, 316 practitioners and 6,000 pupils. All during 2015/16.

two hours a week on language study and the majority (over two-thirds) spent less than an hour on it. Around four in 10 practitioners identified pressures on time as one of the biggest barriers to effective teaching of the subject in primary schools. More time was given to science, with the majority of schools spending between one and two hours on this subject. Around a fifth of schools, however, spent less than an hour on this core subject.

63. For foreign languages in particular, there was a view from some practitioners and from more than half of parents that foreign languages were given a relatively low priority. Where schools were highly effective in their teaching of foreign languages, there was a clear importance placed on the subject within the school. This importance manifested itself in a number of ways. Some schools invested in specialist teachers and these schools started teaching the foreign language earlier than was required. Inspectors also noted an emphasis on supporting staff to develop their knowledge and skills. These schools were well connected with what was happening in other schools in language teaching. However, in the other schools inspected, primary school teachers' lack of confidence in delivering a foreign language was a clear barrier to better teaching. In over half the schools, subject knowledge was seen as a challenge. A lack of recruitment of specialist teachers was a factor in this.

64. In around a quarter of schools in this study, inspectors felt that pupils were not well prepared for further study of a foreign language. A similar proportion of parents of secondary aged pupils who fed back to us echoed this concern. There were some similar concerns for science. In just under a fifth of these schools, inspectors considered pupils not to be well prepared for key stage 3 science.

65. Around half of schools that were visited in this study were not coordinating well with secondary schools to make the transition effective in terms of their modern foreign language learning. For example, a parent described how their child had to change language between primary and secondary, even though the primary school was local to the secondary school.

66. Pupils told inspectors that they like science because they do experiments and they love investigating. A lack of separate science lessons was associated with pupils not being given the opportunity to undertake practical investigations or explain scientific ideas in writing, based on the knowledge they had acquired. When schools use scientific writing well, it helps pupils to understand and explain ideas effectively. Pupils develop scientific vocabulary and show an understanding of fair testing. In schools where scientific writing was weak, all pupils had written the same thing, or the writing involved worksheets or tick boxes. Writing in science was used to develop literacy, but sometimes the literacy was the prime focus, rather than the scientific knowledge and understanding.

67. In another study carried out by inspectors this year, the impact of limited time in the curriculum, a lack of separate lessons and limited opportunity to develop learning at greater depth were also identified as issues for the study of design and technology in primary schools.

Design and technology in primary schools

Inspectors gathered evidence about design and technology (D&T) provision from 26 primary schools in 2016. The proportion of time pupils spend on the iterative design process, working creatively to solve relevant design problems, was typically very limited. Often the D&T projects were linked to a whole-school theme or topic. This resulted in a prevalence of projects that asked pupils to 'design' a model of a historical item such as a Tudor house, Mayan headdress, Roman shields or pottery. Leaders and teachers described these as design projects when they were actually 'craft model making' activities, neither improving the pupils' historical knowledge nor their D&T expertise. Some projects linked to themes such as space and transport required pupils to design a space rocket, or a moon buggy. Such projects can inspire creativity and imagination. However, because the pupils were designing something they could not test the functionality of, they did not learn to refine and develop their first ideas into something that worked. Very little evidence was found of pupils having opportunities to apply knowledge of computing to program, monitor or control their designs.

Where school leaders had a better grasp of subject requirements, projects were focused on a useful, testable, age-appropriate context. Designing a vehicle became 'design a vehicle for teddy'. Designing a rocket involved designing a rocket that could propel something into the air and for which the success of the design could be tested. Several schools provided a range of examples of pupils designing for a purpose. These included designing vehicles to transport an egg safely and designing and constructing shelters.

When planning to meet the 2014 D&T national curriculum requirements, leaders typically focused on the end of key stage expectations to define what pupils should be taught, instead of just using these expectations as indicators of where children broadly might be in terms of their knowledge, understanding and skills. In other words, these schools worried about teaching to the end-point assessment before mapping out the curriculum coherently. As a result, the overall aims and purpose of the subject were overlooked or not considered rigorously.

Assessment was another area of significant weakness. In most cases, schools had not yet developed an approach to assessing pupils' achievement in D&T in line with the new national curriculum because of the priority given to English and mathematics. Leaders had not defined the precise skills and knowledge they expected pupils to acquire in the subject at the end of each project or over time. Therefore, teachers were not well placed to judge how well pupils had achieved or what their next steps should be. The need for pupils to have opportunities to practise and develop expertise was a clear gap.

Assessment in primary schools

68. In 2014, the government abolished the previous system of national curriculum levels, leaving schools free to develop and use their own systems of assessment. On inspection this year,[59] inspectors noted that only around one in four schools were at a good stage of developing an assessment system in the absence of levels. Around one in three schools were at an early stage of developing their systems. Almost exclusively, reading, writing and mathematics were the areas focused on for this assessment development work.

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59. Evidence was collected during 2015/16 from 259 routine inspections of primary schools and secondary schools.

69. Inspectors found that a small number of secondary schools were working closely with their primary 'feeder schools' to come to a common understanding and approach to 'life without levels'. This increased outward focus was also shown in the use of external moderation across groups of schools (around one in three schools). In some schools, inspectors recorded improvement in staff understanding and confidence in shaping the curriculum for their pupils, in turn leading to improved quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This is positive, because it signals growing knowledge about curriculum development among the profession, something that has been missing for some time.

70. Not everybody is content about the move away from national curriculum levels. Where a small proportion of governors reacted positively to the change, responses from our call for evidence on governance[60] showed that these were in the minority. Governors were clearly confused about the reason for the change and made the point that challenge was difficult when the yardsticks are internal rather than linked to a national system. The most common views given were either that the loss of levels was a step backwards, or that it had not been properly explained to them. The common perception was that the change made it difficult to understand school systems, how progress was measured and whether progress was good enough.

71. The change has not had the desired impact in a significant minority of schools. Around one in five were still using at least some aspects of the old system. Inspectors noted the continuing use of 'levels' and 'sub-levels' without taking into account the underlying changes to the national curriculum, its contents and the increased expectations.

Transition from primary

72. An effective transition from primary to secondary school is very important. The best transition ensures that pupils get off to a flying start in their academic studies at secondary school. It involves effective collaboration and communication between primary and secondary partner schools, focused on the curriculum and underpinned by a shared understanding of the ways learning is assessed and the language of assessment. This is more crucial than ever, following the recent changes to the curriculum and national assessments.

73. Evidence gathered from primary schools this year was consistent in its key concern.[61] Primary leaders thought that secondary schools were confused by and/or unaware of the new way that pupils' attainment in national key stage 2 tests is reported, now that national curriculum levels have been abolished. Primary school leaders suggested that, as a result of these changes, there was no longer a shared language of assessment between primary schools and their secondary partners.

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60. There were 2,632 responses to the call for evidence from chairs and vice-chairs of the governing body, other governors and clerks, business managers, school staff including headteachers, advisers and chief executive officers.

61. Based on evidence collected on inspection from 35 primary schools. The views of 18 secondaries identified by the primary schools as one of their main transition partners, were surveyed through follow-up phone calls. 30 members of Ofsted's parent panel who are parents of new Year 7 pupils, completed a survey about their child's transition in English and mathematics.

74. A key issue, from the primary perspective, was that the secondary schools were unwilling to take on board the wealth of information that the primaries had about pupils' academic strengths and weaknesses. A number of secondary schools had not altered their approach to transition this year, despite the far-reaching nature of the changes to assessment nationally. This was shown when some secondary schools asked their primary school colleagues for attainment information displayed in terms of national curriculum levels. Some primary leaders commented that they had made a determined effort to share detailed information, such as how well pupils can solve problems in mathematics and interpret complex vocabulary in English, with colleagues in secondaries. However, a perceived sense of mistrust between primary and secondary colleagues, coupled with confusion about how learning is assessed, meant that in most cases, this rich stream of information had not been shared.

75. As part of our work looking at transition arrangements, we spoke to some parents of new Year 7 pupils. Some of these parents were very disappointed that their youngsters were repeating learning at secondary school that had already been mastered in the lower years of primary school. Parents were particularly concerned by comments made by teachers in pupils' first lessons at secondary school, such as: 'I'm going to assume you know nothing about this and start right at the beginning'.

Secondary education

76. The proportion of good and outstanding maintained secondary schools has increased again this year, with more than 420,000 more pupils in good and outstanding secondary schools than in 2010. While the overall performance of secondary schools still lags behind primary schools, and there is more to be done to bring schools in the North and Midlands up to the level of the rest of the country, the overall trend has been for better teaching in secondary schools and more schools providing a good or outstanding education.

Figure 12: Proportion of secondary schools judged good or outstanding for overall effectiveness at their most recent inspection, 2011 to 2016
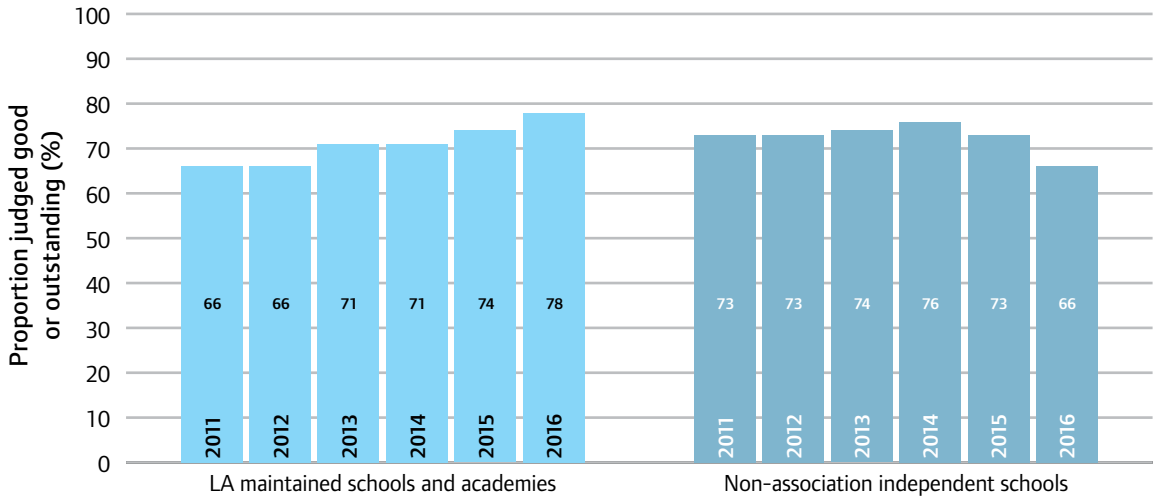
1. Based on inspections conducted by 31 August 2016 where the report was published by 30 September 2016.
2. Excludes other independent special schools. Secondary includes 'all-through' schools where pupils cover all key stages.
3. Secondary non-association independent schools include those schools where the statutory high age is 12 or older (secondary), or where the statutory age range covers all key stages (all through).
Source: Ofsted

77. While the overall picture in maintained secondary schools is an improving one, with an increase of 12 percentage points since 2011, there has been a considerable fall in the quality of non-association independent schools serving secondary aged pupils since 2014. In 2014, the independent school standards were amended and strengthened. Since 2015, these independent schools have been inspected against the common inspection framework, which holds them to account in similar ways to maintained schools for the quality of their work. In 2015/16, 28 independent schools for secondary aged pupils declined from good or outstanding to less than good. Sixteen of these were faith schools. Common features in declining schools[62] were poor leadership, management and governance. Because of poor monitoring of safeguarding practices and the quality of teaching, weaknesses were able to develop without intervention being taken. A failure to stay up to date with current requirements was frequently an issue. For many of the faith schools that declined, there were also concerns about the narrowness of the curriculum.

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62. This is based on a review of 28 reports of non-association independent schools inspected this year that declined to less than good.

78. The overall rate of improvement in maintained secondary schools has not been replicated in every region. The two regions that have seen the strongest improvements in the proportion of secondary schools judged good or outstanding between 2011 and 2016 are East of England (21 percentage point increase) and Yorkshire and the Humber (15 percentage point increase). However, the position in Yorkshire and the Humber was so low in 2011 – only 55% of secondary schools were good or outstanding – that the region is still slightly behind where London was five years ago.

79. In some parts of the North and Midlands, improvement over the last five years has stagnated. In 2011, the North West was one of the stronger regions, but the proportion of pupils in good and outstanding schools is now just over three percentage points higher than five years ago. This means there are only just over 3,000 more pupils in good and outstanding secondary schools in the region compared to an increase of over 90,000 pupils in London in the same period.[63]

80. Last year we reported that there was an 11 percentage point difference in the proportion of good and outstanding secondary schools in the regions of the North and Midlands compared with the rest of the country. This remains an issue; in fact, the gap has widened further this year to 12 percentage points. There are more than twice as many secondary schools judged inadequate: 98 schools in the North and Midlands (6%) compared with 44 in the South and East (3%).

Improvement in secondary schools

81. One factor that leads to higher proportions of good and outstanding secondary schools over time is the improvement of schools that were previously judged satisfactory. In 2012, Ofsted removed the judgement 'satisfactory' and replaced it with 'requires improvement'. When that change was made, there were 933 schools that were satisfactory. In 2016, the majority of those schools (56%) are now good or outstanding schools. A smaller proportion of these schools (19%) have closed. Of the 234 schools that are still open and less than good, more than a quarter are proposed to close in the future.[64]

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63. While a declining pupil population in the North West has contributed to some of the difference between the two regions, it does not account for it entirely.

64. Data based on schools open as at 31 August 16. In September 2016, Department for Education data suggests that a further 65 schools were due to close at some stage.

Figure 13: Improvement in the overall effectiveness of secondary schools that were satisfactory in August 2012 (percentages)

	% Outstanding	% Good	% Requires improvement	% Inadequate	Closed to become academy	Closed for other reason
31 August 2016	3	53	19	6	14	5
31 August 2015	2	48	27	7	11	5
31 August 2014	2	40	38	9	7	3
31 August 2013	2	28	58	8	3	2
31 August 2012			100			
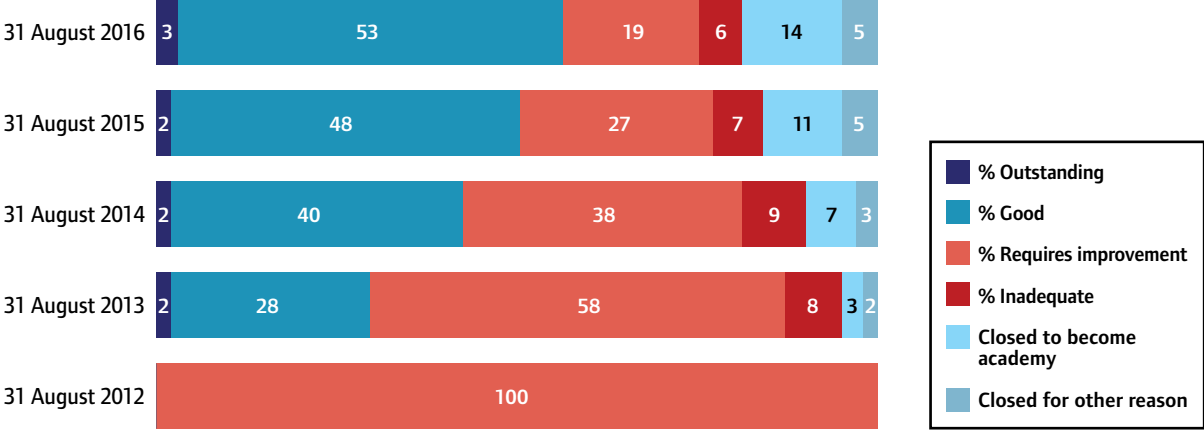
1. On 31 August 2012, 933 secondary schools had been judged to be satisfactory at their most recent inspection.
2. Reason for closure taken from Edubase on 2 September 2016.
3. Where a school has become a converter academy, the school retained the inspection outcome of their predecessor school and the inspection outcome is shown in the chart. However, where a school closed to become a sponsor-led academy, the school is shown as 'Closed to become an academy'.
4. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.

Source: Ofsted and Department for Education

82. This year, in secondary schools that improved to good or outstanding from requires improvement, it was the strong capacity of leaders and managers to secure improvement that made the difference.[65] In the eight secondary schools that went from requires improvement to outstanding this year, leaders responded quickly and incisively to the challenges and areas for improvement from previous inspections. Leaders at all levels were united in their purpose and understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Communication and collaboration were strong and the headteachers set an ambitious direction to improve learning, which leaders throughout the school were consistent in following. Staff felt actively involved in the development of the schools.

83. The leaders who created this successful improvement had clear oversight of standards within the school. Their strong evaluative skills enabled them to analyse the performance of the school and target improvement activity appropriately. Their management was solid and consistent and focused on the right things. Their decision-making developed sustainable improvement as well as tackling immediate short-term issues.

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65. This is based on a review of the reports of 114 secondary schools that improved from requires improvement to good or outstanding this year.

84. A common feature in improving schools was a more purposeful and accountable role for middle leaders. This was an integral part of developing a sharper focus in their work on improving teachers' expertise. Successful schools both developed the confidence of middle leaders to take a greater role in improving teaching and ensured that they had the confidence and skills to hold teachers to account for weak practice. Successful middle leaders in these rapidly improving schools were continuously checking and challenging staff about the progress of different groups of pupils. Middle leaders were made accountable for good continual development of teachers that supported improvement in poorer performance and rewarded good performance. Schools made good use of mentors and shared good practice across the organisation.

The principal of **Oldham Academy North** has been instrumental in driving rapid improvement across the school. He and his able senior leaders are highly driven in their quest to provide good teaching and learning for all pupils in their care. Recent appointments of senior and middle leaders have strengthened the school's capacity for further, sustained and embedded improvement. New leaders have become very effective in a short period. Middle leaders now take responsibility for the achievement and personal development of their pupils and hold other staff strongly to account for the quality of their work. They have a good understanding of the needs of pupils and clear plans are in place to raise the quality of teaching and learning even further. They use the dedicated weekly subject meetings to drive up standards in their departments. They work tirelessly to improve pupils' learning. Consequently, standards are rising quickly and pupils are making good progress across the school.

Senior leaders in **Felpham Community College** monitor the quality of teaching very effectively and they know teachers' individual strengths and areas for further development well. They use this information to provide focused training and support for teachers. This has led to improved outcomes in most subject areas.

Middle leaders trust and respect the headteacher and his senior team. They appreciate the challenge leaders bring to their work. Working together has ensured that teaching is now securely good in English, mathematics, science and across nearly all other subject areas.

Subject leaders work as an enthusiastic and committed team and they have been effective in driving improvements within their own subject areas. A culture of collaborative learning, professional dialogue and coaching has raised standards of teaching and learning. Staff surveys and feedback to inspectors indicate that this approach is valued by teachers and staff morale is high.

85. In the schools that were found to have improved, there was a very clear pattern of improved teaching because leaders had focused on continuous bespoke professional development. Investment in highly personalised training, feedback and assessment of the quality of teaching was beneficial. Senior leaders understood clearly what staff needed to improve their teaching. Around one in six inspection reports specifically mentioned the positive impact of external sources of support, including multi-academy trusts, teaching school alliances, local authorities and informal partnerships with local schools.

86. Good partnerships in improving schools took a number of forms. Partnerships provided support to improve teaching, learning and assessment. Some acted as a critical friend for assessing the evaluation skills and results of self-evaluation. Some schools benefited from expertise and support for vulnerable learners.

> The **Uttoxeter pyramid of schools**, which comprises one high school, three middle schools and 13 first schools, is becoming an increasingly important and helpful network. For example, schools in the pyramid have developed a common assessment system that they all use. They have also jointly planned their curriculum to support pupils' transition from one school to another. Coordinated training for staff in their second year of teaching is proving effective in developing these teachers' skills.

87. In some areas of the country, coordinated efforts at a local authority level have resulted in higher inspection outcomes and improved pupils' attainment where these have been low in the past. In **Walsall**, for example, school improvement partners were reorganised and streamlined. As a result, officers were engaged with school leaders, so that assessment information about pupils' progress and performance was shared with the local authority's school improvement team more systemically. While not necessarily attributable to these actions, Walsall saw an improvement in its GCSE performance in 2015. The proportion of good or better schools in Walsall is now close to the national level.

Outcomes at the end of secondary school

88. As part of the government's reform of standards, the accountability measures for pupil outcomes at the end of secondary school were revised. This year, the Progress 8 and Attainment 8 measures have been published for all state-funded secondary schools for the first time. These measures of school performance focus on progress and attainment across eight GCSE subjects, which may include three high-quality technical or vocational subjects. Whereas the previous benchmark focused on the proportion of pupils securing the relatively high grade of A* to C in only five subjects, the new measures reflect the wider curriculum and all grades count towards the measure, not just those above a C. The proportions of pupils entering and achieving the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) are also a published accountability measure.

89. Last year we reported that there was a substantial gap across all performance measures between the regions in the North and Midlands and the rest of the country. This year it continues to be the case that all the regions of the North and Midlands remain below the national average on all measures. This is true of both the new headline measures[66] and the previous measure of five GCSEs grades A* to C including English and mathematics.

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66. In 2016, the Department for Education implemented a new school accountability system. The headline accountability measures are: Attainment 8 and Progress 8, attainment in English and mathematics (A* to C), and English Baccalaureate (EBacc) entry and achievement.

90. The measure that shows the most dramatic educational divides is in the achievement of the EBacc. At a national level, the proportion of all pupils in state schools achieving the EBacc has not changed since 2014 and remains 24%. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals in state schools attaining the EBacc has also not changed from last year; it remains at 10%. The gap in achievement between pupils eligible for free school meals and their more affluent peers has grown over time against this measure. In 2010/11, the difference was 13 percentage points, and in 2014/15 it was 17 percentage points.

Figure 14: Percentage of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate, 2011 to 2015
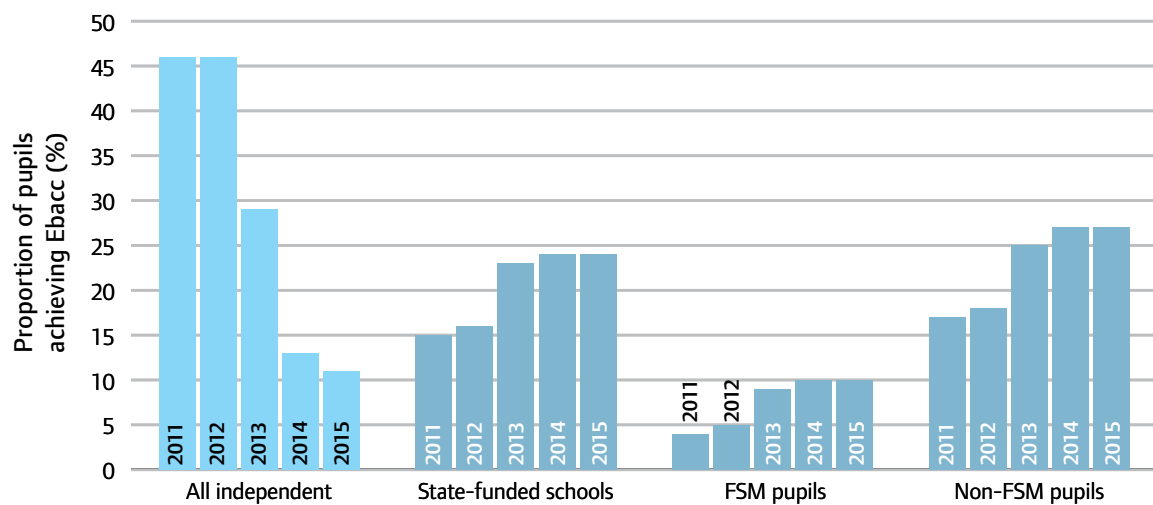
1. 'All independent' includes non-maintained special schools, independent special schools and other independent schools. Data includes both association and non-association independent schools.
2. 'State-funded' includes academies, free schools, city technology colleges, further education colleges with provision for 14- to 16-year-olds and state-funded special schools. They exclude independent schools, independent special schools, non-maintained special schools, hospital schools, pupil referral units and alternative provision. Alternative provision includes academy and free school alternative provision.
3. Pupils eligible for free school meals and those not eligible represent state-funded schools only (including academies and CTCs).
Source: Department for Education

91. Looking at a constituency level, there are wide disparities in EBacc achievement. In Bournemouth West or Leeds Central, for example, only 4% of pupils achieved the EBacc, which was the lowest in the country. By contrast, in Richmond Park, the proportion was the highest in the country at 52%. This means a child in Richmond Park was 13 times more likely to achieve this award than a child in Bournemouth West. Differences can be seen even in small geographic areas. The proportion in Bournemouth East was 36% – nine times higher than in the other half of the town.

92. As well as reporting concerns about the divide in the quality of secondary education between the north and south of the country, we have previously reported concerns about achievement in some of the more isolated parts of the country, particularly coastal areas. Of the 77 areas[67] where fewer than 15% of pupils achieved the EBacc, 22 were on the coast.

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67. Analysis is based on constituency areas.

93. One of the widest gaps in outcomes between the North and Midlands and the rest of the country is the achievement of the most able pupils.[68] The difference in the achievement of A* to C in English and mathematics between the two halves of the country in 2016 was four percentage points for all pupils. However, for the most able pupils going on to secure an A or A* in English and mathematics, the gap was six percentage points. The differences were even greater between some regions. The gap between London and the North West for the most able pupils reaching A or A* in English and mathematics was eight percentage points.

Figure 15: Performance of the most able pupils at GCSE in the North and Midlands compared to the South and East, 2015
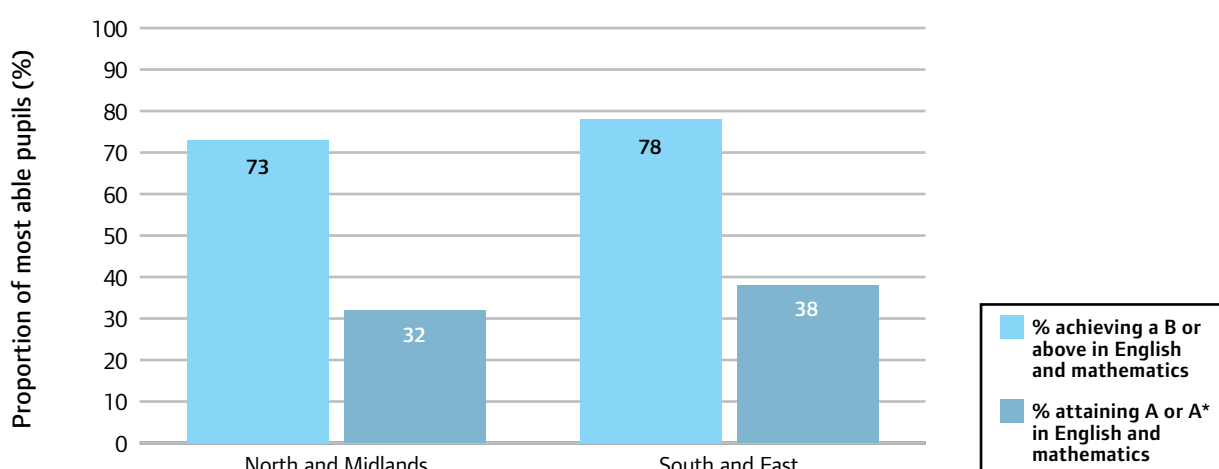
1. Data is based on pupils who achieved Level 5 or above at key stage 2 in English and mathematics in 2010, and took their GCSEs in 2015.
2. Data is based on test results and does not include results of teacher assessments. In 2010 some schools boycotted the key stage 2 tests so are not included in the data.
Source: Department for Education

94. Being located in the North and Midlands is not a necessarily a barrier to high achievement for the most able. One of the stronger local areas for most-able pupils achieving B or above in both English and mathematics was **Leeds**, with 78% reaching that level. **Knowsley**, however, was one of the weakest at only 59%.

95. One of the common features of secondary schools that improved in their overall effectiveness grade this year[69] was that senior leaders recognised that there had been too little stretch for their most able pupils. While these schools had taken steps to remedy this, in many cases at the time of inspection it was still early days. Some of the most able pupils said they would like more challenge in their work to push them even further. Some schools provided more challenge through the curriculum by encouraging study of three sciences and two languages. New extra-curricular activities were targeted at the most able and schools began visits to Russell Group and other universities. Some schools set aside funding to provide additional resources for activities for the brightest pupils.

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68. 'Most able' pupils are those who have achieved Level 5 and above at the end of key stage 2.
69. This is based on a review of the reports of 114 secondary schools that improved from requires improvement to good or outstanding this year.

At **Bedford Free School**, the most-able pupils make good progress overall and especially in English, humanities and languages. Opportunities in the school's 'enhanced curriculum' develop important knowledge, skills and qualities in leadership, resilience and problem-solving, as well as raising their aspirations for higher education through a significant range of opportunities such as 'operation Oxbridge' and STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) programmes.

The most able pupils make good progress in most subjects at **Highcrest Academy**. They are identified as soon as they join the school and their progress tracked closely by academic mentors. Pupils log the further challenges for themselves in all of their subjects. Teachers are aware of the need to ensure that these pupils are given appropriately demanding work in lessons. In 2015, over one third of GCSEs were graded A*, A or B, which reflected well on an intake of which only 17% were higher attainers at the end of Key Stage 2. The high proportion of A* and A grades in English literature last year also indicates good achievement by the most able pupils.

Disadvantage

96. For pupils who are both most able and from a disadvantaged background, the quality of teaching and the determination of a school to stretch and challenge these pupils is essential if they are to realise their potential. The proportion of pupils from more affluent backgrounds who achieved highly at the end of primary school who are not then entered for the EBacc in non-selective schools is surprisingly high, at 27%. However, it is worse still for disadvantaged most-able pupils, 40% of whom were not even entered for this foundation set of enabling subjects.

97. Any most-able pupil, whether disadvantaged or not, is more likely to make good progress if they are in a school where they are not in a tiny minority. In those non-selective schools with the smallest proportions of the most-able disadvantaged pupils, only 48% of these pupils made expected progress.[70] By contrast, in non-selective schools where the proportions of most-able disadvantaged pupils were highest, 69% made expected progress.

98. Areas with selective schools represent some of the areas with the highest proportions of most-able pupils reaching top grades at the end of secondary school.[71] However, some of these areas have very substantial differences in achievement when family background is taken into account. While the expectation for most-able pupils is to achieve at least a grade B at GCSE, achievement of an A or A* is an important target if more pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are to secure places in the most competitive universities and, from there, access to the professions.

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70. Based on pupils reaching Level 5 or above in English and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 going on to achieve B or above in English and mathematics at the end of key stage 4.

71. There are 10 local authority areas defined in legislation as selective: Bexley, Buckinghamshire, Kent, Lincolnshire, Medway, Slough, Southend-on-Sea, Torbay, Trafford and Sutton.

Figure 16: Proportion of the most able pupils achieving A/A* in GCSE English and mathematics, by highest and lowest performing local authority areas in 2015

Local authority	Other pupils	Disadvantaged pupils
Reading	63	52
Barnet	63	39
Kingston upon Thames	63	28
Sutton	60	35
Southend-on-Sea	57	28
Hammersmith and Fulham	55	38
Slough	51	26
Buckinghamshire	51	31
Ealing	50	31
Hounslow	49	33
Nottingham	27	12
Islington	27	20
Portsmouth	25	16
Havering	25	11
Coventry	25	11
Rochdale	24	18
Bury	24	11
Bexley	21	12
Knowsley	20	5
Sandwell	16	13

1. Data is based on pupils that achieved Level 5 or above at key stage 2 in English and mathematics in 2010, and took their GCSEs in 2015.
2. Data is based on test results and does not include results of teacher assessments. In 2010 some schools boycotted the key stage 2 tests so are not included in the data.
3. The impact of the key stage 2 boycott varied between different local authorities. Local authorities where at least half of schools boycotted the key stage 2 tests are not included in the chart.
4. Local authorities with fewer than 100 most-able pupils in the GCSE data are not included in the chart.

Source: Department for Education

99. Inspectors from the South West region interviewed headteachers from 172 secondary schools in the region to better understand the practice that has been successful in those areas that have raised the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. One of the principles identified was the importance of not treating pupils eligible for the pupil premium as a homogeneous group. Another principle they talked about was that disadvantaged pupils do better when they have a high profile within a school. Successful schools often appoint a senior leader to raise the profile and champion the learning of disadvantaged pupils.

100. Governing bodies play an important role in challenging senior leaders on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. In our report on governance, 'Improving governance',[72] we reported that over half of the 2,600 responses to our call-for-evidence identified a commitment and knowledge of the local community as an essential aspect of good governance. For those schools in deprived areas, improving governance involved working hard to understand the particular issues in the community and finding innovative ways in which to address disadvantage.

101. Actions taken by some of the survey schools to improve their understanding of and engagement with the community included:

- an audit of skills that included a 'knowing the local community' measure
- the recruitment of people who work in the local community who could relate information from school to families and vice versa
- the recruitment of governors from small local firms and local religious organisations
- encouraging parent governors to share information both from the community and to the community, and to contribute to higher aspirations.

Children looked after and children in need

102. Children looked after are not a homogenous group, but they are very likely overall to experience lower progress and attainment than their peers who are not in care. In Ofsted's 2016 social care annual report,[73] we reported the positive effect that being 'looked after' can have for children who have experienced disruption or trauma before they entered care. However, the wider group of vulnerable children, those 'in need', are of equal, if not greater, concern in terms of their academic progress.

103. There are 394,400 children in need nationally, out of which 70,440 are children looked after.[74] Both groups of pupils will have had experiences in their home lives that have identified them as needing the support of children's social care services. Unlike children looked after, children in need are not looked after by the local authority in residential or foster care. The vast majority of children in need will have remained with their families. Recent analysis showed that children looked after are more likely to make expected progress in English and mathematics than the wider group of children in need.

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72. 'Improving governance: governance arrangements in complex and challenging circumstances', Ofsted, 2016; available on www.gov.uk/ofsted from mid December 2016.

73. Social care annual report: 2016, Ofsted, June 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-social-care-annual-report-2016.

74. Characteristics of children in need: 2015 to 2016', Department for Education, November 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/characteristics-of-children-in-need-2015-to-2016. 'Children looked after in England including adoption: 2015 to 2016', Department for Education, September 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption-2015-to-2016.

104. The accountability for oversight of the achievement of children looked after is very clear. These children are highly visible in both school and national level data. By contrast, children in need are harder to track as a group. This is because their status can change quickly and their 'in need' status may only last for a brief period. The overall trajectory for the educational progress of children looked after is one of improvement. For children in need, however, there is a lack of visibility and accountability. The poor progress of this much larger group of children reflects this.

105. What all vulnerable children need to help them achieve at school is scrutiny of their progress and robust challenge to schools where that progress is poor. In the majority of local authorities inspected, virtual school headteachers have taken an effective lead role in ensuring that the necessary oversight and challenge is provided for children looked after.

Transition into secondary

106. In our survey report on provision for the most able,[75] ineffective transition arrangements with feeder primary schools were identified as a key factor that led to poor progress for these pupils. Poorly managed arrangements left many academically gifted pupils treading water in the first few years of secondary school rather than building on the gains made at key stage 2. In our report 'Key stage 3: the wasted years?',[76] inspectors interviewed senior leaders who recognised such poor transition as a key weakness in their schools, accepting that some pupils would repeat unnecessarily some of what they had learnt in key stage 2. Evidence from pupils indicated that this problem was particularly acute in English and mathematics, the subjects in which standards and expectations have been raised most in primary schools.

107. Evidence gathered from the leaders of secondary schools this year about transition in English and mathematics[77] supported many of the concerns expressed by primary leaders and by some parents. The picture in secondary schools was more variable than in primary schools. All leaders interviewed could see how their school's transition arrangements might improve, with some remarking how their work in this area had stalled this year.

108. Secondary leaders agreed that changes to the curriculum and assessment in key stage 2 presented significant challenges for transition in English and mathematics this year. While secondary schools have responded to these challenges in different ways, a common feature was the re-testing of Year 7 pupils to check their levels on entry. These tests often took place after the long summer holidays, when pupils had had a significant break from school life. Secondary schools often used the results from these tests to place pupils in ability groups, potentially entrenching lower expectations, particularly for some disadvantaged pupils.

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75. 'The most able students: an update on progress since June 2013', Ofsted, March 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-most-able-students-an-update-on-progress-since-june-2013.

76. 'Key stage 3: the wasted years?', Ofsted, September 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-3-the-wasted-years.

77. Based on evidence collected on inspection from 35 primary schools. The views of 18 secondaries identified by the primary schools as one of their main transition partners were surveyed through follow-up phone calls.

109. In those schools that made an effort to ensure that their own assessments were fully triangulated with primary assessments, it was still the case that insufficient focus was placed on analysing the performance of different groups. Fewer secondary English subject leaders were aware of the question level analysis tool (QLA), available through the NCA toolkit and on RAISEonline, than their counterparts in mathematics. Some secondary leaders and teachers have used the QLA to review and refine planned learning in Year 7. It has enabled them to check easily whether topics are sufficiently challenging and closely enough attuned to pupils' needs.

110. Transition to secondary school was more successful where schools were able to build rapidly on information about pupils' achievements. This meant effective knowledge transfer from primary to secondary schools about the rise in the level of expectation at the end of primary school, and clear communication about how to share assessment information in the absence of levels.

> The **Cotswold Edge Teaching Alliance (CETA)** is cross-phase and includes five primary and five secondary schools. Their work on transition began with an audit about practices that both primary and secondary colleagues felt could be improved. Primary and secondary leaders collaborated to create some agreed non-negotiables that all primary pupils would have mastered ready for secondary and that would be reinforced as part of transition. They agreed that there would be no baseline testing and, instead, alongside using end of key stage test information:
>
> - each pupil assesses their own knowledge, skills and understanding in a specially designed survey
>
> - each primary school class teacher also completes the same survey, using the primary school's day-to-day assessment criteria, which has been agreed across the alliance
>
> - Year 6 pupils across the alliance are also given a 'gift box' containing three tasks – one for English, one for mathematics and one for science – which are completed before the holidays, to ensure that pupils achieve as well as possible.

111. For some pupils there is a heightened risk of underachievement because of multiple factors such as being from a low-income background, having special educational needs and/or disabilities and being from an ethnic group that has lower attainment. This year, inspectors looked at four local authority areas (Knowsley, Wolverhampton, Haringey and Manchester) where groups of pupils with multiple characteristics had achieved well in primary school but had substantially underachieved in secondary school. Secondary schools in these areas, with very few exceptions, were unable to replicate the quality of the support, guidance and care that was offered by primary schools. Secondary schools were seen by parents, headteachers and officers as too big and too impersonal. In two of the local authorities, schools were developing a Year 7/8 model more closely aligned to the primary provision to facilitate good transition for its most vulnerable pupils.

112. If effective transition is an ongoing challenge in many secondary schools, all-through schools that offer primary and secondary education under the same roof should be an opportunity to improve practice. In the maintained sector, all-through schools represent a very small, but growing, proportion of schools. Over the last two years, there has been a steady growth of all-through schools, with 47 opening within this period.

> The curriculum at **Oakfield Academy** is a strength of the school. The headteacher's vision of an all-through curriculum from Year 5 to Year 8 has been realised and there are no artificial barriers between a 'primary' curriculum in years 5 and 6 and a 'secondary' one in years 7 and 8. Pupils' journeys through the school are thus seamless and this continuity helps them to make good progress. Leaders keep the curriculum under constant review and, as a result, it is well tuned to the needs of pupils.

113. The structure of all-through schools may mean that they have an inbuilt advantage in offering pupils a smooth and managed transition from primary to secondary. However, evidence from inspection this year suggests that all-through schools are not always capitalising on this advantage, and that the divide between Years 6 and 7 can be as wide in these schools as any other.[78] Overall, maintained all-through schools have lower proportions of good and outstanding schools (74%) than either maintained primary (90%) or secondary (78%).

Curriculum and preparing for the world of work

114. Developing and leading a broad and balanced curriculum, well matched to the needs of all pupils, was one of the features of many improving schools.[79] In these schools, leaders:

- designed, led and evaluated a curriculum that catered well for the needs of different learners and offered choices at 16 that met pupils needs well

- improved the preparation for the next stage of learners' studies or employment

- achieved more consistently good teaching right across the curriculum

- increased the focus on modern foreign languages

- made sure support was readily available where pupils fell behind

- developed teachers' subject knowledge through effective professional development in order to deliver a better curriculum

- extended cultural and other enrichment activities with clubs, trips and opportunities for further learning after school.

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78. Based on a review of all-through schools inspected this year.

79. This is based on a review of the reports of 114 secondary schools that improved from requires improvement to good or outstanding this year.

115. In just under a half of improving schools, specific improvements to the curriculum had been made. These included:

- increasing the focus on developing literacy and numeracy knowledge and skills across the curriculum

- encouraging in pupils a mature reflection and deeper knowledge of the subject

- prompt intervention strategies to prevent underachievement. These schools had a strong focus on raising pupils' confidence as learners.

116. While we have seen schools improving their preparation for the next steps in pupils' education, there are still too many viewing preparation for the world of work as a 'luxury we cannot afford'. This year, we published our report 'Getting ready for work'[80] which identified that key aspects in preparing young people for work were weak in the majority of the secondary schools visited. For pupils to be well prepared for future employment, the curriculum must give them access to education that includes business-related learning such as financial education, activities to develop attitude and character, and good careers information, advice and guidance.

117. Following the withdrawal of the requirement for key stage 4 pupils to undertake work experience, it is now the case that fewer than half[81] of secondary schools visited for the survey gave all of their pupils the opportunity to gain such experience. This is despite local employers and their national representatives suggesting that a lack of work experience is a major barrier to young people gaining employment. Leaders who made provision for well-managed work experience in key stage 4 reported that it had a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to school on their return and was therefore well worth the investment in curriculum time.

118. Work experience and business partnership involvement in schools relied heavily in some areas on the personal networks of teachers and pupils, potentially leaving disadvantaged pupils behind. Teachers and employers had little time to create partnerships and, where they did exist, they were vulnerable to staff changes. Where schools offered work experience, the responsibility for finding placements was often left to the pupil and there was a distinct lack of quality checks and support when placements were secured. While inspectors saw some very impressive examples of work experience placements, many arose solely because the pupils' parents were well connected to a range of professions and could secure a placement for their child.

119. The government is increasingly looking to apprenticeships to provide a trusted and reliable route into work. Inspectors saw divergent practice in the schools visited in relation to the promotion of apprenticeships, with some encouraging all pupils to consider vocational and technical courses, and others only steering lower ability or lower attaining pupils towards these routes. This misguided approach limits opportunities for all pupils to access high-quality technical and vocational training for a range of career options.

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80. 'Getting ready for work', Ofsted, 2016; available on www.gov.uk/ofsted.
81. Fifteen out of the 41 schools visited.

120. In some of the schools visited for the survey, the apprentice route for 18-year-olds was promoted well. It appeared that an increasing minority of learners were making a calculation about the financial costs of either taking a traditional university degree or choosing an apprenticeship. These tended to be especially popular with learners seeking a career in engineering or finance. However, there was a continuing perception among both pupils and parents that apprenticeships were for less-able pupils and that, regardless of career path, the safer option was to obtain a university degree. In many of the schools with sixth forms, learners told inspectors that university applications were prioritised by their school and then direct entry to work or apprenticeship was supported later in the year.

121. It is important that schools develop effective links with local and national businesses that can provide invaluable advice and support to pupils through a range of activities such as talks and careers fairs, in order to help them develop the knowledge and skills needed for employment. However, both schools and businesses reported that there were barriers to doing this effectively. Partnerships worked well where schools had a clear strategy for work-related learning and the key requirements from and outcomes of their relationships with businesses were understood clearly by all partners. Some schools reported that they had difficulty in achieving this without an external body to offer a degree of quality control. For other schools, location was a key issue. In schools that were geographically isolated with a relatively narrow local employment base, delivering such provision was generally a challenge.

University technical colleges and studio schools

122. Given the weaknesses in how many secondary schools are securing good foundations for pupils' future employment, university technical colleges (UTCs) and studio schools should offer a positive alternative for pupils seeking an aspirational technical route. However, inspection outcomes to date have not been strong and the potential of these institutions has not yet been realised.

123. Studio schools are a type of academy that provides education for 14 to 19-year-olds. There are currently 37 studio schools in England, with the first opening in 2011. They offer a range of academic, technical and vocational qualifications, teaching through enterprise projects as well as paid work placements with local employers. Studio schools are spread across all Ofsted regions nationally, with just under a quarter being in the South West region. Of the 19 studio schools that have been inspected to date, two were judged to be outstanding, eight good, six to require improvement and three inadequate at their most recent inspection.[82]

124. The number of UTCs opening across the country, and within each region, has risen steadily over the last three years. An additional 11 UTCs are planned to open in the 2016/17 academic year, substantially increasing the number of institutions available for young people whose talents and ambition better match a technical/vocational route into the world of work. Fifteen of the 39 UTCs that are currently in operation have been inspected and eight were judged good or outstanding.[83]

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82. Number of studio schools open, and their inspection outcomes, is as at 31 August 2016.
83. Number of UTCs open, and their inspection outcomes, is as at 31 August 2016.

125. Strong leadership, particularly of teaching, the curriculum and partnership working, can lead to effective provision for those wishing to pursue a technical or vocational pathway. Those UTCs judged to be good or outstanding share similar strengths and characteristics, including:

- a business-like ethos and culture of high aspirations and expectations for both staff and students
- carefully designed and specialised curriculum, with a strong focus on equipping students with the technical knowledge to meet local skills shortages
- robust tracking and assessment systems
- impressive destination data showing that students have achieved the relevant qualifications to enable them to progress to the next stage of their education or into a job
- excellent links forged with local and national employers that offer students real world experience through well-planned work placements
- exemplary careers guidance
- well-equipped laboratories and workshops
- strong literacy and numeracy development that underpins good progress in the technical aspects of the curriculum
- regular, informative feedback from business partners on the progress of students.

In **Aston University Technical College**, inspectors saw a team of six Year 12 boys make a presentation to business executives. The aim of the project was to improve the safety of workers on the railway. The team of learners had developed their schematic at the sponsoring university using a 3D printer. It was a very confident professional presentation with a clear explanation. Learners talked around the presentation without a script, showing good confidence in their proposal. They were presenting to the UK's largest provider of on-track warning systems and had developed from scratch a system that was very similar to that which the company uses. The feedback was that it could be developed into the next generation of safety equipment. The team was offered opportunity to test the product on the business's own test track. The UTC's vice principal followed up the presentation with enquiries about what professional qualification in rail engineering it would be possible (given their age) for learners to do.

126. Not all UTCs are doing well. In those judged to date to be less than good, the curriculum lacked the distinctiveness that should have characterised the college and overall was poorly thought-through. Expectations of what pupils could achieve were low and the quality of teaching was not good enough, with literacy and numeracy skills taught inconsistently. Though there were links with local employers, best use was not made of these and careers guidance did not meet expectations.

127. These weaknesses in providing the very best quality of education should be seen in the context of some systemic barriers to greater success, not least the common view that many technical or vocational pathways are inferior to pursuing an academic route into employment. Another challenge for UTCs is the starting age of 14. Many parents are not aware that there are options at the end of key stage 3 and transition at this age is not well aligned with local offers or national accountability.

128. Recruitment of pupils is also an ongoing factor across the sector. Of all the UTCs currently in operation, only three are above 75% capacity, and much lower levels are common. Most UTCs have been open for less than three years so some do not yet have pupils in all year groups. UTCs have reported a lack of interest from leading industries and businesses to work in partnership with them, and their specialist curriculum has meant they have sometimes found it difficult to recruit teachers with the requisite relevant and current technical expertise. Additionally, in some areas, other local schools view UTCs as opportunities to pass on low-attaining or poorly behaved pupils.

129. Two UTCs have already closed,[84] and the rationale given by one of these makes clear the challenges: 'a recent disappointing inspection, a thorough assessment of actual and projected student numbers, financial challenges, staffing capacity and the impact these will have on standards of teaching and learning.'

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84. Based on schools open as at 31 August 2016, in line with Ofsted's official statistics.

Post–16 education and training

130. There has been a six percentage point decline in the proportion of good or outstanding general further education (FE) colleges. The performance of these colleges contrasts with the continued improvement of sixth form colleges and independent learning providers (including employer providers). Eighty-nine per cent of sixth form colleges are now good or outstanding.

Figure 17: Proportion of post-16 education and skills providers judged good or outstanding for overall effectiveness at their most recent inspection
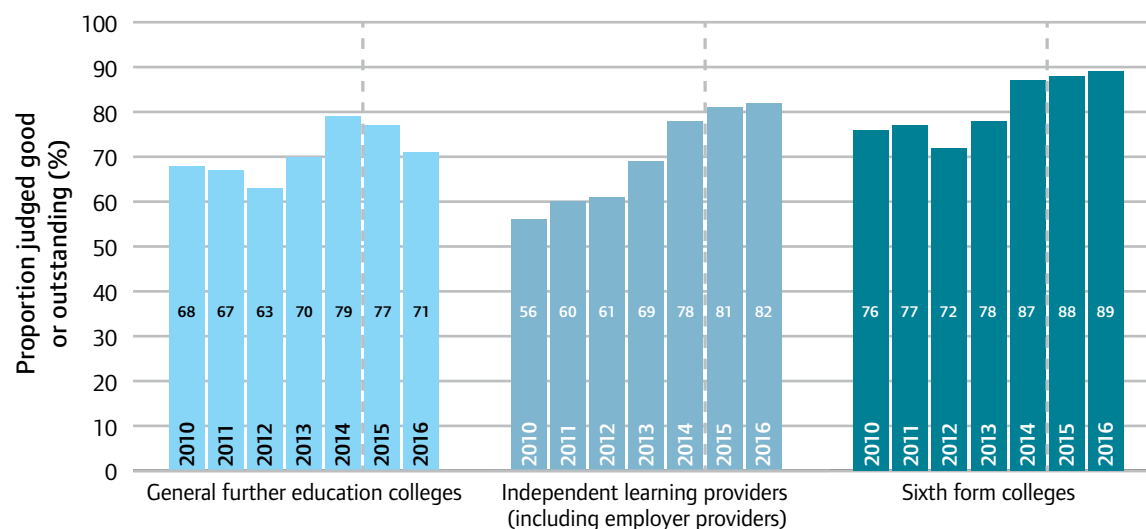
1. The main providers of 16–19 education are included on the above chart, with the exception of school sixth forms.
2. Figures for 2015 onwards are not comparable to previous years. A different methodology has been used to calculate the percentage of providers judged good or outstanding, with providers that ceased to be funded or closed during the year no longer included.
Source: Ofsted

131. We inspected 82 general FE colleges in 2015/16. Most of the colleges that were previously good remained good following short inspection, but a large majority of those that previously required improvement or were inadequate did not become good. All of the colleges judged inadequate this year were characterised by systemic weaknesses in leadership and/or governance. Strengthening leadership capacity within the sector remains a priority.

Study programmes

132. Seventy-one per cent of 16- to 18-year-olds continue with full-time education.[85] The government has made it a requirement to provide these students with an individualised study programme that takes into account their prior attainment and their future education and career aspirations. As well as study towards qualifications relevant to the student's next steps, study programmes require any student not already holding GCSEs at grades A* to C in English and mathematics to work towards the achievement of these qualifications.[86] Those full-time students who hold a grade D must retake their GCSE. Students should also receive careers guidance and participate in work-related activity and activities to develop their character and confidence.

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85. 'National statistics: Participation in education, training and employment: 2015', Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/participation-in-education-training-and-employment-2015.
86. Or approved stepping-stone qualifications.

133. The main providers of study programmes are general FE colleges (484,000 students), school sixth forms (433,000 students) and sixth form colleges (157,000 students).[87] Our common inspection framework is designed so that we make consistent, comparable judgements about the quality of study programmes wherever they are offered. We have previously reported that school leavers do not always make choices about their next steps on the basis of effective information, advice and guidance.[88] Student choices are constrained further by the geographic distribution of different types of provider. In many parts of the country, there are limited options. For example, while there are many sixth form colleges in Hampshire and Surrey, there are none in Cornwall, Devon or Dorset.

Figure 18: 16 to 19 study programme provision inspected between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016, by provider type

Number of providers in brackets
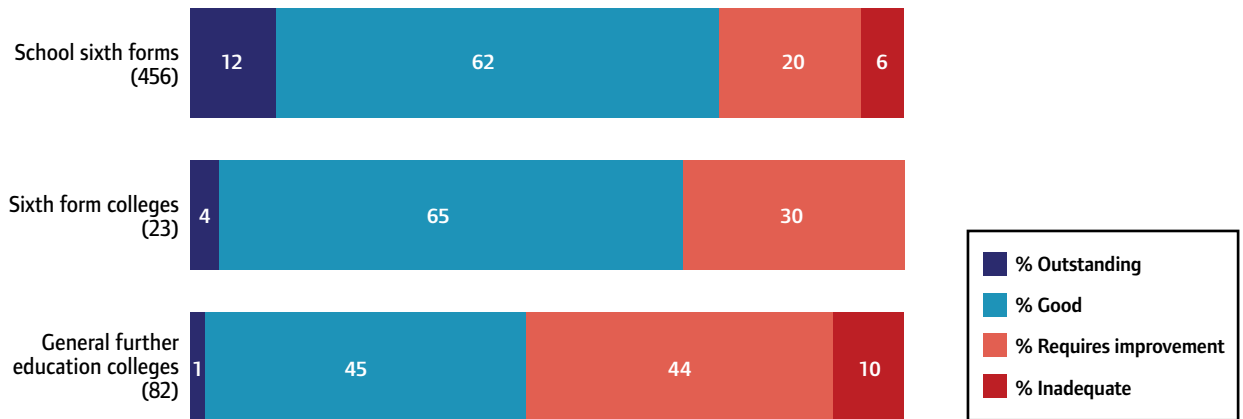
1. Inspection outcomes include the 16 to 19 study programme judgement made on full inspections this year and the previous overall effectiveness for those providers that had a short inspection, which did not convert to a full inspection.
2. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100. Where the number of inspections is small, percentages should be treated with caution.
Source: Ofsted

134. Outcomes from inspections this year show that in more than half of general FE colleges inspected, study programmes were less than good. We found a number of common weaknesses in the provision of study programmes, which are not confined to general FE colleges but are disproportionately evident there. In providers that required improvement or were inadequate, inspectors found:

● a failure to equip many students, particularly those studying vocational subjects at level 3 and those studying below level 3, with the necessary knowledge, skills and attributes to achieve and progress to their full potential

● in almost all, teaching that was not demanding enough, resulting in slower progress and lower standards

● too few students achieved passes at a higher grade when retaking GCSE English or mathematics

● variable quality of information, advice and guidance was provided to meet the full range of students' needs, such as those who were not intending to make applications for higher education

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87. 'National statistics: Participation in education, training and employment: 2015', Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/participation-in-education-training-and-employment-2015.

88. 'Careers guidance in schools: going in the right direction?', Ofsted, 2013; www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-guidance-in-schools-going-in-the-right-direction.

- too few students undertook challenging and well-planned work-related and extra-curricular activities; this was particularly the case for students studying below level 3

- attendance at lessons was low, or an ongoing issue, on most of the study programmes at these providers.

Study programmes at level 3

135. In 2014/15, 920,400 16- to 18-year-olds studied for a level 3 qualification full-time. Around two thirds of the students studied for academic qualifications and a third studied for vocational qualifications,[89] with around one in 10 taking a mixture of academic and vocational qualifications at level 3 in 2014/15.[90] The majority of those studying academic qualifications attend school sixth forms, with a very small minority attending sixth form colleges, while the large majority of those studying vocational qualifications attend general FE colleges.[91] The number of students taking an academic qualification has only risen by 5% over the last 10 years. However, the number of young people taking a vocational qualification as part of their study programme has grown substantially by 71%.[92]

Figure 19: Number of 16- to 18-year-olds participating in full-time education at level 3, by academic and vocational qualifications, 2005 to 2015
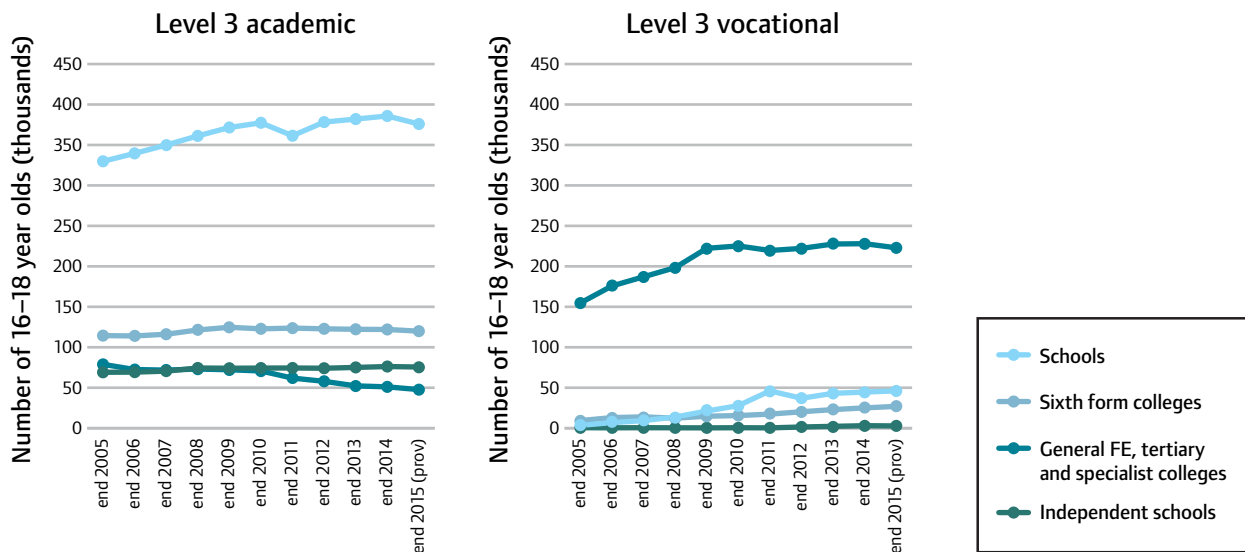

Source: Department for Education

89. 'National statistics: Participation in education, training and employment: 2015', Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/participation-in-education-training-and-employment-2015. Academic qualifications include 'GCE/VCE A/AS levels' and vocational qualifications include 'NVQ 3 and equivalents'.

90. 2014/15 data generated from the 'compare school and college performance' tables on 20 September 2016; www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk.

91. 'National statistics: Participation in education, training and employment: 2015', Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/participation-in-education-training-and-employment-2015.

92. 'National statistics: Participation in education, training and employment: 2015', Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/participation-in-education-training-and-employment-2015.

136. Across provider types, level 3 academic study programmes are working well. Over 90% of students who progress to the second year of A-level study successfully achieved their qualification.[93] Record proportions of 18- and 19-year-olds are now going to university in England, including from disadvantaged areas.[94] In 2015, 31% of 18-year-olds in England were accepted into a university place, compared with 25% in 2006. Over the past 10 years, London, the North West and Yorkshire and Humber have each seen increases in the proportions of 18-year-olds going on to higher education, of around 30%. Over the same period, 18-year-olds from the most disadvantaged areas in England have gained ground against those from the most advantaged areas, in both the proportions going to higher education and the proportions going to those providers with the most demanding entry requirements.[95]

137. Inspection evidence shows that students on level 3 academic study programmes typically undertake challenging and well-planned extra-curricular activities. These support their personal development and future employment goals. Students also benefit from focused and relevant work experience. The learning from these experiences supports their university applications to study a degree, such as vocational degrees in medicine and dentistry. Inspectors found that information, advice and guidance provided are best when there is a defined progression route leading to a realistic destination following completion of their study programme.

Students at **King Edward VI College** in Stourbridge benefit from effective support in making their applications for higher education. Prospective Year 11 students attend a series of open-day events, where they meet with subject tutors and sample a range of academic lessons related to their specific areas of academic interest. They are able to discuss with the careers team how subject pathways relate to their university entrance requirements. Students say this preparatory work is very useful in helping them make informed careers choices. Students in Years 12 and 13 benefit from a planned series of specific university-led presentations offered on a three-weekly basis covering individual university entrance requirements and the importance of well-constructed and informative personal statements. They also attend the annual 'UCAS HE Convention'. The college's 'higher education parents' forum' and a bespoke 'Oxbridge parents' forum' support parents and carers helping their son/daughter make an informed higher education choice. At the college's 'next step forum', Year 13 students gain information and advice through discussion with former students who are currently attending a wide range of universities. Students say they greatly value and appreciate this extensive and wide-ranging support. As a result, they have a well-developed understanding of how to progress to their next steps in learning. Almost all students gain places at their preferred university.

138. Inspection findings show that the best providers of study programmes are those with the largest numbers of A-level students. This is regardless of whether the provider is a school sixth form, general FE college, or sixth form college. For example, of the 20 general FE colleges with the largest number of A-level students, eight are currently outstanding and eight good. There is a clear link between the number of A-level students in a school sixth form and the school's overall effectiveness grade. Schools with larger sixth forms are more likely to be good or outstanding than schools with smaller sixth forms.

93. 'National statistics: SFA: national achievement rates tables 2014 to 2015: open data CSV files', Skills Funding Agency, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sfa-national-achievement-rates-tables-2014-to-2015-open-data-csv-files.

94. 'UCAS Undergraduate End of Cycle Report', UCAS, 2015; www.ucas.com/corporate/data-and-analysis/ucas-undergraduate-releases/ucas-undergraduate-analysis-reports/ucas.

95. 'UCAS Undergraduate End of Cycle Report', UCAS, 2015; www.ucas.com/corporate/data-and-analysis/ucas-undergraduate-releases/ucas-undergraduate-analysis-reports/ucas.

Figure 20: Most recent overall effectiveness of schools with sixth forms as at 31 August 2016, by the number of A-level students in 2014/15

Number of A-level students, followed by number of schools with sixth forms, in brackets

	% Outstanding	% Good	% Requires improvement	% Inadequate
Most A-level students (127–507) (365)	63	34		3
More A-level students (87–126) (360)	36	56	6	2
Average A-level students (60–86) (367)	20	63	14	2
Fewer A-level students (35–59) (363)	12	56	25	7
Fewest A-level students (1–34) (366)	8	53	30	9

1. The number of A-level students at the end of key stage 5 study.
Source: Ofsted and 2014/15 data generated from the 'compare school and college performance' tables taken on 20 September 2016

139. In providers with large academic provision, the breadth of subjects on offer is an advantage to young people when they make choices. Students are more likely to benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular and work-related activities that are relevant to them. Specialist teachers can concentrate on A-level provision, rather than having to teach at several key stages. Government has recognised some of these concerns in recent guidance to academies, which stipulates that any new sixth form should have at least 200 students (alone or in partnership) and offer a minimum of 15 A-level subjects.[96]

140. In contrast with academic level 3 courses, inspection evidence showed that too many technical and vocational courses inspected last year were simply not demanding enough. In general FE college inspection reports in 2015/16, a key weakness for nearly all colleges graded as requires improvement or inadequate was that teaching did not challenge students enough. Students were making slow progress in their learning, expectations of them were too low and their standards of work were not high enough. Too much work consisted of task-based activities, often conducted through basic computer research, which inspectors often judged to be more suited to level 2 work, rather than level 3. The problem of insufficiently stretching work was acute for the most able students on technical and vocational courses.

141. Schools and colleges show continued weakness in providing a technical and vocational curriculum appropriate to meet the needs of the economy. They also do not provide enough expert advice and guidance to show students the full range of courses. The overall cohort due to complete their BTEC qualifications in 2014/15 showed that 69% were on study programmes in arts, media and publishing, business administration, and leisure, travel and tourism. By contrast, science and mathematics accounted for 13%, and engineering and manufacturing a mere 1%.[97] Too few providers liaise sufficiently with employers or with local enterprise partnerships to design a curriculum that provides the knowledge acquisition and high-level skills that Britain needs.

96. 'Making significant changes to an existing academy', Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-significant-changes-to-an-existing-academy.
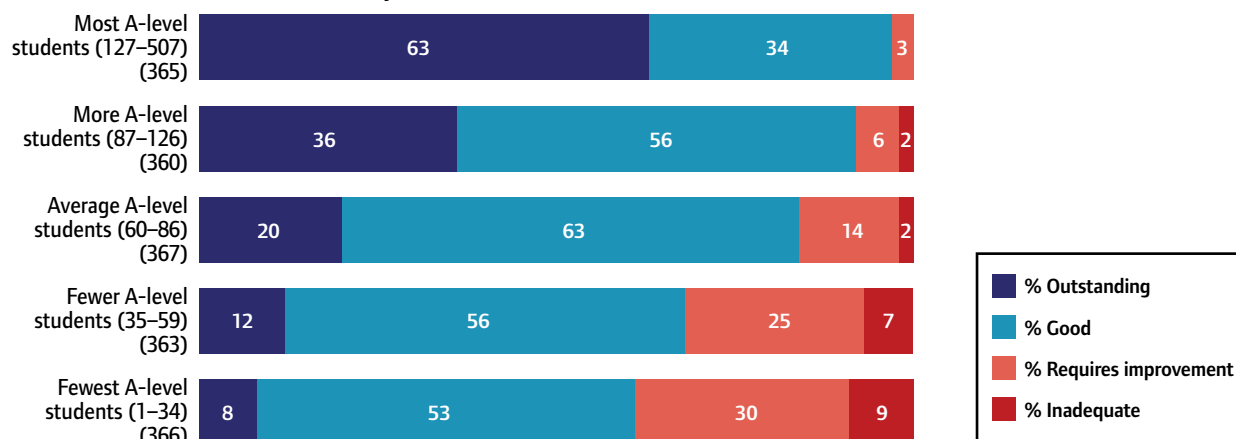
97. 'National statistics: SFA: national achievement rates tables 2014 to 2015: open data CSV files', Skills Funding Agency, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sfa-national-achievement-rates-tables-2014-to-2015-open-data-csv-files.

Staff at **Derby College** have formed partnerships with employers to create employment and skills and employer academies. Employment and skills academies are made up of a group of employers from a specific sector. Employer academies are individual employers that have a dedicated cohort of learners within their academy. Both models are designed to give apprentices and learners extra-curricular activities related to employment, such as projects, work placements, workplace visits, talks from specialist speakers, masterclasses and entrepreneurial and enterprise activities.

Every learner/apprentice, whether attached to a specific employer or an employment and skills academy, participates in these activities throughout the duration of their learning, specific to the sector in which they have chosen to study.

The college has 15 employment and skills academies across as many sectors with 300 active board members who assist with curriculum design and delivery. They work in partnership to ensure that the curriculum delivered through apprenticeships and study programmes assists the learners to develop employability and enterprise skills as well as delivering the extra-curricular employer engagement activities. In total, 1,730 employers have assisted in delivering activities such as work placements, specialist speakers, masterclasses, visits and projects.

In addition to the employment and skills academies, the college has specific employer academies (of which there are now 20). Each employer interviews learners who apply to work in their academy and pledges to give a formal interview with the chance of gaining employment or an apprenticeship after their full-time studies. The purpose of the employer academies is to work closely with the employer to give the students specific knowledge and skills aligned to the needs of the employer, preparing the learners to make a smooth transition from education into work.

Managers evaluate the effectiveness of every activity undertaken for the impact the activities have on the apprentice's/learner's development of knowledge and skills for the subject area in which they are studying or working.

In addition to the extra-curricular activities, learners/apprentices also undertake entrepreneurial and enterprise activities with a dedicated board of employers and 'entrepreneurs'. Cross-college and specific projects are run in accordance with sector needs. Over 1,000 students have taken part in enterprise and entrepreneurial projects to date. All students have embedded enterprise activities within their studies supported by the enterprise board.

The college is in the second year of running the employer academies and employment and skills boards. The college also has its own agency, 'Roundhouse Recruitment', which enables students to work in the hospitality industry with employers across the city. The students gain training in either bar sales, hospitality, or stewarding security and events planning, and then gain paid part-time employment.

Study programmes at level 2 and below

142. In 2014/15, a sixth of all 16- to 18-year-old students in full-time education were studying at level 2 or level 1, with around nine out of 10 of these students going to general FE colleges.[98] Study programmes below level 3 are less successful than those at level 3, with the core principles of the programmes not always met. The proportion of students who achieve their qualification is substantially lower than at level 3, and declined in 2014/15. Qualifications taken at level 3 within general FE colleges have an achievement rate of 85%. For level 1 and 2 qualifications, they are around 75%.[99]

143. Long-term outcomes for students who do not reach level 2 are poor. In 2014, the employment rate for 19- to 64-year-olds with a highest qualification below level 2 was less than 60%, compared with around 80% for those qualified to level 2 or above.[100] Therefore, it is essential that these students have personalised programmes of study, where the focus is to prepare them for work or an apprenticeship. Too often, students do not benefit from a well-thought-out programme to prepare them for their next steps. Far too many students with lower levels of prior academic attainment progress on to courses that do not have clear value, and work experience or work-related learning are too rarely at the heart of study programmes at levels 1 and 2.

At **Derwen College**, governors, the chief executive and senior managers have established a culture of very high expectations for all students. Staff reinforce very high standards across the college, at work and in the residences. Students at this independent specialist, residential college for young people who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities greatly enjoy their learning, their work experience and the social aspects of college life. Almost all make excellent progress in the development of their personal and vocational skills, and are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Managers have developed very close links with employers, particularly in retail and hospitality. 'Industry champions' work closely with college staff to enhance college vocational programmes. They ensure that staff and students are fully aware of the standards and skills required in the workplace and provide students with meaningful work experience opportunities. The range of provision is excellent. Leaders and managers monitor carefully the progression of students and use this information well to improve and inform changes to curriculum design. Managers have made significant changes to vocational programmes, which enable students to develop the relevant skills required for all sectors, increasing their opportunities to progress to employment when leaving college.

98. 'National statistics: Participation in education, training and employment: 2015', Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/participation-in-education-training-and-employment-2015.

99. 'National statistics: SFA: national achievement rates tables 2014 to 2015: open data CSV files', Skills Funding Agency, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sfa-national-achievement-rates-tables-2014-to-2015-open-data-csv-files.

100. 'Statistical data set: Qualifications in the population based on the labour force survey', Skills Funding Agency, 2014; www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-qualifications-in-the-population-based-on-the-labour-force-survey.

144. Students on study programmes at level 2 or below also receive weaker advice and guidance. Discussions with students indicated that they often needed long-term and frequent guidance to help them identify career goals and develop ideas for their future. At this level, career paths can be less well defined and require advisers to have a good information base to support effective guidance. Too often, this is dependent on subject teacher/tutor knowledge and experiences. This does not guarantee that students are well enough informed, advised and motivated to consider all available education, training and employment options.

145. In 2013, the government introduced traineeships to enable young people to progress to a sustainable job or apprenticeship. Just over 20,000 young people under 19 have completed traineeships since their inception. Around 15,000 of these young people have progressed to a job, apprenticeship, further full-time education or other training. These numbers are encouraging, but they represent a very small proportion of the 226,000 students studying at level 2 or level 1.[101]

Improving students' English and mathematics

146. The government is rightly concerned that too many young people leave school without achieving at least a grade C in GCSE English and mathematics, and that only a very small minority of those who have not achieved this benchmark by age 16 achieve it by age 19. In 2014, the government introduced a new condition of funding for young people on 16 to 19 study programmes, requiring all those who do not already hold a GCSE at grades A* to C in English or mathematics to work towards the achievement of these qualifications. In 2015, the funding condition was strengthened for those full-time students with a grade D. The condition of funding required them to enrol on to a GCSE with the intention of achieving at least a grade C within two years.[102] While the policy's intention to improve literacy and numeracy levels is well intentioned, the implementation of the policy is not having the desired impact in practice.

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101. 'National Statistics: Further education and skills: statistical first release October 2016', Skills Funding Agency and Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-october-2016.

102. 'Guidance: 16 to 19 funding: maths and English condition of funding', Education Funding Agency, 2016; www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-funding-maths-and-english-condition-of-funding.

Figure 21: Percentage of students achieving A* to C in English and mathematics GCSE by the end of key stage 4 and between the ages of 16 to 18
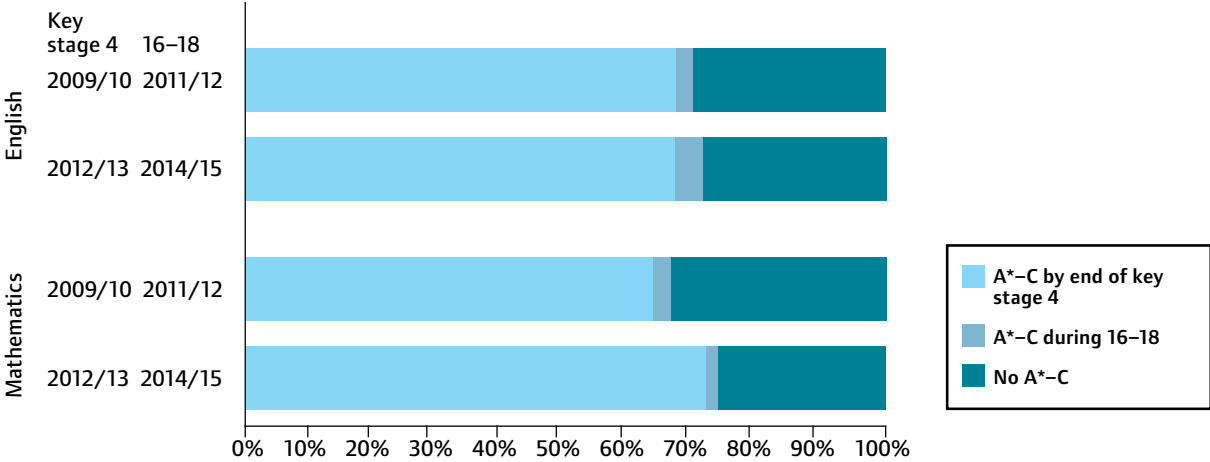
Source: Department for Education

147. The policy change has been a significant challenge for providers, but particularly so for general FE colleges, where the majority of students without a GCSE grade C in English or mathematics study and where there have been the biggest increases in numbers studying for qualifications in English and mathematics at level 2. In addition, more students attend general FE colleges with much lower prior attainment in English or mathematics than sixth form colleges or state funded mainstream schools. For example, in 2014/15 around half of the students at general FE colleges who failed to achieve a GCSE at grades A* to C in English at key stage 4 started their study programme with below a grade D. This compared with less than a third studying at sixth form colleges and maintained schools who had below a D grade. There has been an increase of 156% in the number of students studying GCSE English in general FE colleges over the last three years, and a 58% increase for mathematics.[103] This has led to many general FE colleges struggling to recruit and retain enough skilled and experienced GCSE teachers in these subjects. The numbers studying English and mathematics will have increased further again in 2015/16.

148. Just over a quarter of students by age 19 are not achieving a grade C or higher in GCSE mathematics and more still in English.[104] There are also clear difficulties for general FE colleges in putting policy into practice. It remains unclear whether the GCSE qualification is the best way of ensuring that students have the English and mathematical skills needed for their intended career. Inspection evidence shows that, for some students, having to retake their GCSE can be demotivating and that attendance at these lessons is lower. For many students, an alternative level 2 qualification may be a more appropriate means of improving their English and mathematics and ensuring that they are ready for work.

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103. 'Official Statistics: Level 1 and 2 English and maths: 16 to 18 students, 2014 to 2015', Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/level-1-and-2-english-and-maths-16-to-18-students-2014-to-2015.

104. 'Official Statistics: Level 1 and 2 English and maths: 16 to 18 students, 2014 to 2015', Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/level-1-and-2-english-and-maths-16-to-18-students-2014-to-2015.

Apprenticeships

149. Since 2010, almost three million apprentices have started training to prepare them for careers in their chosen occupations.[105] In 2014/15, there were 194,000 young people aged under 19 on an apprenticeship. Of these, general FE colleges provided 37%, and 48% were provided by independent learning providers (including employer providers).[106] Apprenticeships offer an opportunity for young people to gain the skills and knowledge they need to succeed, while meeting the needs of employers.

150. This year, 63% of apprenticeships inspected were found to be good or outstanding, an increase of 12 percentage points compared with last year. The quality of apprenticeships is improving, but too many apprenticeship programmes are not yet good. Of the 181 apprenticeship programmes inspected this year, 49 required improvement and 18 were inadequate, affecting around 90,000 apprentices.[107]

151. In providers that required improvement or were inadequate, inspectors found a range of weaker characteristics in the development of apprentices' skills for employment. Almost all these providers were failing to improve apprentices' English or mathematics skills, or helping them to achieve these qualifications. Apprentices in most of these providers did not understand what they had to improve following work reviews with their assessors. Assessors were not good at setting apprentices' targets. They did not ensure that apprentices understood and developed a wider range of personal skills, necessary to be effective in the workplace, beyond those needed to complete an assessment. Apprentices were not adept at organising themselves to make the best use of time and meet deadlines. In around half of these providers, there were issues where apprentices did not attend well, or turn up on time, or who dropped out during their apprenticeship programme. Employers also reported skills gaps that were related to personal skills.[108]

105. 'National statistics: Further education and skills: statistical first release October 2016', Skills Funding Agency and Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-october-2016.

106. Learner numbers from 'Statistical data set: FE data library: local authority tables', Skills Funding Agency, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-local-authority-tables. Providers matched by UKPRN to the Ofsted further education and skills provider types.

107. Learner numbers from 'Statistical data set: FE data library: local authority tables', Skills Funding Agency, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-local-authority-tables. Providers matched by UKPRN to the Ofsted further education and skills provider types.

108. 'UKCES Employer Skills Survey 2015: UK report', UK Commission for Employment and Skills, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/ukces-employer-skills-survey-2015-uk-report.

Figure 22: Apprenticeship starts by level and age, 2015/16 (provisional)
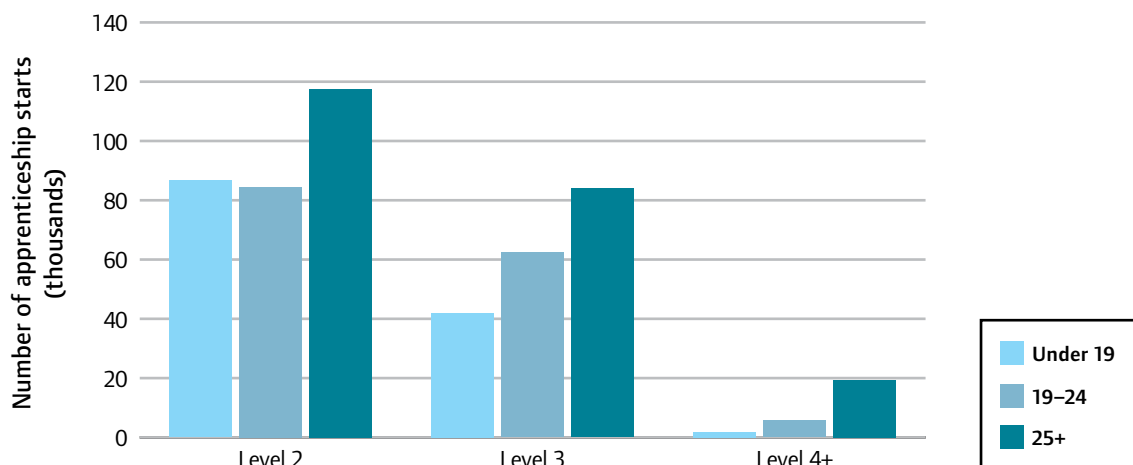
Source: Skills Funding Agency and Department for Education

152. Apprentices aged 16 to 18 are in the minority. They make up around a quarter of all the apprentices who start and complete an apprenticeship. There are a number of reasons why the take-up of apprenticeships in this age group is low, particularly those at an advanced level.[109]

153. We have raised concerns in the past about the extent to which schools have promoted apprenticeships. While some schools are still not doing enough in this regard, the majority of schools we visited this year for our report 'Getting ready for work'[110] were promoting apprenticeships and presenting them as a route that had parity with other options.

154. Our 'Getting ready for work' survey[111] found that there were a number of financial, social, geographical and cultural barriers that limited the take-up of apprenticeships. 'Fear of missing out' on traditional routes such as sixth forms and universities is a major barrier. The quality of apprenticeships is also a factor: both students and parents were clear-sighted about the quality of apprenticeships. There was good awareness that the apprenticeships of some major national businesses, such as Rolls-Royce, were excellent destinations. Apprenticeships at post-18 were gaining wider acceptance and credibility among students at school sixth forms, particularly for career paths such as engineering or accountancy. However, the more widely available apprenticeships were perceived to be of variable quality, and both parents and students were concerned about the consequences of taking up a placement that was primarily about 'cheap labour' or where low quality might restrict rather than widen future options.

109. 'National statistics: Further education and skills: statistical first release October 2016', Skills Funding Agency, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-further-education-and-skills.

110. 'Getting ready for work', Ofsted, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/collections/ofsted-further-education-and-skills-survey-reports.

111. 'Getting ready for work', Ofsted, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/collections/ofsted-further-education-and-skills-survey-reports.

155. The insufficient availability of apprenticeships risks undermining the increased awareness-raising and interest-generating activity. There is evidence also to suggest that the low take-up of apprenticeships in the 16 to 18 age group and the lack of supply of apprenticeship vacancies from businesses limits the overall number of apprentices. Among employers, there is a perception that 16-year-olds lack the necessary maturity for the workplace and that there are too many hurdles to making apprenticeships worthwhile. The number of applications on the 'Find an apprentice' website is far greater than the number of vacancies. Consequently, it is becoming harder for students to get an apprenticeship. In 2015/16, there were eight applications submitted via the website for every level 2 apprenticeship vacancy and nine applications for every level 3 vacancy.[112]

Figure 23: Number of apprenticeship applications and vacancies submitted on 'Find An Apprentice', by level, 2015/16
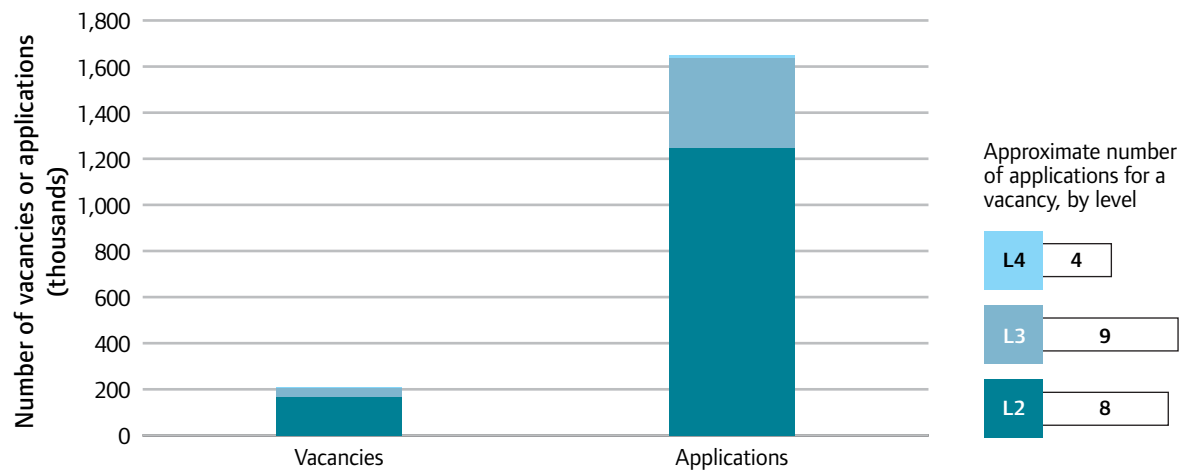
Source: Skills Funding Agency and Department for Business, Innovation & Skills

156. The increase in apprenticeships has not focused sufficiently on the sectors with skills shortages. Businesses and local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) have identified digital, manufacturing or technical skills shortages and set local and regional priorities for skills development. However, more than two thirds of the apprenticeships started last year were in 'business, administration and law', 'health, public services and care' and 'retail and commercial enterprises'. The former Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the National Audit Office have recently commented on the oversight and planning for skills shortages. They reported that government departments[113] and LEPs[114] were not communicating effectively to ensure that all apprenticeship providers in their regions could access the relevant information needed to plan apprenticeships that met local, regional and national priorities on economic growth, skill shortages or youth employment rates.

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112. 'Statistical data set: FE data library: apprenticeship vacancies', Skills Funding Agency and Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-apprenticeship-vacancies.

113. '2010 to 2015 government policy: industrial strategy', Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, 2015; www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-industrial-strategy/2010-to-2015-government-policy-industrial-strategy.

114. 'Delivering value through the apprenticeships programme', The National Audit Office, 2016; www.nao.org.uk/report/delivery-value-through-the-apprenticeships-programme.

157. In 2015, a report from the UKCES stated that the digital and creative sector, employing 2.1 million people in 2012, was worth around £134 billion gross value added in 2014. The report emphasised the importance of digital skills to the economy and recognised that, although digital technology was pervasive across all aspects of life, there was a significant digital skills shortage. It expressed deep concern about the capacity of the education system to supply the quantity and quality of workers needed for digital roles.[115] Since 2014, the proportion of apprentices in information and communication technology has grown slightly, but remains very low, at just over 3% of the total number of apprenticeships started.[116]

Figure 24: Projected new information technology (IT) jobs, compared with apprenticeship starts in information communication technology (ICT)

22%

projected increase in IT employment 2012 to 2017

36,000 projected new IT jobs in 2017

15%

decline in ICT apprenticeship starts 2011/12 to 2015/16

15,720 ICT apprenticeship starts in 2015/16
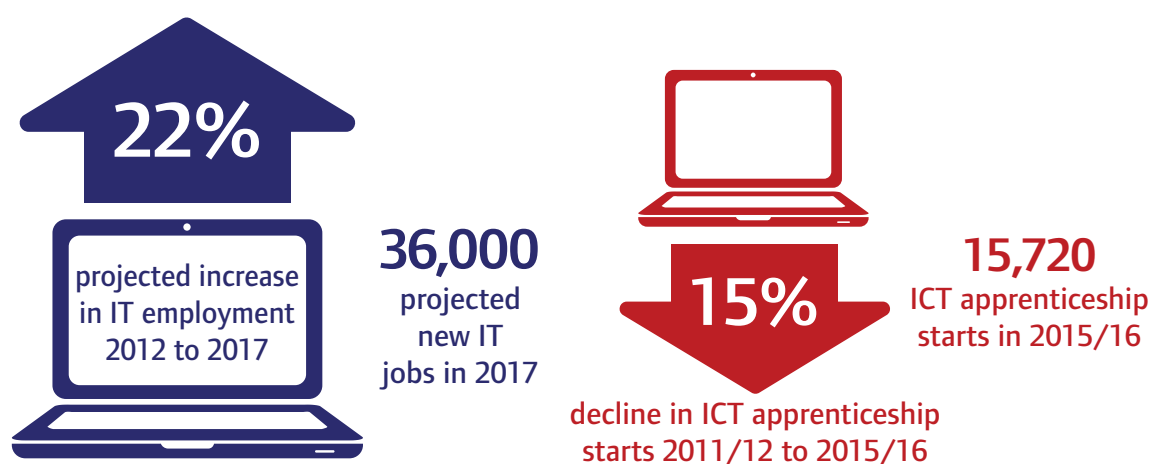
1. Projected number of new IT jobs in 2017 is based on the UK Commission for Employment and Skills' five year projected increase between 2012 and 2017.
Source: UK Commission for Employment and Skills and Skills Funding Agency and Department for Business, Innovation & Skills

158. Achievement rates for apprentices vary widely between the highest and lowest performing sectors. Last year, around one third of retail and commercial enterprise apprentices, regardless of their age or their apprenticeship level, were not successful. However, achievement in information and communication technology was higher, with around four in five apprentices meeting the required industry standards.[117]

159. Apprenticeships work best when leaders and managers work well with employers to ensure that the structure and delivery of apprenticeship programmes enable apprentices to meet exacting standards and contribute to the growth of the businesses in which they work.

115. 'UKCES sector insights reports 2015', UK Commission for Employment and Skills, 2015; www.gov.uk/government/collections/ukces-sector-insights-reports-2015.

116. 'Statistical data set: FE data library: apprenticeships', Skills Funding Agency and Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-apprenticeships.

117. 'National statistics: SFA: national achievement rates tables 2014 to 2015: open data CSV files', Skills Funding Agency, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sfa-national-achievement-rates-tables-2014-to-2015-open-data-csv-files.

160. The best employers ensure that their apprentices are successful by providing strong support and effective training both at and away from work. In most of the employer providers inspected last year, inspectors continued to find that employers do not know enough about the requirements of an apprenticeship, and do not provide enough off-the-job training to ensure that apprentices develop the skills they need.

B C Arch is a specialist independent learning provider delivering digital and IT apprenticeship frameworks to large corporate employers, local authorities, and small- and medium-sized enterprises. They work with employers to recruit and select young people for apprenticeships in a variety of workplaces and job roles where they can develop high levels of digital and IT skills. The vast majority of apprentices are aged 16 to 18. Leaders and managers have an incredibly strong focus on the design and development of qualifications and learning programmes that meet the rapidly changing skills needed by the digital and IT workforce. They have been instrumental in developing appropriate and relevant frameworks and, more recently, trailblazer standards. Managers and staff carefully plan and constantly improve the training programmes to address employers' skill gaps and to develop young people's skills ready for a future career.

Reform of vocational routes

161. Reforms to apprenticeships are welcome, including the move from qualification frameworks to industry-defined standards and greater ownership of apprenticeships by employers. They have the potential to make a substantial difference to the quality of apprenticeships available. However, their impact may be limited by several factors.

162. First, employer providers must ensure that their apprenticeship provision is good. This year, three new employer providers were inspected for the first time and all three were found to require improvement.

163. The transition from current apprenticeships based on frameworks to a new apprenticeship approach based on standards is too slow. Last year, there were around half a million apprenticeship starts. Less than 0.1% were on apprenticeships working towards the new standards. In 2015/16, the number of apprentices working towards new standards had increased but represented less than 1% of the cohort.[118] Currently, while less than 5% of apprenticeships are studied at a higher level, over a third of the apprenticeship standards approved to date are at a higher level.[119] Many of the intermediate and advanced level standards have not yet had this focus.

164. The development of apprentices' English and mathematical skills may be limited by the requirement for intermediate-level apprentices to take, but not necessarily pass, examinations in English and mathematics at level 2 before completing their apprenticeship. Likewise, current proposals link funding to an end-point assessment (EPA) through which an assessment organisation, independent from the provider, will assess the competencies and skills that apprentices have gained by the end of their apprenticeship. The processes for ensuring that apprentices are ready to take this EPA

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118. 'National statistics: Further education and skills: statistical first release October 2016', Skills Funding Agency and Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-october-2016.

119. 'Further education and skills - guidance: Apprenticeship standards approved for delivery', Skills Funding Agency, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-standards-ready-for-delivery.

are unclear. This means that an employer or provider could receive funding for the duration of the apprenticeship without knowing until the end that apprentices have acquired the necessary competencies and skills. In addition, there is a lack of clarity on what happens to apprentices who do not pass the EPA.

165. Finally, the delays in establishing the Institute for Apprenticeships have led, in part, to wide variability in the quality and structure of apprenticeship standards. Too many do not provide enough detail about the skills and behaviours that apprentices need to demonstrate, and arrangements to ensure the quality, rigour and consistency of the EPA are unclear.

The challenges for post-16 education

166. There is still a divide in the quality of provision for those on academic and vocational courses. This is evident in the weaknesses in study programmes, affecting students on vocational courses, particularly those studying at a lower level, and the weaknesses in apprenticeship provision. From 1990 to 2012, the ratio of youth to adult unemployment doubled. Young people are now four times more likely to face unemployment than workers aged over 24.[120] This is partly because the curriculum is not geared to train young people for the specific, often high-level, skills that are in short supply in key sectors of the economy. There are, however, some grounds for cautious optimism in the planned reforms to vocational and technical qualifications, following Lord Sainsbury's review of technical education.[121]

167. General FE colleges have the potential to have the greatest impact in bridging this divide. Yet there are concerns that there is not enough leadership capacity within the FE sector to enable the improvement. This year, the effectiveness of leadership and management was judged to be good or outstanding in only 52% of general FE colleges. Of the 82 general FE colleges inspected in 2015/16, 28 (34%) were judged to require improvement and a further 12 (15%) were judged inadequate for overall effectiveness.[122] Almost half of these colleges have performed poorly for many years. All of the inadequate colleges were characterised by systemic weaknesses in leadership or governance.

168. The current programme of area reviews instigated by government, and conducted by the FE commissioner and his team, presents an opportunity to rationalise provision. They can ensure that good and outstanding colleges, and their leaders, work in partnership with those that are struggling educationally or financially. However, the reviews do not include the full range of post-16 providers and exclude school sixth forms. This limits the effectiveness of the reviews in providing a strategic perspective on the provision within an area. Area reviews also provide an opportunity to ensure that the curriculum offer is more closely aligned to local, regional and national employment priorities. In practice, however, the outcomes of area reviews have focused primarily on proposed mergers to support financial sustainability, or tackle inadequate provision. So far they have not focused on an objective rationalisation or re-alignment of curriculum provision.

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120. 'What do recruiters think about today's young people? Insights from four focus groups', Anthony Mann and Prue Huddleston, 2015; www.educationandemployers.org/research/what-do-recruiters-think-about-todays-young-people-insights-from-four-focus-groups. Youth unemployment relates to those aged 15 to 24 years old and adult employment relates to those aged 25 to 64 years old.

121. 'Post-16 skills plan and independent report on technical education', Department for Education and Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/post-16-skills-plan-and-independent-report-on-technical-education.

122. Includes full inspections and short inspections that did not convert to a full inspection, where the provider remained good.

Special educational needs and disabilities

169. In September 2014, the law changed relating to children and young people aged from birth to 25 who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Associated duties and guidance for providing for their needs came into force. The SEND code of practice was also updated in 2014.[123] This makes clear to schools and local areas their responsibilities for the accurate identification and assessment of special educational needs and of pupils' primary area of need. Pupils identified by schools and other providers, including health providers, as having special educational needs and/or disabilities will either have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan (EHC plan) or be in receipt of special educational needs support (SEN support).

Identification and prevalence of special educational needs and disabilities

Figure 25: The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs, 2007 to 2016
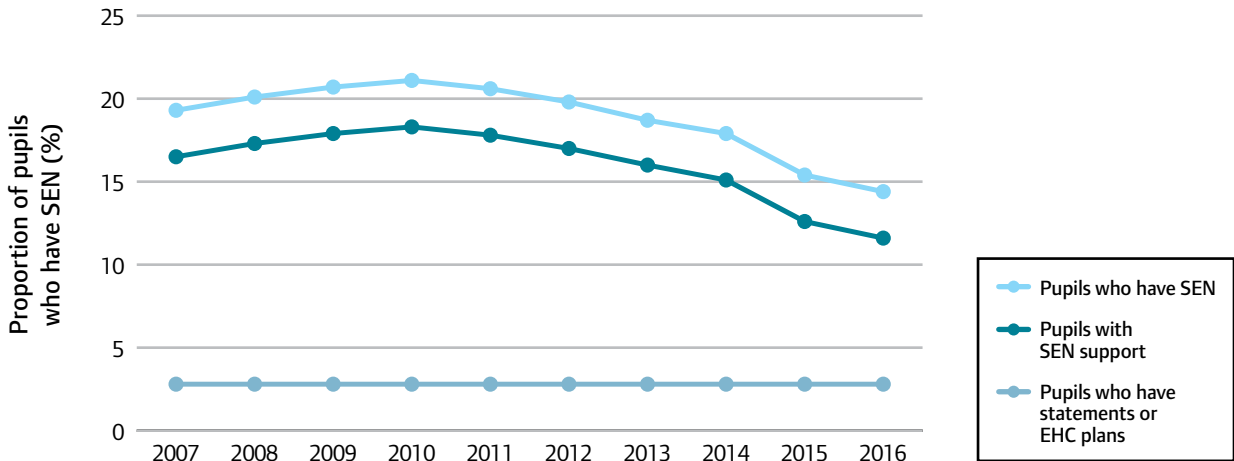
1. From the school census on pupils with special educational needs (SEN), and SEN provision in schools as at January each year 2007–2016
Source: Department for Education

170. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is now at 14.4%.[124] This is its lowest level since 2007. This decline is due to a fall in the proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs without a statement or EHC plan (those in receipt of SEN support). In 2016, this group declined to 11.6% of all pupils. This is the lowest on record and down 6.7 percentage points from its peak in 2010. Almost half of the reduction in the proportions of pupils identified as requiring special educational needs support has occurred since 2014, a 3.5 percentage point fall, when the revised code of practice and Children and Families Act came into force. The proportion of the total pupil population with a statement or EHC plan has remained constant, at 2.8%, since 2007.[125]

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123. 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years', Department for Education and Department of Health, 2014; www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25.

124. All data on numbers of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities and the schools that they attend throughout this section: 'Special educational needs in England: January 2016', Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england-january-2016.

125. Source: School census 2007–2016 (as at January each year).

171. In primary schools, including in their early years provision, boys are much more likely to be identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities than girls, including having an EHC plan or statement. In January 2016, almost 18% of boys in primary schools and 9% of girls were identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion is highest in Years 5 and 6 for both boys and girls. It then reduces during secondary school. By the beginning of key stage 4, the proportion receiving SEN support is very similar to that in Year 1, at around 11%, although the proportion who have an EHC plan or statement is higher, at 2%.

172. Some groups are much more likely to be identified as having special educational needs and/ or disabilities than others. In primary and secondary schools, pupils who speak English as a first language are more likely than pupils who speak English as an additional language to be identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. Twenty seven per cent of all pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are eligible for free schools meals, compared with just over 12% of pupils who have no special educational needs or disabilities. An even higher proportion of pupils who have statements or EHC plans are eligible for free school meals: almost a third. Pupils who have social, emotional and mental health needs as their primary type of need are the most likely to also be eligible for free school meals.

173. The proportion of boys (4%) who have an EHC plan or statement is more than twice that of girls (1.5%). Thirty per cent of boys who have a statement or EHC plan have autistic spectrum disorder identified as their primary need, compared with just under 15% of girls with an EHC plan or a statement.

Local areas' implementation of the reforms: a new form of inspection

174. Working with the Care Quality Commission inspectorate, we have introduced a new type of local area inspection this year to check how effectively education, health and social care are working together with others and parent/carers to implement these reforms. Eight of these inspections were carried out in the summer of 2016.

175. We found local areas to be at different stages in how they had put the new reforms into place. This was usually linked to whether they had previously been involved in earlier 'pathfinder' arrangements.[126] In these first inspections, each local area was meeting its statutory obligations. Joint commissioning arrangements were established between health, education and social care to provide services. The different ways of involving parents strategically in decision-making (known as co-production) were generally working well, although there was some variation across the areas inspected.

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126. In October 2011, the Department for Education set up 20 trials with 31 local authorities to test the proposals in the special educational needs and disabilities green paper. See: www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-and-aspiration-a-new-approach-to-special-educational-needs-and-disability-consultation.

176. Services for children, pupils and learners who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, from birth to 19 years, were mostly well established, including the drawing up of EHC plans with families. Most parents said they had been able to influence their own child's EHC plan, although some felt that their views were not taken into account sufficiently. Almost all of the inspected authorities had more to do to secure provision and a continuous pathway of services for young people up to the age of 25. Many parents remained anxious about the continuity of provision, care and resources from health, education and social care once their children left the school system.

177. Arrangements for identifying, assessing and meeting the needs of children and young people who had EHC plans (or a statement of special educational needs) were also usually well developed. Most local areas and schools had reviewed their practice on identification and assessment of need, and were continuing to do so as they put into place the requirements of the Children and Families Act 2014.[127] In some areas, inspectors found that additional training has been provided to special educational needs coordinators (SENCos) in schools by local authorities to ensure that they understood their responsibilities and the 'local offer'. As a result, individual schools had adjusted their criteria for including a pupil on their register of special educational need.[128]

178. Not all local areas we inspected had established systems for checking on how well all pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities were doing, wherever they went to school or college. Most kept careful oversight of those in maintained schools with statements or EHC plans, but were less informed about these pupils' progress or indeed their safety in independent schools or when they are placed out of area.

179. Few local areas routinely gathered and analysed information about how effective provision is for pupils in receipt of SEN support in mainstream schools, colleges and other provision and, in particular, how well they progress compared with others. Our analysis of data about the progress of these pupils shows that it frequently lags behind that of their peers and there is considerable variation nationally as to how well these pupils do. Only 54% make expected progress in English between key stages 2 and 4, for example, compared with 69% of all pupils nationally. The proportion of pupils in receipt of SEN support who make the expected level of progress varies between 37% and 74% across local authority areas.[129]

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127. Children and Families Act, 2014; www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted.
128. Review of evidence bases and report letters of all local area SEND inspections.
129. Analysis of Ofsted's RAISEonline database, based on data provided by the Department for Education. Includes pupils in maintained secondary schools and special schools, but excludes pupil referral units and independent schools.

Placements

Figure 26: The proportion of pupils with a statement or education, health and care plan by type of school, January 2016
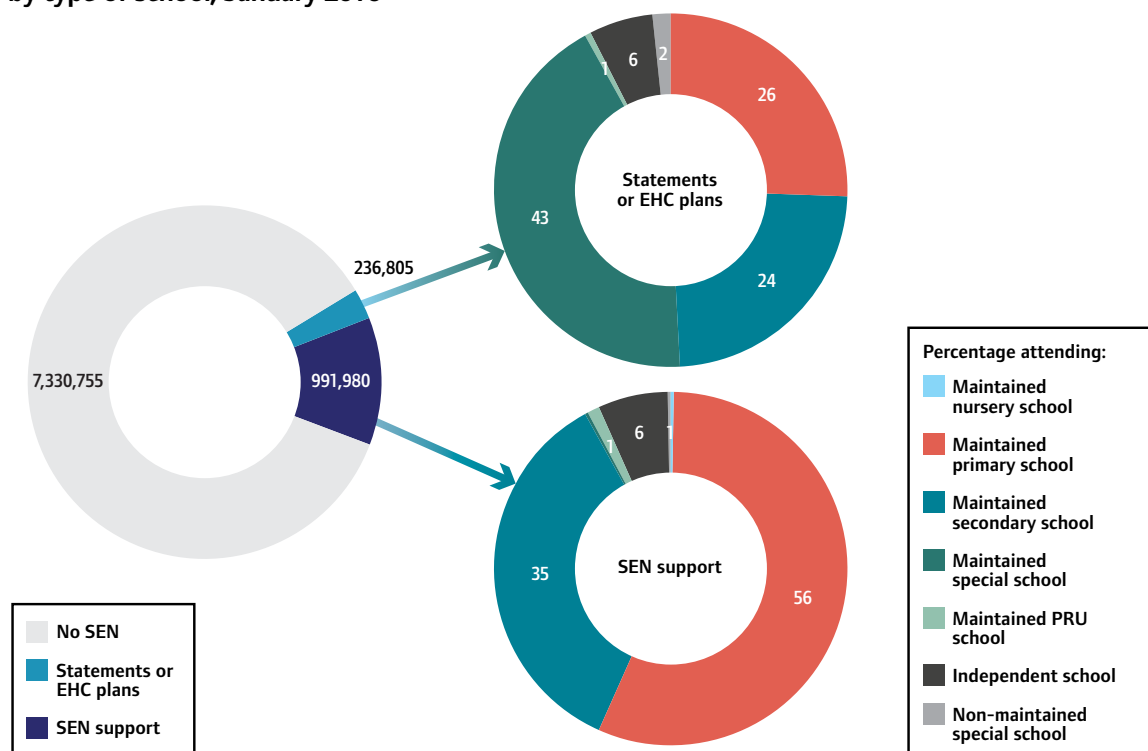
Source: Department for Education

180. Greater proportions of pupils with EHC plans or statements, 43%, are now educated within maintained special schools than at any point since 2007. The proportion of these pupils placed in independent schools has increased from just under 4% in 2009 to over 6% in 2016. The proportion of pupils with a statement or EHC plan placed within mainstream primary and secondary schools is now at its lowest level since 2007. The decrease is much greater for secondary aged pupils than for primary aged pupils.

Figure 27: The proportion of pupils with a statement or education health and care plan within each provider type, 2007 to 2016
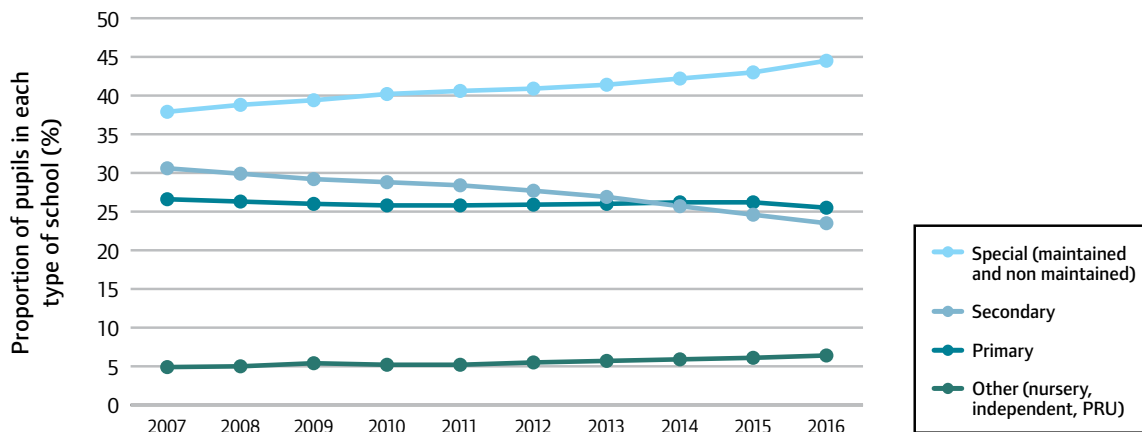
1. From the school census on pupils with special educational needs (SEN), and SEN provision in schools as at January each year 2007–2016
Source: Department for Education

181. Evidence from local area inspections suggests that the increase in the proportion of special school placements may relate to concerns that parents have reported about perceived or real inconsistencies in awareness in some mainstream schools. Parents have also raised concerns about the ability of mainstream schools to deliver specialist support, such as therapy, which is readily available in special schools. Some parents do not feel that aspirations are high enough or that the curriculum in mainstream schools is broad enough to cater for their child's current strengths and future needs. They also fear that where a local school requires improvement or is inadequate, it may not have the time and resources to prioritise the learning of their child.

182. There is no evidence from our school or local area inspections that mainstream schools, whether primary or secondary, are not welcoming pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities onto their rolls. Children and young people spoken with during school and local area inspections are generally positive about their experiences and the help they receive, whether in mainstream or special schools.

183. In the small number of local area inspections completed to date, it would appear that parental confidence in their child's placement and the progress they are making is linked to how much they feel their views and concerns are taken into account. In the strongest areas, parents and parent groups are directly involved in reviewing and planning services, not just for their own child but in relation to the provision and overall outcomes for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. In these circumstances, parents have confidence that provision is being tailored as much as possible to their child's needs and targets, wherever they are placed, and that school and local areas are committed to further improving provision and outcomes. Other parents lack confidence in local areas or schools when they feel that:

● their child's provision and EHC plan are determined by what currently exists as provision, rather than provision being tailored and adapted to meet their child's needs

● they have been asked for their views but the suggested provision or EHC plan does not appear to reflect these

● the provision that is meant to be made for their child does not always happen and the local area, school or college do not explain fully to them how the proposed provision or adjustments to provision will meet their child's needs effectively and how this will be evaluated.

Quality of provision

Figure 28: Proportion of specialist providers judged good or outstanding for overall effectiveness at their most recent inspection, from 2010 to 2016
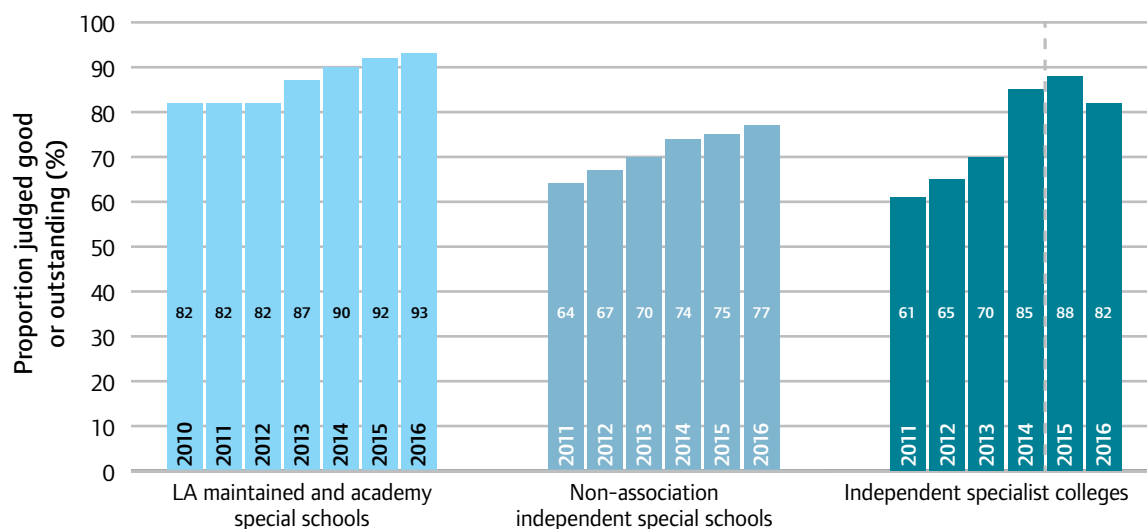
1. Outcomes for maintained school inspections are shown for inspections to 31 August 2016 where the report was published by 30 September 2016.
2. Maintained and non-association school details are taken from Edubase and show the position at 31 August 2016.
3. For independent specialist colleges, figures for 2015 onwards are not comparable to previous years. A different methodology has been used to calculate the percentage of providers judged good or outstanding, with providers that ceased to be funded or closed during the year no longer included.

Source: Ofsted

184.   There are 1,038 maintained special schools. Of these, 81% (836) are under local authority control. In addition, there are 150 special academy convertors, 33 sponsor-led special academies and 19 special free schools.

185.   The proportion of maintained special schools, including free schools and academies, judged to be good or outstanding at their most recent inspection continues to be higher than either primary or secondary mainstream schools.

186.   Overall, only 7% of maintained special schools are less than good. Less than good provision is much more widespread in independent special schools (23%) and independent specialist colleges (18%). There are 5,975 pupils with statements or EHC plans in local authority special schools, or in special academies and special free schools that are not good or outstanding schools. In non-association independent schools that are not good or outstanding, there are a further 1,485 of these pupils.

187.   In all state-funded schools, there are over 159,000 pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in schools judged as requiring improvement or inadequate. This includes 16,100 pupils with EHC plans or statements who are in maintained primary or secondary schools or pupil referral units that are not yet good. Nationally, 20% of pupils with an EHC plan or statement who attend maintained secondary schools are in schools that are less than good.

188. The proportion is even higher for secondary aged pupils who are in receipt of SEN support. Nationally, 23% of these pupils are in secondary schools judged as requiring improvement or inadequate. There is a marked difference when considering the position of pupils in receipt of SEN support in the North and Midlands, compared with the South. There are lower proportions of good or outstanding secondary schools in the North and Midlands and the effect of this on pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is more marked than for other pupils. While 17% of secondary aged pupils in receipt of SEN support are in schools that are less than good in the South of the country, this rises to 30% in the North and Midlands.

189. Where inspectors found provision for these pupils to be less than good, common weaknesses can be identified. This is the case whether pupils are in mainstream or special schools, specialist colleges or a school with enhanced special educational needs and disabilities provision or resource base. Often, arrangements for checking on progress were not robust enough and aspirations for these pupils too low. Leaders and managers did not do enough to check which aspects of support were proving effective. Some leaders did not have enough knowledge or understanding as to how to do this. Teachers and other staff had received too little training in how to use specialist resources and approaches, and how to measure pupils' small steps of progress. This meant that resources available were not used effectively and that work was not well matched to pupils' needs and next steps. As a result, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in these provisions did not make as much progress as they should.[130]

Special schools

190. It is not surprising that the characteristics of highly effective special schools, whether independent or maintained, do not differ much from those for mainstream schools. Behind this are the aspiration, vision and quality of leadership and management at all levels, including governance. Outstanding special schools have leaders who are tenacious in their aim for high standards in teaching and learning. They are rigorous in how they check on the impact of the schools' work on the progress and well-being of every pupil.[131]

191. In the most effective special schools, we see leaders who are clear about their duties and responsibilities in meeting their pupils' identified special educational needs. They also deliver a broad, rich and relevant curriculum that helps each pupil be ready for their next steps in education and life. These schools work extremely well with other specialist providers of support and therapies, with parents and with young people to review pupils' progress rigorously. They have accurate, comprehensive information about what a pupil knows and can do and what they need to learn to do next. They are highly focused on providing the pupils with learning opportunities that enable transfer of skills from the classroom into everyday life. Consequently, pupils at these schools make outstanding progress in the subjects they study but also in important aspects of their personal development. They acquire skills that set them up extremely well for later life and learning.

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130. Based on a review of all maintained and inadequate schools and a sample of further education and skills provision judged inadequate this year.
131. Based on a review of the inspection reports of 75 maintained and independent special schools.

192. These schools know themselves and assess their pupils' current knowledge and skills very well indeed. They are supported by local areas that keep careful watch on every pupil's progress and outcomes. Their vision is of an 'enabling' curriculum, rather than a disabling one, that not only supports pupils' understandings but also their resilience. They check rigorously on progress in subjects, including technical and vocational knowledge and skills. They also monitor progress in specialist areas such as mobility, independence, communication or how pupils manage their behaviour or learning. They inspire pupils to have a love of learning, to be confident in their own abilities and to also know when they might need help.

Perseid School is a happy and inspirational place. Pupils are keen to get off the buses when they arrive because they enjoy coming to school. External partners and other professionals recognise that leaders and governors are committed to ensuring that the school remains a centre of excellence that others can learn from. This has led to the school becoming the hub of a teaching school alliance and a valued training provider within the local area.

Leaders and governors are continually looking for ways to make further improvements. They constantly evaluate how their actions are making a difference and draw on the advice of other professionals to confirm their findings. They will not compromise on the high standards of care and education provided throughout the school. For example, governors insisted that the local authority conduct a full review of health and care services to ensure that the diverse needs of the growing number of pupils attending the school could continue to be met. Consequently, all pupils continue to receive high-quality support to allow them to make outstanding progress. Parents say that they appreciate the support and the wrap-around care that is provided by all staff at the school. They miss it during the holidays because the school plays such a significant role in the lives of their children.

193. In good and outstanding special schools inspected this year, governors provided robust challenge and support. They held leaders to account rigorously for pupils' progress and well-being. They were clearly focused on the responsibilities of the school to secure the highest outcomes for each young person in both their academic and personal development. Often, their governors included parents and experts from within education, social care and health who thoroughly understood the potential barriers that a disability or need might present to learning. They asked highly pertinent questions as to how well the school is doing, querying how specific interventions are working. For example, in a school specialising in providing for pupils with social and emotional challenges, they checked on how effective the schools' behaviour management approach was and whether incidents had reduced over time. Where pupils' primary needs were linked to communication and language difficulties, they checked carefully on pupils' progress in these areas. They ensured that pupils had any additional technological aids and other resources they needed swiftly and staff had the training to use them.

A letter to **Meadowgate School:**

'You have made significant improvements to the already outstanding quality of education provided in the school since the last inspection. This is because you are determined that each pupil shall achieve the greatest possible academic and personal success, and benefit from the highest standard of care and support. This commitment is shared by other leaders, including governors, and all staff. You and many of your colleagues have completed high-level research into techniques that best enable pupils to learn and make rapid progress.'

194. This rigour in monitoring all aspects of the school's work and pupils' outcomes can be seen in both the maintained and independent sector. It is a common feature of reporting about outstanding or much-improved independent special schools, such as Overley Hall School in Shropshire, in which the curriculum and assessment and pupils' preparation for their working lives and for leisure were judged particular strengths.

195. In special schools found to be less than good, assessment and monitoring of progress was often a weakness, with schools not checking carefully or rigorously on areas known to be challenging for learners who have particular needs. Sometimes, such limitations were 'taken as read', rather than staff looking for new and innovative ways of enabling access. Slow progress and poor attendance or behaviour were accepted rather than challenged. Pupils' interests, needs and next steps were not taken into account enough when planning the curriculum and lessons. There was often a lack of urgency, because lessons started slowly and time for learning was lost.[132]

196. In addition, in a number of inadequate schools, particularly independent special schools, safeguarding was found to be ineffective. This is discussed further in the safeguarding section below.

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132. Based on a review of all maintained and independent schools judged inadequate this year.

Learners with high needs in further education

197. The large majority of learners with high needs aged between 16 and 24 in further education (excluding school sixth forms) are studying in general further education (FE) colleges. A very small proportion of learners attend sixth form colleges (7%) and independent specialist colleges (14%).

Figure 29: Provision for learners with high needs inspected between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016, by provider type

Number of providers in brackets
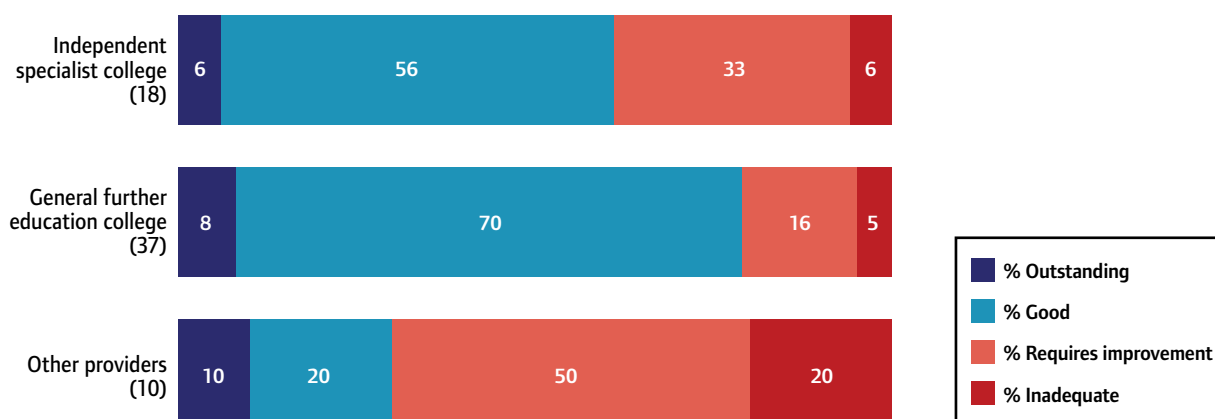
1. 'Other providers' include 16–19 academy converters, independent learning providers, local authority providers, not for profit organisations, sixth form colleges and specialist further education colleges.
2. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100. Where the number of inspections is small, percentages should be treated with caution.
Source: Ofsted

198. A separate judgement as to the quality of provision for learners with high needs is made in further education and skills provision, where appropriate. Overall, the proportion of general FE colleges judged good or outstanding for their provision for learners with high needs this year (78%) was much higher when compared with the colleges' overall effectiveness judgement (51%). The proportion of independent specialist colleges (ISCs) judged good or outstanding at their most recent inspection has dropped by seven percentage points, to 82%, between 31 August 2015 and 31 August 2016. This is almost entirely linked to the inspection of new providers, with four out of seven being judged less than good. In these weaker colleges, inspectors found too little focus on employability, independence and behaviour, including opportunities for meaningful work experience and too little use of supported internships.

199. This year, the number of young people with statements or EHC plans who are undertaking traineeships, apprenticeships and supported internships was collected on a voluntary basis for the first time. Out of 117 local authorities that provided this information, there were only 125 young people with either a statement or an EHC plan who were undertaking apprenticeships, 125 undertaking traineeships and 65 undertaking supported internships. In some areas, there were none. Of the young people who were issued with a statement or an EHC plan for the first time during 2015, 10 were undertaking an apprenticeship, five were undertaking traineeships and 10 were undertaking supported internships.[133]

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133. 'National statistics: Statements of SEN and EHC plans: England, 2016', Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statements-of-sen-and-ehc-plans-england-2016.

200. In March 2016, we published our thematic report 'Moving forward: how well the further education and skills sector is preparing young people with high needs for adult life'.[134] This report concluded that young people with high needs were not well served. Of the local authorities and further education providers surveyed, the implementation of the Children and Families Act 2014 had not been fully effective. As a result, the support that learners with high needs received varied considerably. The sharing of information between schools and providers was not good. The learners were not getting enough specialist careers advice. Health, social care and education providers were not working closely enough together to ensure that these young people were prepared well for adult life. Too many learners with high needs were on programmes that did not lead to further learning, employment or supported or independent living.

201. In almost all local area SEND inspections, provision and planning for young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities aged 19 to 25 was also identified as weaker than for provision for younger pupils. Local authority, health and other services in these areas recognised that this aspect of their joint working, whether at strategic level or in implementation of plans, was less developed than for early years and school-age services. Most local areas inspected are now trying to collate information more systematically about their provision and outcomes for young people aged 19 to 25, so it can be used to review and drive forward services and outcomes for this age group. This includes gathering and analysing information about the progress of learners with high needs, the qualifications they achieve and what is known about the quality of these young people's lives after leaving school and children's services.

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134. 'Moving forward? How well the further education and skills sector is preparing young people with high needs for adult life', Ofsted, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-learners-with-high-needs-for-adult-life.

Adult learning

202. In an increasingly specialised economy, employees need to develop their knowledge and higher level skills, and to improve their English and mathematics. More than six million working-age adults have no level 2 qualifications at all.[135]

203. In 2014/15, there were 2.6 million funded learners aged 19 and over taking part in further education. This has fallen from a peak of 3.3 million adult learners in 2012/13. Thirty per cent are on courses at community learning and skills providers, 24% at independent learning providers (including employer providers), and 44% at general further education (FE) colleges.[136]

Figure 30: Proportion of adult education and skills providers judged good or outstanding for overall effectiveness at their most recent inspection
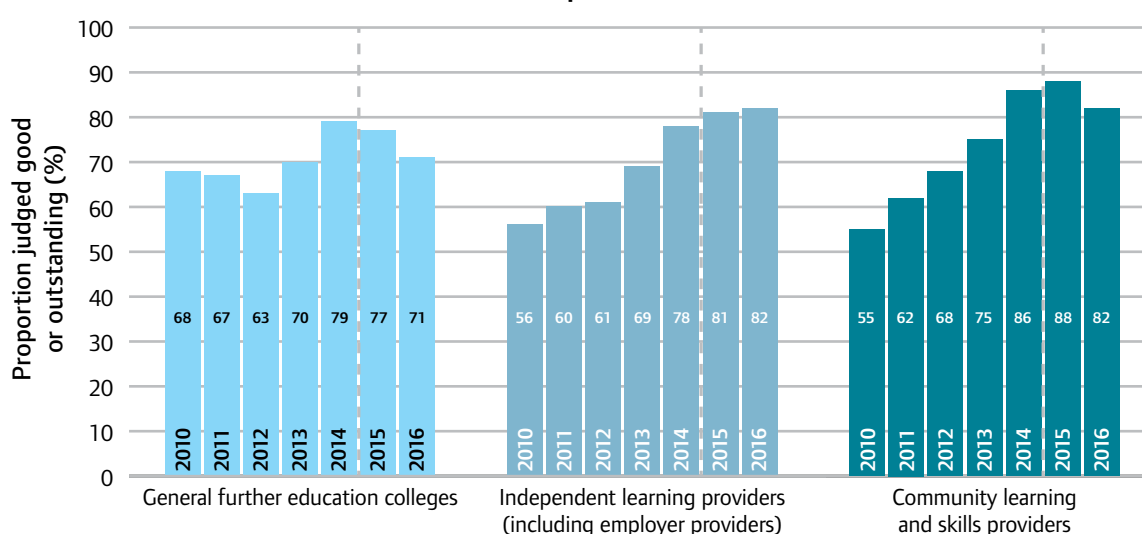
1. The main providers of adult education are included on the above chart.
2. Figures for 2015 onwards are not comparable to previous years. A different methodology has been used to calculate the percentage of providers judged good or outstanding, with providers that ceased to be funded or closed during the year no longer included.
Source: Ofsted

204. This year, adult learning programmes were given an overall judgement for the first time on full inspections.[137] Inspectors found that the lower overall effectiveness of general FE colleges extended to low performance in adult learning. Of the 66 full inspections of general FE colleges this year, 64 received a grade for adult learning. Fifty-eight per cent of these colleges were judged to be good or outstanding for their adult learning programmes. Performance was not markedly higher in other sectors: only 60% of community learning and skills providers and 55% of independent learning providers (including employer providers) were good or outstanding for their adult learning programme provision.

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135. 'National statistics: Further education and skills: statistical first release June 2016', Skills Funding Agency and Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-june-2016.

136. Learner numbers from 'Statistical data set: FE data library: local authority tables', Skills Funding Agency, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-local-authority-tables. Providers matched by UKPRN to the Ofsted further education and skills provider types.

137. 'Further education and skills inspection handbook', Ofsted, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-education-and-skills-inspection-handbook.

205. Where provision was good, learners developed the skills and confidence they needed to prepare for work because leaders worked well with employers and community groups to develop relevant courses. In weaker provision, the majority of teaching did not challenge or enable adult learners to achieve well.

206. Adult learners followed more than one million education and training qualifications in general FE colleges in 2014/15. Just over half of the qualifications were basic skills courses in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (level 1).[138] It is not clear that these courses in basic skills are sufficiently stretching and helping learners to make progress.

Community learning and skills provider performance

207. Community learning is designed to help people of all ages and backgrounds to get a new skill, to reconnect with learning, follow an interest, to prepare to study formal courses and get qualifications or learn how to support their children better. Where it is done well, it supports wider government policies on localism, social justice, stronger families, digital inclusion and social mobility. Learning often takes place in community settings, such as primary schools, church halls, libraries and community centres.

208. The downward trend in the number of funded non-accredited courses identified last year has continued.[139] This decline has again been offset by an increased focus on longer courses in literacy, numeracy and preparation for life and work that lead to recognised qualifications such as functional skills or a GCSE. However, fewer adults have participated in funded community learning, shown most starkly by the substantial fall in the number of learners in 'personal and community development learning', which dropped by around 40,000 in the past year.[140]

209. The fall in the number of learners is greater for those aged over 35 and is marked by a steep decline in the participation of learners aged over 60.[141] With progressive increases in the state pension age, many more people over 60 will find themselves seeking employment, sometimes as a result of redundancy. Often, the key to a rapid return to work is access to education and training to get the qualifications and skills necessary for a change in employment. In the majority of inspections carried out this year, even in good or outstanding providers, managers do not know if their employability and skills offer is making a difference and helping people get back to work.

138. 'National statistics: SFA: national achievement rates tables 2014 to 2015: open data CSV files', Skills Funding Agency, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sfa-national-achievement-rates-tables-2014-to-2015-open-data-csv-files.

139. 'Statistical data set: FE data library: community learning', Skills Funding Agency, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-community-learning.

140. 'Statistical data set: FE data library: community learning', Skills Funding Agency, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-community-learning.

141. 'Statistical data set: FE data library: community learning', Skills Funding Agency, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-community-learning.

Figure 31: Number of funded learners participating in personal and community development learning by age, 2009/10 to 2014/15
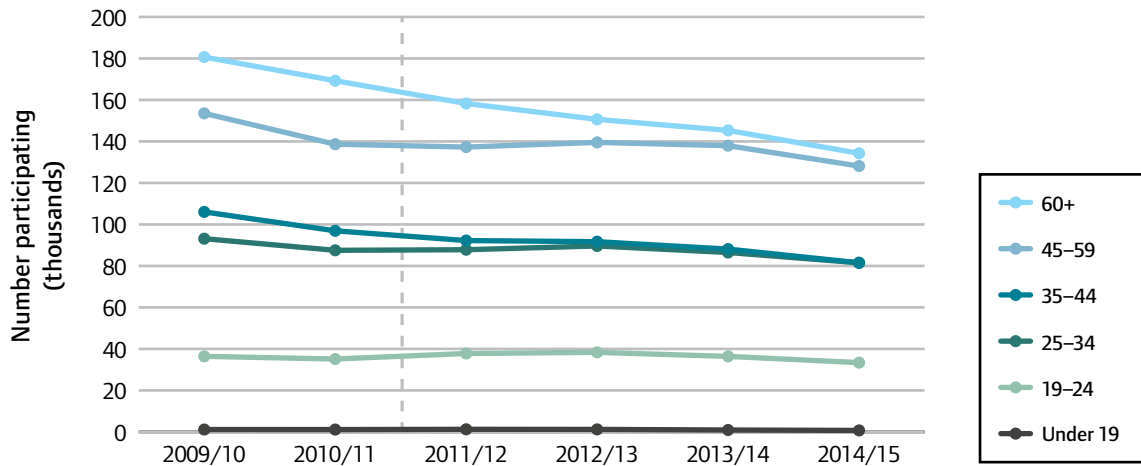
1. Figures for 2011/12 onwards are not directly comparable to previous years.
Source: Skills Funding Agency

210. In providers judged good or outstanding, the shift in funding emphasis has led to vibrant and innovative approaches to community learning for those aged 60 and above. However, the falling participation rates for this age group highlight the need for local authorities, as community learning and skills providers, to develop partnerships that will stimulate community activity in areas where social networks are poorly developed because of deprivation or rural geography.

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211. Inspectors found that good and outstanding community learning and skills providers were particularly effective in their communities at responding to the social, economic and health pressures caused by unemployment, poverty and low levels of literacy, numeracy and digital skills. These providers share services, and work in partnership with other education providers, charities and the public and voluntary sector so that they can reach all sections of their locality. Inspections this year show that work with disadvantaged communities leads to social and educational benefits, such as:[142]

- funding short courses that enable local people to set up self-financing clubs and community ventures that promote healthy living and better mental health and counter loneliness, for example through lunch clubs and park running groups

- working with partners best placed to deliver a wide range of courses to support adults from disadvantaged communities

- increasing enrolments from specific under-represented groups and communities, such as socially isolated men and residents from the most economically deprived wards.

Figure 32: Inspection outcomes of community learning and skills providers at their most recent inspection, as at 31 August

Number of providers in brackets
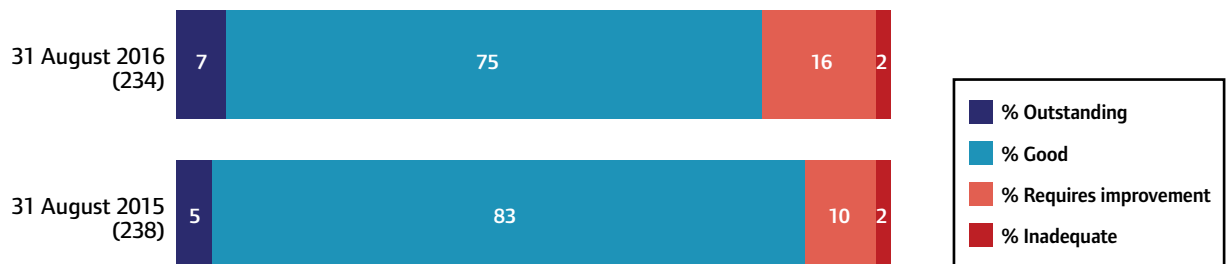
Source: Ofsted

212. Eighty-two per cent of the 234 currently open and funded community learning and skills providers are judged to be good or outstanding. This is a six percentage point decline from the previous year. This year, 18 previously good providers were judged to require improvement at their most recent inspection. This shift in performance is characterised by courses that did not challenge or inspire learners enough to raise their aspirations, and by leaders and managers who did not know enough about the impact of their work. For example, leaders didn't know whether the courses and training they provided led to long-term work for unemployed residents or to improvements in health and well-being in disadvantaged communities.

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142. We reviewed 78 reports from inspections of community learning and skills providers, including both local authority and non-local authority providers.

Learning and skills in prisons and young offender institutions

213. For too long, education and training in prisons and young offender institutions have not been effective enough in giving prisoners the opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills they need to remain out of prison after release. Around 60% of prisoners leave prison without going on to employment, education or training.[143] More than four in 10 adult offenders commit further offences within a year of release. Almost six in 10 prisoners who serve sentences of less than 12 months commit further crimes and receive a caution or court conviction.[144] We are supportive of the Coates review recommendation to 'place education at the heart of the prison regime' to enable prisoners to gain the knowledge and develop the skills and attributes necessary to lead law-abiding, useful lives on release.[145]

214. Governors are still not doing enough to ensure that education, training or work reduce re-offending and rehabilitates prisoners. In 13 out of 20 prisons, inspectors found governors did not provide enough activity places to ensure that all prisoners had good access to education, work or vocational training throughout the week. Prisoners waited too long before activities were available to them.

Figure 33: Inspection outcomes of prisons and young offender institutions at their most recent inspection, as at 31 August 2016

Number of prisons and young offender institutions in brackets

	% Outstanding	% Good	% Requires improvement	% Inadequate
Overall effectiveness of learning and skills and work activities (80)	5	30	53	13
National Careers Service (NCS) (82)	1	62	35	1
Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) (87)	5	52	39	5
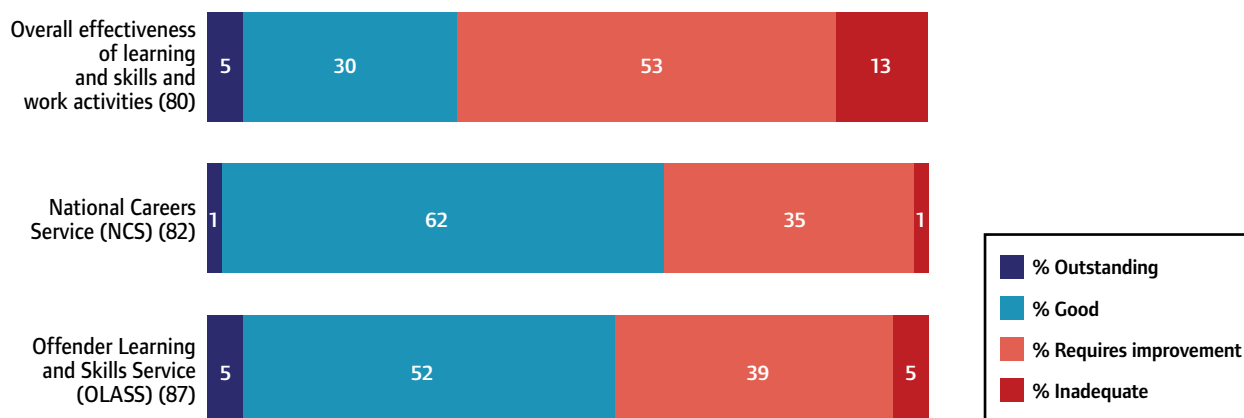
1. The overall effectiveness of learning and skills and work activities was introduced in March 2014; as at 31 August 2016, 34 prisons and young offender institutions had yet to receive this judgement and therefore are not included.
2. Inspections published by 31 August 2016.
3. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.
Source: Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons and Ofsted

143. 'Unlocking potential: a review of education in prison', Ministry of Justice, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/unlocking-potential-a-review-of-education-in-prison.

144. 'National statistics: Proven reoffending statistics: Ministry of Justice, October 2013 to September 2014', Ministry of Justice, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/proven-reoffending-statistics-october-2013-to-september-2014.

145. 'Unlocking potential: a review of education in prison', Ministry of Justice, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/unlocking-potential-a-review-of-education-in-prison.

215. The overall effectiveness of learning and skills and work activities in prisons and youth offending institutions is poor in comparison with the rest of the education and skills sector. The inspection outcomes this year are higher than last year, but improvement is slow. Of the 42 prisons and young offender institutions with inspection reports published this year, leadership and management remained weak, with a majority (60%) judged as requires improvement or inadequate.

216. This is the first year that we have reported on the personal development and behaviour of prisoners in offender learning. Inspectors report on how well education, training and work activities help prisoners to develop the skills relevant to their courses, their everyday lives and their plans for employment on release. Only 36% of prisons inspected enabled prisoners to develop and maintain the behaviour and attitudes to prepare them for life after prison effectively. Consequently, the majority of prison regimes failed to promote a good work ethic with prisoners. Although prisoners were largely polite, attentive and respectful when they attended classes or work activities, absences and punctuality of prisoners were often poor and went unchallenged by prison staff. When prisoners attended, work activities often failed to challenge and inspire them. In many cases, there was not enough work to keep prisoners busy for the whole of the working day.

217. The best leadership and management of prisons set clear priorities for learning, skills and work that matched the curriculum and training offer to the skills needed for employment. Partnerships with local, regional and national employers were also effective in extending realistic work activities.

218. The quality of education and training provided by the Offenders' Learning and Skills Service has improved in the last year. Vocational training and preparation continued to be mainly good. The proportion of qualifications achieved that were below level 2 (excluding English and mathematics) has increased for the third consecutive year.[146] These qualifications may do much to raise self-esteem and give prisoners a sense of achievement, but it is not clear that they help offenders get back into work once they leave prison.

Figure 34: Offender learning participation (aged 18+) by level and over time, 2011/12 to 2015/16
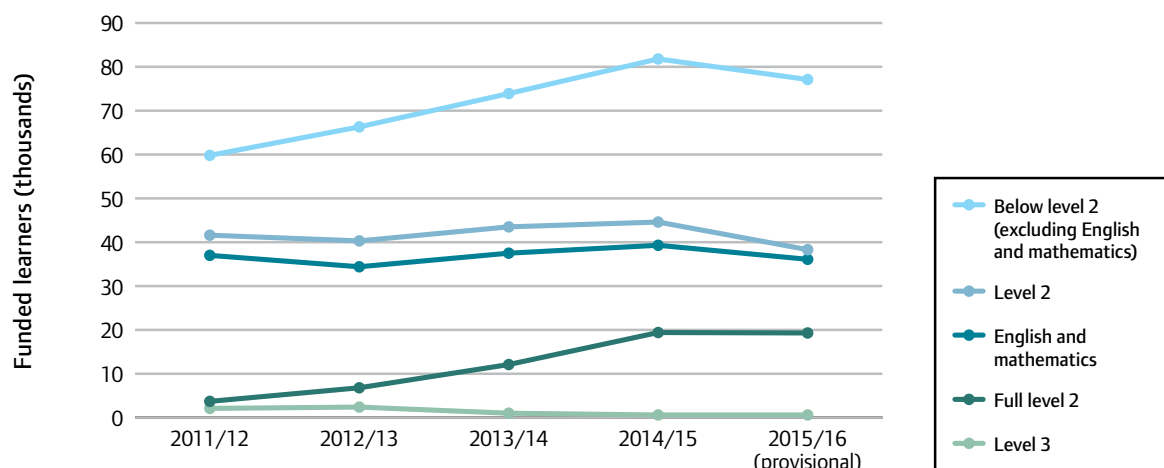
1. A full level 2 qualification is equivalent to five or more GCSEs at grade A* to C.
Source: Skills Funding Agency and Department for Business, Innovation & Skills

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146. 'Statistical data set: FE data library: further education and skills', Skills Funding Agency, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-further-education-and-skills.

219. The majority of prisoners enter prison with literacy and numeracy skills equivalent to expected primary school levels of attainment.[147] The development of English and mathematics skills remains poor and too many prisoners fail to make the progress they should. Having fallen sharply in 2012/13, the proportion who achieved their qualifications in English and mathematics has increased, but at 54% is still almost 10 percentage points lower than in 2011/12.[148]

220. Of the 33 prison and young offender institution inspections of the National Careers Service provision, around two thirds provided good support for prisoners to understand their education, training and employment options on release. However, many prisons, governors and Offenders' Learning and Skills Service managers did not work closely enough with the National Careers Service and local employers to ensure that learning and work activities linked closely enough to resettlement plans on release. There were too few opportunities for prisoners nearing the end of their sentence to gain direct work experience in the community.

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147. 'Unlocking potential: a review of education in prison', Ministry of Justice, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/unlocking-potential-a-review-of-education-in-prison.

148. 'Statistical data set: FE data library: further education and skills', Skills Funding Agency, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-further-education-and-skills.

Safeguarding

221. Children and young people can only thrive and learn when they feel safe. Everyone who works with children and young people has a responsibility to promote their welfare and protect them from the risk of harm. Since September 2015, on all inspections in early years, schools and further education (FE) and skills, inspectors judge whether the safeguarding of children is effective. We will not judge a school or setting as anything better than inadequate if its safeguarding arrangements are ineffective. When considering whether safeguarding is effective or not, our inspectors consider many factors, including how well providers:

- identify and respond to indicators of child abuse and neglect
- are tackling issues such as child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation
- protect their pupils from extremism and radicalisation.

222. The vast majority of early years providers, schools and FE and skills providers take their safeguarding responsibilities very seriously and take action to keep pupils safe and well. However, there are exceptions. This year, 2% of maintained schools and 3% of providers in FE and skills were found to have safeguarding arrangements that were not effective. The proportion of independent schools where safeguarding arrangements were not effective was much higher, at 15%. Whether in the state-funded or independent sector, these weaknesses were the result of poor governance, leadership and management. Leaders failed to check whether their staff were actually complying with instructions and applying guidance as to how to keep children safe.

Safeguarding children in the early years

223. The high proportion of early years providers judged good and outstanding is testament to the emphasis these providers place on children's welfare, health and safety. This includes a determination not only to keep up to date with the latest requirements and guidance but also to ensure that the ways that they keep children safe are rigorous and effective. For example:

Staff at **Crazy Crackers Ltd @ St.Bartholomew's** had an excellent knowledge of what to do should they have a concern about a child in their care. Staff were extremely knowledgeable about the signs and symptoms of abuse and of the action to take to protect children from harm. The environment is risk-assessed and staff include children in assessing their own role in keeping themselves safe.

An **outstanding childminder in Cambridgeshire** had an exceptional understanding of how to minimise potential risks to children. She constantly updated her safeguarding and child protection training to ensure that her understanding and practice remained sharply focused on the protection of children. The childminder monitored all that she did exceptionally well. This enabled her to remain accurately accountable for children's attendance, ongoing accidents, individual care plans and their ongoing learning and development.

224. In contrast:

> In a **private day nursery in Calderdale**, staff were unsure of the correct procedure to follow or where to find the relevant information if they had a concern about a colleague or if an allegation was made against a member of staff. Daily registers were not always completed accurately. The manager did not always ensure that staffing ratios for children aged two met the legal requirements. There were also not clear policies and practices in place to minimise potential risks to children when staff used electronic devices that can connect to the internet.

225. In the small proportion of early years settings inspected where safeguarding was not effective,[149] this was because of policies and guidance not being put into practice. For example, in a number of provisions we found a lack of adequate supervision in outdoor learning areas. A few settings had premises that were in a poor state of repair or were dirty and left children at risk of harm. In other cases, the required vetting or recruitment checks had not all been carried out on individual members of staff.

226. In independent schools with early years provision where safeguarding was judged ineffective, similar weaknesses in premises, outdoor learning areas and the vetting of staff were also found. There was not a rigorous culture in place that kept pupils safe throughout the school. Staff often had a weak understanding of young children's care needs, so they did not always have effective risk assessments for activities in place, for example in outside learning areas or in the level of supervision and help provided. This meant that the safety of children in their care was not secure and their learning and development was not as good as it should be.[150]

227. Where early years providers have been found to have unsafe practices or not to have everything in place that they should, we have been swift to act. Between 2014 and 2016, approximately 2,000 providers received a welfare requirements notice. A welfare requirements notice sets out the actions that a provider must take by a certain date to meet the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage for childminders and childcare providers. A provider commits an offence if they do not take the action(s) set out in a welfare requirements notice within the specified time. We can prosecute providers who do not take the action required in a legal notice.

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149. This is based on a review of 182 early years registered providers inspected during 2015/16.
150. This is based on a review of inspection findings of all independent schools, with early years provision, where safeguarding was found to be not effective.

Safeguarding children and young people in schools and FE and skills providers

228. In 2015/16, a statement on the effectiveness of safeguarding was included in all reports for the first time. Only 2% of maintained schools were reported as not having effective safeguarding arrangements in place. Out of over 3,300 full and short inspections, 64 schools were identified where the arrangements for safeguarding were not effective. Out of these, 34 were primary schools, 19 were secondary schools, eight were special schools and three were pupil referral units.

229. In 2015/16, in 11 of the 410 full and short inspections of FE and skills providers, safeguarding arrangements were found to be ineffective: six independent learning providers (including employer providers), two general FE colleges, two community learning and skills providers and one independent specialist college.

230. In non-association independent schools, safeguarding is weaker and of concern. Fifteen per cent of these schools did not have effective safeguarding arrangements in place: 37 out of 248 inspections this year.

231. Schools and FE and skills providers that are getting safeguarding right have leaders who instil a safeguarding culture throughout the organisation.[151] Staff are supported to develop a good understanding of the signs that a child or young person may be suffering or may be at risk of abuse or neglect. They know what to do to support that child or young person and work effectively with colleagues and outside agencies to do so.

232. In these provisions, safeguarding is embedded in the curriculum, so that children and young people learn to recognise threats and how to protect themselves and their friends from harm. Schools and colleges that are proactive about engaging in local multi-agency challenges, for example to combat child sexual exploitation or the threat of radicalisation and extremism, can make a real difference in reducing the risks to children and in supporting victims of abuse.

233. Weaknesses in any aspect of safeguarding bring with them serious concerns about the effectiveness of leaders, managers, governors or proprietors. The common thread in all provision where safeguarding was ineffective was a lack of rigorous oversight. This included leaders not regularly checking that they are fulfilling all of their responsibilities. Having policies is not enough. They must be put into practice, reviewed and evaluated. Some independent schools, for example, do not do enough. Once they have met the standard for registration, some do not put effective arrangements in place for checking regularly that they are still meeting standards on welfare, health and safety, premises and the suitability of staff and that their practices are helping their pupils to keep themselves safe.[152] Eight of the independent schools that were registered in the last five years were found not to meet multiple independent school standards at their inspection this year.

151. This is based on a review of 182 early years reports and 227 primary, special and secondary reports and 10 FE providers judged outstanding.
152. Based on a review of the inspection reports of all non-association independent schools where safeguarding was found not to be effective.

234. This year, in both maintained and non-association independent schools found ineffective for safeguarding, the behaviour or anti-bullying policies and teachers' behaviour management skills were also often ineffective. This meant that pupils' safety was not secured or they were not protected from bullying. As a result, pupils did not feel safe.

235. Poor record-keeping and recording of incidents, including safeguarding incidents, were also a weakness in these schools. For example, incidents of physical restraint were not recorded appropriately and analysed. Leaders were not checking that guidance was consistently followed, that the use of physical restraint was appropriate and what had been learned that might help staff and pupils in the future.

236. Sometimes, too little was being done to check on pupils who were vulnerable to being influenced by extremists. In some faith schools in particular, there was a notable lack of rigour in their approach to keeping pupils safe, whether in their checks on staff or the ways in which they used the curriculum to help their pupils to understand how to keep themselves safe. A few had a curriculum that was too narrow and did not support pupils' understanding of the dangers of radicalisation, extremism and of grooming online. Twenty-five out of the 37 independent schools with ineffective safeguarding arrangements were schools with a religious character or ethos.[153]

237. In many of the independent schools where safeguarding was not effective, staff, leaders, governors and proprietors were not adequately trained in safeguarding or leaders were not checking that staff understood and were following up in practice the training they had received. Occasionally, individual members of staff had not received any training at all. Training alone is not enough. It cannot be assumed that it will automatically lead to a change in staff behaviour and practice.

238. In some cases, staff had been trained but this training did not guide their practice. Concerns about children and young people were not raised quickly enough or followed through robustly and in line with the school's policies and Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance. In some independent schools, the culture within the school was a barrier because there were few mechanisms for pupils' voices and views to be heard. This meant that staff were not alert to pupils' concerns and pupils with concerns did not feel able to share them.

239. This year, inspectors carried out 37 visits to FE and skills providers to evaluate how well providers were implementing the 'Prevent' duty, which came into effect from 18 September 2015. Inspectors found that while 22 of the 37 providers were implementing the requirements well, others had been slow in putting their plans into practice. General FE and sixth form colleges were furthest forward in their implementation of the 'Prevent' duty, having formed strong partnerships with external agencies and stakeholders. They had good quality risk assessments and action plans in place.

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153. Based on a review of all maintained schools and non-association independent schools where safeguarding was found not to be effective.

240. Around a third of the providers did not train staff effectively. Not enough practical action was taken to reduce potential risks to learners. In nearly half the providers, not enough had been done to ensure that learners were protected from the risk of radicalisation and extremism when using information technology (IT). Over a third of providers were not working in partnership with the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) to assess and minimise IT risks. Local authorities had often not worked with providers to build partnerships or share information effectively.

241. The weakest providers, predominantly independent learning providers, had not implemented any aspect of the 'Prevent' duty and six providers had no arrangements in place to check the suitability of people coming to the provider to make presentations to learners. Learners were easily able to access inappropriate websites and were at risk of being exposed to or accessing dangerous extremist materials. Other poor practice included remote and unmonitored multi-faith rooms.

242. Ofsted made a series of recommendations designed to strengthen providers' implementation of the 'Prevent' duty. These included a commitment to ensure that inspections from September 2016 focus more strongly on the impact of providers' work on learners' and apprentices' understanding of potential risks.

Safeguarding off site

243. Our 2011 survey[154] and the subsequent Taylor review[155] of alternative provision raised concerns about schools' oversight of their pupils' progress and safety while at alternative provision. Both highlighted that many schools and local authorities did not check on pupils' learning and safety enough while at this provision. The Taylor review concluded that:

> 'At the moment, there is no system for sanctioning and closing down an inadequate provider if it is too small to be covered by the DfE [Department for Education] registration requirement and thus Ofsted's inspection remit. This means that children can be placed in inadequate and dangerous provision without there being any external monitoring.'

244. Private providers of alternative provision offering part-time education, or full-time education to a very small number of pupils, do not have to be registered, except in particular circumstances. However, it is the school's responsibility to ensure the quality of the placements they use, including pupils' safety.

245. In February 2016, we reported the findings from our three-year survey of alternative provision.[156] Inspectors visited 165 maintained schools and academies and 448 of the alternative providers they used. The survey found that most schools and providers were paying proper attention to their pupils. They were taking responsibility for pupils' safety and making sure they were doing well.

154. 'Alternative provision', Ofsted, 2011; www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision-education-outside-school.

155. 'Improving alternative provision', Department for Education, 2012; www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-alternative-provision.

156. 'Alternative provision: the findings from Ofsted's three-year survey of school's use of off-site alternative provision', Ofsted, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-school-provision-findings-of-a-three-year-survey.

246. Some schools, however, still did not visit alternative provisions regularly enough to have a clear view of their quality and safety. Alternative providers were often not well enough informed about their child protection responsibilities or how to promote use of social media, social networking and e-safety. Most had received no written guidance from the school about child protection. This meant that these already vulnerable pupils were not being adequately safeguarded and they were not being supported to keep themselves safe.

247. In the best arrangements, schools and providers took joint responsibility for ensuring good-quality risk assessments were carried out and shared. However, in a small number, no risk assessments were available and no conversations about risk had taken place with schools. Risk assessment is absolutely crucial in securing the safety of the pupils themselves, of staff and of others who attend the provision. For example, pupils may need to be separated from other pupils in a provision because of gang association or known risks of peer-on-peer grooming and abuse. It is essential to consider how to manage the risks of particular groups of pupils coming together in a provision and how pupils will be enabled to better manage risk for themselves.

248. In our survey, we found that all schools had appropriate procedures in place for checking on attendance and punctuality. In a small number of cases, pupils who were meant to attend full time were not receiving a full-time education. In these circumstances, neither schools nor providers can be sure whether pupils are safe when they are not in school.

249. During the survey, we found 14 providers that were breaching the regulations about registration. They were operating a school that fulfils the definition of an independent school but not registering the school with the Department for Education as required by law. This is a criminal offence and the penalty for the proprietor if found guilty is a fine and/or imprisonment. We referred all these providers to the DfE and they have since reduced their provision, closed or undergone the appropriate registration procedures.[157]

250. Inspectors this year[158] found that not all schools and FE providers had robust safeguarding arrangements in place when students were off site. This included effective risk assessments for when students were learning off site, on visits or doing work experience. In FE and skills, independent learning providers in particular may have engaged subcontractors to help them deliver their programmes, but had not always checked the suitability of contractors, their staff or sites. They did not appear to appreciate that in delegating course delivery, they could not give up responsibility for students' well-being and safety, as well as their progress and learning.

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157. An independent school is defined as one in which full-time education is provided for five or more pupils of compulsory school age (or one such pupil with an education, health and care plan or statement of special educational needs or who is looked after by the local authority).

158. This is based on a review of all FE and skills providers and schools judged inadequate this year where safeguarding arrangements were not effective.

Unregistered schools

251. Even where schools have weaknesses in safeguarding, these schools are at least properly registered and held to account for the quality of their education and their safeguarding arrangements. In 2015, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector raised concerns with the Secretary of State for Education that an unknown number of children were hidden away from local authorities and other agencies because they were attending unregistered schools. He warned that the number of such children could be much higher than previously estimated.[159] As a result, and with the support of the Secretary of State, this year, we established an unregistered schools task force of specialist inspectors who investigate and inspect unregistered schools.

252. We are currently working on 152 cases of suspected unregistered schools. Since January 2016, 38 schools have been inspected. Inspectors have issued 19 warning notices telling the proprietor to cease operating illegally. Fourteen providers have ceased operating illegally since those inspections. This means they have either taken steps to comply with the requirements for registration as a school or have ceased operating altogether.

253. We are alerted to possible unregistered schools through our inspectors' local intelligence as well as a range of other sources, including the Department for Education (DfE), local authorities, other schools or individual members of the public or Ofsted inspectors. For example, our inspections of early years, maintained schools, academies or further education and skills provision may reveal possible unregistered schools nearby.

254. Adults running these schools are often unaware of the standards that must be met when running a school. This applies across a range of areas, such as quality of teaching, breadth of curriculum, premises and safety. As a result, pupils in unregistered schools are not only unsafe, but also subject to narrow curriculum, poor resources and poor-quality teaching and assessment.

255. About a third of these unregistered schools were associated with particular faith groups and were found to deliberately teach a restricted, faith-based curriculum. This can leave pupils unprepared for life in modern Britain. It can also place them at greater risk of exposure to indoctrination, radicalisation and extremism.

256. In many of these cases, inspectors have been very concerned about the risk to children by what they have found in unregistered schools. For example, they found dirty, unsafe premises, with exposed wiring and locked fire doors. Sometimes, pupils were working in premises to which members of the public or much older learners had access. Proprietors had not ensured that adults working with children are properly checked and vetted. They were often not aware of the requirements to do so.

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159. 'Advice letter from Sir Michael Wilshaw, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, on the latest position with schools in Birmingham and Tower Hamlets', Ofsted, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-advice-note-on-schools-in-birmingham-and-tower-hamlets.

257. Since our task force was set up, a number of local authorities have increased their response to concerns within their area. Local authorities welcome the invitation for an officer to join the inspection. Most are robust in how they follow up actions after inspection. For example, local authority officers have returned to check that a school has ceased operating and have been active in ensuring that pupils are swiftly placed in registered schools. However, inspectors have also found that, sometimes, local authorities themselves have inappropriately placed pupils in unregistered provision. In several instances, this has been within alternative providers where there are high proportions of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and are therefore among the most vulnerable.

258. Sometimes proprietors and indeed local authorities do not understand that they cannot admit pupils until their registration as a school has been approved.

For example, inspectors, accompanied by local authority representatives, visited an alternative provision that admitted pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and others who had been excluded from school. All had social, emotional and mental health needs. The proprietor had submitted an application to be registered as a school but this had not yet been approved. However, some pupils attended full time. HMI told the proprietor that they must cease to operate illegally, with immediate effect, and issued a warning notice. The local authorities concerned acted swiftly and have reviewed their quality assurance practices as a result of these findings.

259. In May 2016, HMCI wrote to the Secretary of State expressing particular concerns around the link between home education for some pupils and attendance at unregistered schools. He said that these provisions operate at 'the cusp of the law'. Proprietors of unregistered schools have been found to exploit the freedom that parents have to home-educate their children. Some charge parents thousands of pounds to do so. In these cases, proprietors claim they are providing a service to support and supplement home education. However, inspectors have found that they are providing full-time education away from the pupils' homes. HMCI has urged the Secretary of State to consider how this problem can be addressed.[160]

160. 'Advice letter from Sir Michael Wilshaw, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, to the Secretary of State for Education on unregistered schools: 16 May 2016', Ofsted, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/unregistered-schools-ofsted-advice-note.

Promoting British values and protecting pupils from the risk of extremism

260. This year, no independent or state-funded schools were found to be inadequate solely because of a failure to promote British values and protect pupils from the risk of extremism. However, about a third of maintained schools and over a quarter of independent schools found to be inadequate because of ineffective safeguarding were asked to improve the ways in which they supported pupils' understanding of these issues.[161, 162]

261. In both the state-funded and the independent sector, the large majority of schools now show good awareness of these requirements and appear to be making good efforts to teach pupils about these matters, even if they have weaknesses elsewhere.

At one faith school, not all the independent school standards were met. However, the lead inspector praised the determination with which leaders were addressing the promotion of British values. Pupils were very confident in managing the various aspects of their identity and expressed a high degree of tolerance for others. Pupils learned about fundamental British values and compared these with the values of their Islamic faith. They learnt about respect, tolerance and discrimination in the context of what it means to be a British Muslim. Pupils understood the meaning of democracy and could contrast this with dictatorship. They took part in annual elections for the school council and a local politician is one of a number of visitors invited into the school as part of a planned programme to support the promotion of fundamental British values.

262. After a period of intense focus on Birmingham from Ofsted and other agencies in relation to extremism, there have been some improvements. Two of the schools that were at the heart of the Trojan horse concerns (Nansen Primary School and Rockwood Academy, previously Park View Academy) are no longer in special measures and were judged good. We found strengths in leadership and management, including governance. Inspectors continue to consider carefully how effectively leaders and managers promote fundamental British values and keep pupils safe from the risks of extremism and radicalisation when inspecting all types of schools, including independent schools.

263. About 40% of independent schools and over a third of maintained schools that were ineffective for safeguarding also did not prepare pupils well enough for life in modern Britain. Limitations in the ways in which schools prepared pupils were often linked to narrowness in the curriculum. In particular, the curriculum did not allow for anything other than superficial teaching about other faiths and culture.[163]

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161. Based on a review of the inspection reports of all maintained and non-association schools where safeguarding where safeguarding was found to be not effective.

162. Based on a review of inspection reports of all maintained and independent school reports where overall effectiveness was judged inadequate.

163. Based on a review of the inspection reports of all maintained and non-association independent schools where safeguarding was found not to be effective.

School A

Pupils are not prepared well for life in modern Britain. The school does not actively promote values such as democracy and the rule of law. There is no evidence that pupils learn about other religions and cultures. There are very few opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

School B

School leaders have organised a curriculum that provides too few opportunities for pupils to experience life outside the school. Consequently, pupils do not learn how to live in modern Britain safely or how to contribute positively in a wider society. This has limited their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

School C

Pupils do not experience a balance of differing views on certain matters including the 'protected characteristics' (for example, relating to: age, disability, gender, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, sexual orientation) of the Equality Act 2010. This means that they are insufficiently prepared for life in modern Britain. It also means that leaders have not effectively promoted all forms of equality and have not taken sufficient note of the guidance issued by the Secretary of State. Therefore, the school is not fulfilling its legal requirements.

264. In addition, in a small number of schools, although British values such as respect and tolerance were being taught, pupils were not acting in accordance with these in their school and community life, for example in their behaviour towards each other in playgrounds or towards their teachers.

Child sexual exploitation and children missing from education

265. This year, we worked with three other inspectorates[164] on a series of joint inspections. We looked in depth at the multi-agency response to child sexual exploitation and to missing children. Our joint report, 'Time to listen – a joined up response to child sexual exploitation and missing children',[165] concluded that there is evidence of improvement in the multi-agency response to tackling child sexual exploitation over the past two years. However, more can be done to ensure that all children receive consistently good support from all agencies.

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164. The inspectorates are: Care Quality Commission, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and HM Inspectorate of Probation.

165. 'Time to listen – a joined up response to child sexual exploitation and missing children', Ofsted, Care Quality Commission, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and HM Inspectorate of Probation, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/joint-inspections-of-child-sexual-exploitation-and-missing-children-february-to-august-2016.

266. Schools have a critical role to play in raising awareness of such issues, as do parents and carers, public services such as transport and recreation, and the local business community.

267. When children go missing from education or have poor attendance, this can be an indicator that they are at risk of abuse or neglect. This is why it is so important for schools to keep accurate attendance records and take action when children go missing.

268. Over half of the independent schools where safeguarding was ineffective did not meet the independent school standard on the keeping of admissions and attendance registers. In our Annual Report last year, we made particular reference to the issue of children missing from education and the potential dangers many of them faced. When attendance and admissions records are not rigorously kept, patterns and trends go unnoticed and potential indicators of pupils being at risk are neglected. Many of these independent schools were not following guidance as to how to check that pupils were safe if they were not attending regularly or were arriving late to school. If parents had taken children out of school, managers did not always know whether individual pupils were now on the roll of other schools or were in fact 'missing from education'.

269. We will continue to check rigorously on how well schools are meeting their responsibilities. This means considering how well schools follow through their concerns and, when pupils experience bullying, abuse or neglect, what schools do and how they play their part in making things better.

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Capacity in the school system

270. England's schools system continues to grow in diversity. Regardless of whether a school is an academy, an independent school or maintained by the local authority, the quality of the school depends on attracting and retaining the best teachers and leaders. The ability of a school to maintain its performance or to improve depends on the effectiveness of the oversight and challenge the school receives. This means that highly skilled governors, high-performing multi-academy trusts and active sponsors are more important than ever.

Recognition of exceptional leadership

271. We formally recognise those leaders who bring about significant improvement in their own school, while also providing support, challenge and expertise to other institutions. Inspectors have nominated the following leaders in 2015/16 who they have seen showing great determination to raise standards and improve the life chances of youngsters in previously underperforming schools beyond their own.

Bradley Taylor, headteacher at Chiltern Gate School (special school) in Buckinghamshire, also took on the role of interim headteacher at nearby Maplewood School. Under Bradley's leadership, Maplewood moved from inadequate in 2014 to be judged good in November 2015. Inspectors reported that 'the headteacher's exceptional leadership has led to rapid improvements in all aspects of the school's work. He has set clear, high standards for all staff and he has ensured that they meet them. His unswerving determination to achieve the very best had transformed the school's effectiveness.'

Dr Tom Canning OBE, executive headteacher at Tollgate Primary School in the London Borough of Newham, East London, also took on the role of executive headteacher at the nearby Cleves Primary School. Under Tom's leadership, Cleves moved from requires improvement in September 2013 to achieve outstanding in November 2015. The inspection report identifies that 'since the previous inspection, the executive headteacher and the headteacher have transformed this school. The headteachers share a vision of excellence for the school. They have demonstrated the drive to turn this vision into reality.'

Kerrie Lewis, headteacher at Condover Church of England Primary School in Shropshire, also took on the role of acting headteacher at nearby Shrewsbury Cathedral Catholic School. Under Kerrie's leadership, Shrewsbury moved from inadequate in July 2014 to be judged good in November 2015. Inspectors said: 'The acting headteacher provides strong and effective leadership. Since joining in February 2015, she has transformed the school. Staff morale is high. The soft federation between the acting headteacher's own primary school and close links with other good or outstanding schools are improving teaching and developing still further the leadership skills of staff who manage subjects, aspects and phases of the school.'

Fiona Todd, headteacher at St Oswald's Worleston in Cheshire, also took on the role of executive headteacher at nearby Bunbury Aldesley Church of England Primary School. Under Fiona's leadership, the school was removed from special measures in under 12 months and was judged good. The inspectors stated: 'The headteacher is scrupulous in her approach to others. She has united staff behind her vision to further improve the school'. Also reported was that she 'gives generously of her time to support colleagues and pupils alike… In her relatively short time in post and ably supported by her senior team, she has brought significant improvements in pupils' welfare and safety.'

Janet Collins, the headteacher at Springfield House Community Special School, supported Lindsworth School, a similar type of special school that was placed in special measures in March 2014. As executive headteacher, she dealt effectively with a number of complex and difficult issues. As a result, the school was judged good in January 2016. Inspectors identified that the school's journey had been very well led by the headteacher, 'who has set a clear direction for change and taken some difficult decisions in order to allow the school to become more effective'.

School structures

272. There are now 5,800 academies in England, with over 1,600 new academies created since August 2014. This number will continue to rise in the coming years.

273. While 66% of secondary schools are now academies, this figure is only 20% for primary schools. Inspection evidence, research and analysis continues to find that, while becoming an academy can be beneficial for some schools, there is not a clear or substantial difference between the performance of academies and schools maintained by local authorities.

274. While there remain differences in the proportion of schools that are good or outstanding across the types of school in each phase, these differences are largely because of the history of the academy programme. Most academy converters were previously good and outstanding local authority schools; most sponsor-led academies were previously requires improvement and inadequate schools.

Figure 35: Most recent overall effectiveness of primary schools as at 31 August 2016, by type of school
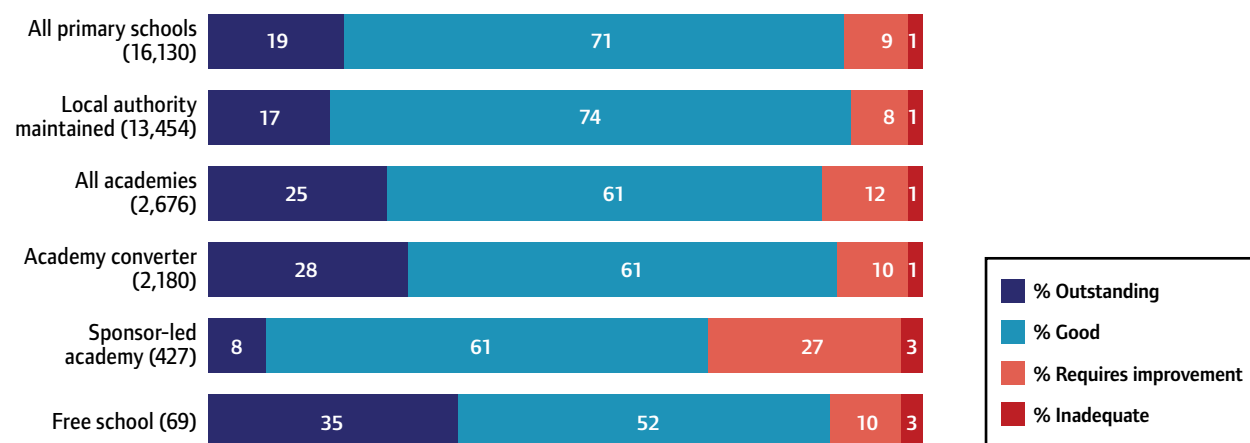
Number of schools in brackets

School type	% Outstanding	% Good	% Requires improvement	% Inadequate
All primary schools (16,130)	19	71	9	1
Local authority maintained (13,454)	17	74	8	1
All academies (2,676)	25	61	12	1
Academy converter (2,180)	28	61	10	1
Sponsor-led academy (427)	8	61	27	3
Free school (69)	35	52	10	3

1. Based on inspections conducted by 31 August 2016 where the report was published by 30 September 2016.
2. School type based on Edubase as at 31 August 2016.
3. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.
Source: Ofsted

Figure 36: Most recent overall effectiveness of secondary schools as at 31 August 2016, by type of school
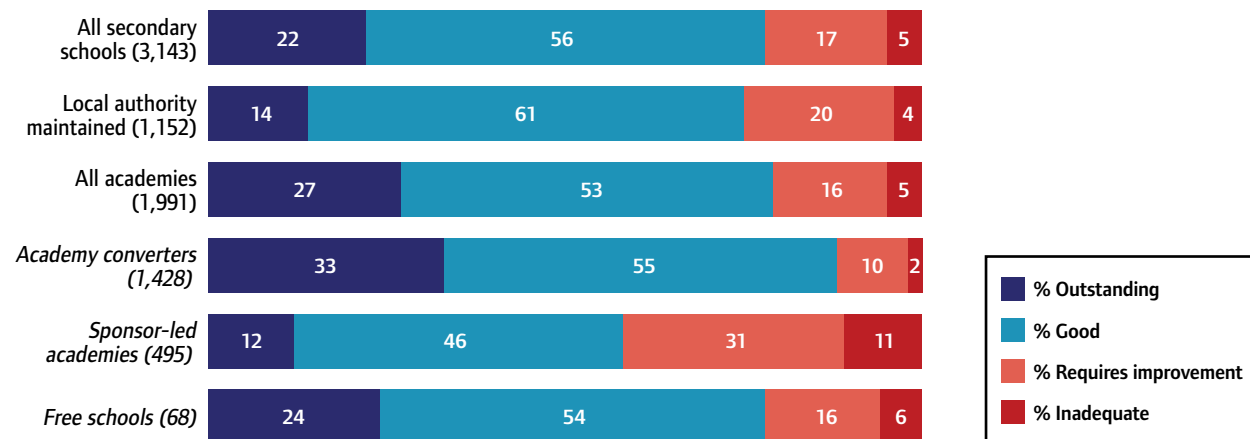
Number of schools in brackets

School type	% Outstanding	% Good	% Requires improvement	% Inadequate
All secondary schools (3,143)	22	56	17	5
Local authority maintained (1,152)	14	61	20	4
All academies (1,991)	27	53	16	5
Academy converters (1,428)	33	55	10	2
Sponsor-led academies (495)	12	46	31	11
Free schools (68)	24	54	16	6

1. Based on inspections conducted by 31 August 2016 where the report was published by 30 September 2016.
2. School type based on Edubase as at 31 August 2016.
3. University technical colleges and studio schools are included as sponsor-led academies.
4. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.
Source: Ofsted

275. There are 376 sponsor-led academies that were less than good when they became academies that are now good or better. However based on their latest inspection 237 academies have failed to improve from requires improvement or inadequate since they became an academy, and almost half of these have been inspected more than once.

276. A recent piece of research found no evidence that was statistically significant of increased attainment in primary sponsor-led or converter academies that have been open for between two and three years. They found a small increase in the key stage 2 performance of pupils in these schools compared with pupils in similar local authority maintained primary schools. However, once other factors such as socio-economic background were taken into account, this increase was not statistically significant.[166]

277. There is a small difference in school GCSE performance between secondary sponsored and converter academies that have been open for between two and five years and groups of similar local authority maintained schools. Secondary sponsored academies are often below the national average for both progress and attainment. However, the proportion of pupils achieving five or more GCSEs at grade A* to C, including English and mathematics, is 2.7 percentage points higher than in similar maintained schools. Secondary converter academies generally have a record of performance above national levels, with pupils making on average one third of a grade more progress and attaining one third of a grade higher than similar maintained schools.[167]

Teacher supply

278. Good teaching depends on good teachers. In recent years, the gaps in teacher supply have affected the ability of schools to recruit the teachers needed for pupils to reach their potential. These weaknesses have been acutely felt by schools in more challenging circumstances. These schools find it even harder to recruit quality teachers, because of their location, performance or context.

279. The recruitment of high-quality entrants to the profession is a key factor in improving teacher supply. This year, the target for new entrants to primary school initial teacher training courses was exceeded, with 13,034 postgraduate entrants against a target of 11,245.[168] However, the target for secondary school entrants continues to be missed. This year, 3,427 fewer postgraduate entrants were recruited than the Department for Education's teacher supply model target.

166. 'Analysis of academy school performance in 2015', National Foundation for Educational Research, 2016; www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/LGGG01/LGGG01_home.cfm.

167. 'Analysis of academy school performance in 2015', National Foundation for Educational Research, 2016; www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/LGGG01/LGGG01_home.cfm.

168. 'Official statistics: Initial teacher training: trainee number census: 2015 to 2016', Department for Education and National College for Teaching and Leadership, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/initial-teacher-training-trainee-number-census-2015-to-2016.

280. Failure to recruit to a range of subjects is a significant issue for secondary schools. This is disproportionately spread across subjects. In 2011/12, no secondary subjects had unfilled places. This year, 15 out of the 18 secondary subjects had unfilled training places. Physics, for example, had less than three quarters of places filled and, in design and technology, less than half of places were filled. This also has implications for the quality of entrants, with a recent National Audit Office report finding that providers are more likely to accept trainees with lower degree classifications in subjects with hard-to-fill places.[169]

Figure 37: Proportion of secondary training places filled against targets by subject, 2015 to 2016

Subject	Proportion of training places filled (%)
History	113
English	103
Physical education	100
Chemistry	95
Mathematics	93
Biology	89
Drama	88
Modern and ancient languages	87
Geography	83
Classics	79
Music	74
Physics	71
Computing	70
Business studies	64
Art and design	63
Religious education	63
Design and technology	41
Other	39
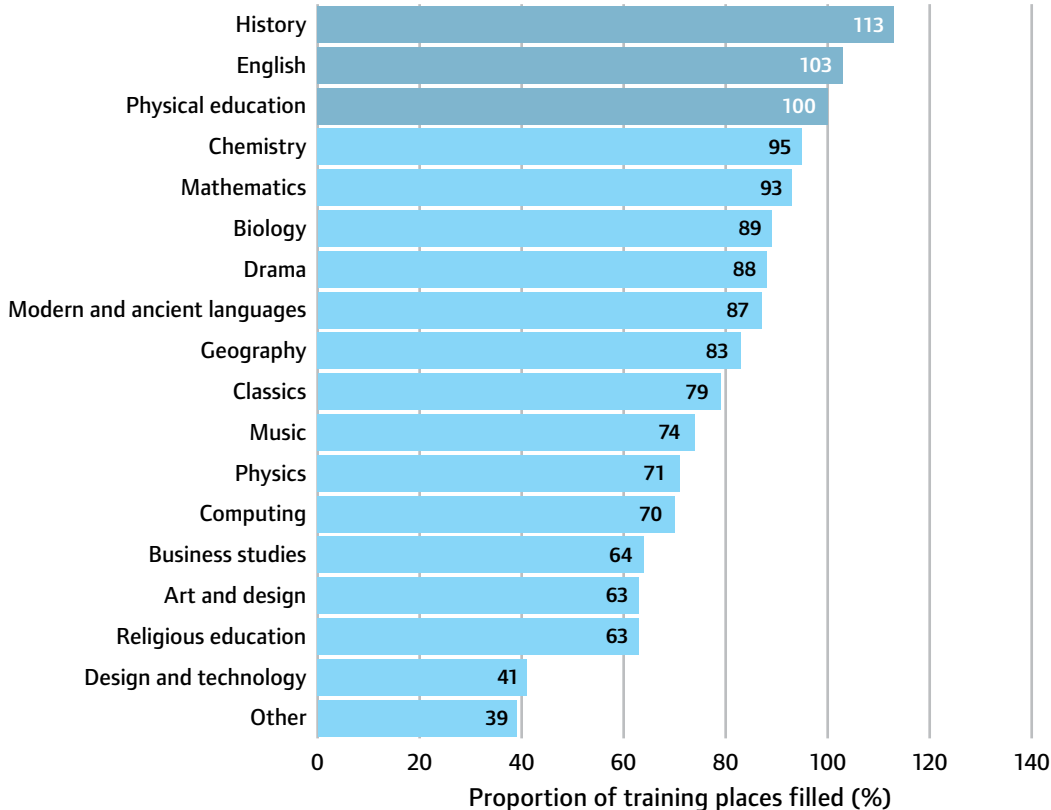
1. 'Other' includes dance, social studies, psychology and economics
Source: National College for Teaching and Leadership

169. 'Training new teachers', National Audit Office, 2016; www.nao.org.uk/training-new-teachers.

281. Difficulties in retaining teachers makes ensuring an effective supply more challenging. Between 2011 and 2015, the percentage of teachers leaving the profession increased by 14%, with the proportion of those choosing to leave the profession for reasons other than retirement increasing from 64% to 80%. To some extent, this is offset by the 14,000 returners to the profession over the same period. Nevertheless, in the 12 months to November 2015, just over 43,000 qualified teachers in England left the state sector. This equates to one in 10 teachers leaving the profession: the highest proportion for 10 years. Of greatest concern, one quarter of teachers are no longer in post three years after qualifying and entering service and more than 100,000 potential teachers have never taught in the state sector, despite finishing their training and gaining qualified teacher status.[170]

282. The demand and supply of teachers is part of an increasingly globalised market.[171] The significant growth in British schools overseas will add another dimension to existing teacher supply issues.[172] This rapidly growing sector also needs to recruit large numbers of new and existing teachers.

Figure 38: Number of vacancies and temporarily filled posts in the state-funded sector, 2010 to 2015
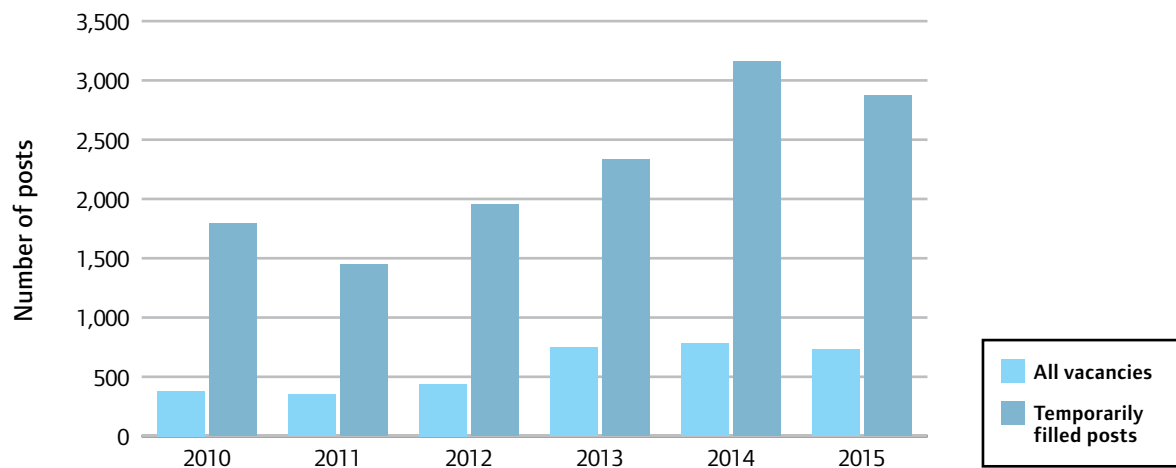
1. Historical figures have been revised since the 2014/15 Ofsted Annual Report.
2. Data have been rounded to the nearest 10.
Source: Department for Education

283. This year, Education Datalab has carried out analysis to test whether there is systematic evidence that schools serving more disadvantaged communities have greater recruitment difficulties.[173] It found that:

- teachers are almost twice as likely to leave a secondary school with a high proportion of disadvantaged pupils than a nearby school with low proportions

- the percentage of unqualified teachers in schools with a high proportion of disadvantaged pupils is close to double that of schools with low proportions of these pupils

170. School workforce in England, Department for Education, June 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2015. All figures based on full-time equivalents.
171. 'HMCI's monthly commentary: February 2016', Ofsted, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/speeches/hmcis-monthly-commentary-february-2016.
172. The number of British schools overseas registered with the Department for Education has increased from 18 in September 2014 to 140 in September 2016.
173. Various analyses from Education Datalab, see www.educationdatalab.org.uk for details. Differences may not be statistically significant.

- primary schools with low proportions of disadvantaged pupils have 12% of teachers with more than 10 years of experience, while those with the highest proportions have just 7%; among secondary schools, the figures are 12% and 8% respectively

- pupils in schools serving areas of higher deprivation are much more likely to have teachers without an academic degree in a relevant subject

- inequalities were more pronounced in areas with selective schooling.[174] Grammar schools have a more stable staffing structure, with a lower proportion of teachers leaving to join other schools. By contrast, secondary moderns can be disadvantaged in the competition for teachers. Grammar schools have much larger numbers of very experienced teachers and very few unqualified teachers.

284. A lack of government data, both on recruitment and retention, hinders the national response to this issue. It is difficult to understand accurately the extent to which shortages exist at a local level, or the number of teachers moving abroad or between the independent and state sectors.[175] The Department for Education's teacher supply model is used to identify where new school-centred initial teacher training providers, or allocation of places to providers, may be needed. Currently, this model does not take important regional and local area considerations into account. As a result, there have been no significant changes in the geographical location of initial teacher education (ITE) providers.

285. In September 2016, the government began piloting a 'national teaching service' scheme in the North. It aims to enlist up to 100 teachers to work in primary and secondary schools that are struggling to attract and retain teachers. If successful, and rolled out on a large enough scale, this may have some impact on teacher supply.

The performance of ITE providers

286. Key to securing high-quality teaching is ensuring that trainee teachers are equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to teach well and teach well quickly when they join the profession. We inspect:

- all providers of programmes leading to qualified teacher status (QTS), including higher education institutions (HEIs), school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) partnerships and employment-based initial teacher training (EBITT)

- programmes of further education (FE) teacher training validated by higher education institutions

- all providers of programmes leading to early years teacher status (EYTS).

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174. 'Inequalities in access to teachers in selective schooling areas', Education Datalab, 2016; www.educationdatalab.org.uk/2016/06/inequalities-in-access-to-teachers-in-selective-schooling-areas.

175. 'Training new teachers', National Audit Office, 2016; www.nao.org.uk/training-new-teachers.

287. Overall, inspection evidence indicates that the quality of ITE partnerships across all age phases is improving. The vast majority of QTS ITE partnerships inspected were judged to be good or outstanding. Improvements were seen in leadership and management and the ability of partnerships to equip teachers with the practical skills and professional attributes required. Trainees' subject knowledge, their research and theory-informed practice were strengths. Inspectors noted that trainees were able to reflect critically on their teaching. They set high expectations for the progress of their pupils and learners. They also engage and enthuse pupils and learners through relationship-building and behaviour management.

288. Some common areas for improvement were also identified. Concerns were raised about the accuracy of assessments of trainees' practical competence, and the lack of emphasis paid to the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. Trainees were not as strong at teaching the most able and other groups of pupils who have specific needs. They did not consistently check on pupils' progress to ensure that work was set at the right level. They also sometimes lacked the skills and confidence to adapt their teaching away from their plan during lessons to maximise learning. Inspectors found that some primary trainees were not prepared to teach the breadth of the curriculum. For secondary trainees, concerns were raised about the specialist subject support available, particularly where there were small numbers of subject specialists within an ITE partnership.

289. At the end of June 2016, four FE partnerships were judged at their most recent inspection to be outstanding, 31 were good and one required improvement. Our inspections of ITE in FE partnerships revealed that some need to do more to provide trainees with practical experience of the diverse nature of the FE and skills sector and all elements of the wider teacher roles and responsibilities. Some trainees do not reach their potential by the end of their training. This is because not enough attention is paid to tracking trainees' progress and setting appropriate targets. As with QTS, trainees would benefit from more support to develop their skills in meeting the needs of all learners, including those who speak English as an additional language. The ability of trainees to support learners in the development of their English and mathematical skills was an area for improvement.

Leadership capacity

290. The future success of England's schools system depends in part on the recruitment and retention of good leaders. The need for more high-quality headteachers and chief executive officers looks set to grow in the coming years. In 2015, the Future Leaders Trust and Times Educational Supplement surveyed 286 headteachers. Twenty-eight per cent of respondents said they were planning to leave headship within five years.[176] More than half said they did not expect to be a headteacher in 10 years. The increasing numbers of executive headteacher roles in multi-academy trusts (MATs) will also increase demand. Despite this clear need, there is evidence to suggest that not enough is being done to encourage and support the recruitment of school leaders, particularly in areas and schools where they are needed most.

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176. 'Heads up: Meeting the challenges of headteacher recruitment', Future Leaders Trust, 2016; www.future-leaders.org.uk/insights-blog/heads-up-challenges-headteacher-recruitment.

291. A recent survey of over 5,000 governors by the National Governors Association and the Times Educational Supplement found that over a third of respondents had reported difficulties when recruiting a headteacher. There was little difference in the views of governors of primary schools and secondary schools about the difficulties of headteacher recruitment. Over two fifths of governors said that they had found it difficult to recruit to senior staff posts.[177]

292. It is not clear that the school system, which is responsible for growing its own leaders, is making the necessary inroads to meet this demand. The lack of national information about teacher supply also extends to projections for the future supply of headteachers. Positive initiatives, such as the 'Future Leaders' programme, are welcome, but the programme has been limited to supporting 159 leaders to headships in challenging schools.[178] The programme on its own is unable to produce enough great leaders to satisfy demand or tackle regional variation in school performance.

293. In June 2016, inspectors visited seven strong-performing MATs to gather evidence about the characteristics of effective trust leadership and governance. Each of the seven MAT chief executives spoken to during these visits said they had clear strategies for identifying and growing leaders within their constituent schools. They identified potential leaders early on in their careers and were quick to provide opportunities for them to develop their leadership skills. Structured coaching and mentoring from experienced headteachers was often the norm. Some MATs provided their potential leaders with regular opportunities to shadow senior staff. They also encouraged leaders to take up secondments at other academies within the chain, when the time was right, to allow emerging skills to be applied in context and the confidence of new leaders to grow.

294. Some of the MATs visited had established their own leadership courses, designed to address important aspects of headship that senior executives felt were not covered in the National Professional Qualification for Headship. This was delivered alongside a commitment to mentoring new principals in their first few years by more experienced colleagues.

295. All seven of the multi-academy trusts visited were embracing the 'grow your own' model and delivering bespoke leadership development programmes. Crucially, they were making sure that aspiring leaders had plenty of opportunity to work alongside and learn from outstanding and inspirational headteachers before taking up their own post.

296. However, the strengths in succession planning shown in these MATs are not commonplace. As the number of small MATs and stand-alone academies grows in the coming years, the need for new, effective headteachers will become an increasing challenge.

177. 'The 2015 NGA/TES survey of governors and trustees', National Governors' Association (NGA) and Times Educational Supplement (TES), 2016; www.nga.org.uk/Guidance/Research/NGA-TES-survey-2015.aspx.

178. 'Heads up: Meeting the challenges of headteacher recruitment', Future Leaders Trust, 2016; www.future-leaders.org.uk/insights-blog/heads-up-challenges-headteacher-recruitment.

Governance

297. Governors play an important role in improving schools. As changes within the education system place more power in the hands of governing boards, their importance will continue to grow.[179] Governing bodies are responsible for:

- setting the school's vision, ethos and strategic direction
- holding the headteacher to account for the performance of the pupils, teachers and school
- ensuring financial integrity.

298. At the root of much school failure is weak governance. In the 2015/16 academic year, inspectors recommended an external review of governance in 295 schools, which is a third of all the schools judged to require improvement or to be inadequate this year.

299. This year, we carried out a survey report to look at the effectiveness of governance.[180] Inspectors visited 24 recently improved schools in some of the poorest areas of the country. Neither the types of school, nor the structure of governance, were the reasons for the original weaknesses in governance. In order to improve, they needed to become more self-aware. Two thirds of the survey schools had not engaged in any self-evaluation of governance prior to being found to be less than good.

300. All of the boards needed to develop the professional knowledge, understanding and insight within the Board. However, over 1,600 responses to our call-for-evidence from governors told us that it is difficult to access high quality professional support and training. National Leaders of Governance and Professional Clerks are in particularly short supply. Boards also told us that they are finding it difficult to appoint people who possess the required expertise for the role and who are willing to take on the responsibility and be accountable . Around three quarters of respondents to the call for evidence reported that recruitment and retention were significant challenges for the sector.

301. In independent schools, there is no requirement for there to be a governing body. There is still a need for them to demonstrate sound governance, as for maintained schools. For some schools, this means that they have established a group of directors or advisers or a small group of named governors who are charged to oversee the leadership of the school and hold it accountable. In other schools, it is the proprietor or the proprietorial body that fulfils this role.

179. 'HMCI's monthly commentary: November 2015', Ofsted, 2015; www.gov.uk/government/speeches/hmcis-monthly-commentary-november-2015.

180. 'Improving governance: governance arrangements in complex and challenging circumstances', available on www.gov.uk/ofsted from mid December 2016.

302. In all independent schools inspected this year where the school was inadequate, and in many of the schools that were judged requires improvement, governance was weak. Systems for holding leaders to account were underdeveloped. Those responsible for governance had had little training. They did not fully understand their responsibilities for holding school leaders to account, including ensuring that they continue to meet the independent school regulations.

Multi-academy trusts

303. As the number of academies grows, the importance of multi-academy trusts (MATs) within the education landscape grows. MATs are able to provide important oversight and challenge for schools. Some are doing this well, ensuring consistent improvement and progress for all pupils.

304. There are now nearly 800 MATs and nearly 90% of new academies now join a MAT from the outset.[181] The proportion of academies in MATs has increased from 50% in August 2014, to 65% in August 2016. This pattern varies across the country.

305. Although the best-known MATs may be large in size and have schools right across the country, the average size of a MAT is only five schools. Almost three quarters of MATs operate within a single local authority area. We estimate that if all schools were to become academies in the longer term and most new academies are to be in MATs, then there may need to be over 900 new MATs of an average size of 10 schools per MAT.[182] Such a substantial change would present a significant challenge for the sector.

306. The performance of MATs is variable. There are 33 MATs in which less than half of their schools are good or better, including five of the largest MATs. Recent research has identified that the difference between the highest and the lowest performing groups of schools can be as much as five grades at GCSE.[183] Table 3 shows that the MATs with the largest number of secondary schools vary in their value added scores.[184] More than half of all MATs are significantly below average on this measure, although some of their schools will have been historically underperforming schools.

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181. Data refers to MATs with two or more schools. A further 53 MATs have been established but currently only have one school or no schools: www.data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/education-committee/multiacademy-trusts/written/32262.html.

182. In April 2016, the Department for Education submitted a response to the Education Select Committee's call for evidence on MATs. This suggested that MATs can begin to fully deliver their intended benefits when they have around 10 to 15 academies in the MAT, and that they expect there to be many more MATs of this size over time. See: www.data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/education-committee/multiacademy-trusts/written/32262.html.

183. 'School performance in multi-academy trusts and local authorities – 2015', Education Policy Institute, 2016; www.epi.org.uk/report/school-performance-multi-academy-trusts-local-authorities. Groups of schools includes both local authorities and MATs.

184. 'Official statistics: Multi-academy trust performance measures: 2014 to 2015', Department for Education, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/multi-academy-trust-performance-measures-2014-to-2015. Based on the 10 MATs with the most schools included in the dataset.

Table 3: Key stage 4 value added scores for multi-academy trusts (MATs) with the largest number of secondary schools, 2015

MAT name	Number of academies included in key stage 4 VA measure	Value added score – 2015	Improvement in value added score	Improvement measure description
Academies Enterprise Trust (AET)	33	987	-3.6	Significantly below average
Ormiston Academies Trust	26	987.9	-5.3	Significantly below average
United Learning	26	998.9	1.8	Close to national average
Harris Federation	16	1026.1	9.2	Significantly above average
Oasis Community Learning	15	985.8	-2.5	Close to national average
The Kemnal Academy Trust (TKAT)	14	997.2	4.4	Close to national average
School Partnership Trust Academies (SPTA)	14	974.9	-10.8	Significantly below average
ARK Schools	13	1017.6	10.2	Significantly above average
E-ACT	13	991.2	-7.4	Significantly below average
Academy Transformation Trust (ATT)	9	990	1.2	Close to national average
Outwood Grange Academies Trust	9	1022.8	15.8	Significantly above average

1. Value added (VA) scores include GCSEs and equivalent qualifications.
2. Improvement in VA captures the relative improvement in an academy's VA over time between a baseline year and the current year in comparison to schools with similar VA in the baseline year. The baseline year is taken as the last year as the predecessor school (if applicable) or five years ago whichever is more recent. This is then aggregated to MAT level to get a measure of the overall level of improvement of schools within the MAT. In calculating this aggregation, a weighting is applied for both school size and length of time in the MAT.
3. Data are based on the schools in a MAT as at 11 September 2014.
Source: Department for Education

307. In March 2016, HMCI wrote to the Secretary of State for Education[185] to report the findings from the focused inspections of academies in multi-academy trusts. The inspections were of academies within seven of the largest MATs that gave us the most concern. Despite having operated for several years, many of these trusts showed the same weaknesses as the worst performing local authorities.

308. Pupils in these MATs made poor progress. This was particularly the case at key stage 4 and for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders had inflated views of the quality of teaching. There was not enough scrutiny of pupils' progress. There was a lack of strategic oversight by the trusts and a lack of urgency to tackle weak leadership in the academies. There was also some confusion over the roles and responsibilities of the trusts and the local governing boards of the constituent academies.

309. This year, inspectors also visited seven of the strongest performing MATs to better understand what is working well.[186] These visits showed the difference that effective MATs can make to the lives of pupils. Inspectors found executive leadership, with a proven track record of turning around failing schools. Leaders had a clarity of vision and the urgency to reach higher standards, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. There were clear, delegated frameworks of governance and intelligent use of assessment information so potential problems could be anticipated.

185. 'HMCI advice note on multi-academy inspections', Ofsted, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/publications/focused-inspections-of-academies-in-multi-academy-trusts.
186. 'HMCI's monthly commentary: October 2016', Ofsted, 2016; www.gov.uk/government/speeches/hmcis-monthly-commentary-october-2016.

310. These trusts showed an ambition to support the educational landscape for children from the age of two to 19. This included ITE and the development of the next generation of leaders. Staff development was an important priority. This has helped to improve staff recruitment and retention. The Ark Schools Trust, for example, reported that 86% of its NQTs were still teaching within Ark academies five years after qualifying. Many had secured leadership positions early in their career. The trusts ensured a slower, more assured growth model. This emphasised the quality and consistency of a few academies, before larger scale sponsorships were considered.

311. One encouraging development is the transfer of academies from one MAT to another. Over 70 academies have been transferred to a different MAT so far.[187] There are 16 MATs that have transferred at least two schools to other MATs. In addition, there are nearly 100 schools that were originally standalone academies but have been transferred into a MAT. It is too soon to say whether this will lead to improvement in the schools, but there are some encouraging signs. So far, 62 of these academies have been inspected both before and after being transferred to a different MAT. Of these, 48 improved their grade, 11 stayed at the same grade, and three declined. We will continue to monitor their performance closely.

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187. Data provided by the Department for Education, and covers movements in to and between MATs, where a change of sponsor was involved. Data covers all such movements up to July 2016. Inspection outcomes based on inspections conducted by 31 August 2016 and published by 30 September 2016.

Annex 1: Key statistics

Table 4: Overall effectiveness of open maintained schools and academies at their most recent inspection as at 31 August 2016, by phase and type

		Total number inspected	Percentage of providers			
			Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Nursery schools	**(total)**	**403**	**60**	**39**	**0**	**0**
Primary schools	**(total)**	**16,130**	**19**	**71**	**9**	**1**
Of which	Local authority maintained	13,454	17	74	8	1
	Academy converters	2,180	28	61	10	1
	Sponsor-led academies	427	8	61	27	3
	Free schools	69	35	52	10	3
Secondary schools	**(total)**	**3,143**	**22**	**56**	**17**	**5**
Of which	Local authority maintained	1,149	14	61	21	4
	City and technology colleges	3	67	33	0	0
	Academy converters	1,428	33	55	10	2
	Sponsor-led academies	461	12	47	31	10
	Free schools	68	24	54	16	6
	University technical colleges	15	7	47	33	13
	Studio schools	19	11	42	32	16
Special schools	**(total)**	**999**	**38**	**55**	**5**	**2**
Of which	Local authority maintained	771	37	58	4	2
	Academy converters	147	51	43	5	1
	Sponsor-led academies	7	0	100	0	0
	Non-maintained special	65	35	51	11	3
	Free schools	9	22	56	11	11
Pupil referral unit	**(total)**	**322**	**18**	**68**	**10**	**4**
Of which	Local authority maintained	263	17	68	11	4
	Academy converters	41	24	68	7	0
	Free schools	18	17	61	11	11
All provision		**20,997**	**21**	**68**	**10**	**2**

1. Based on inspections conducted by 31 August 2016 and published by 30 September 2016.
2. Includes section 5 and section 8 deemed section 5 inspections.
3. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.
Source: Ofsted

Table 5: Overall effectiveness of maintained schools and academies inspected between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016, by phase and type

		Total number inspected	Percentage of providers			
			Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Nursery schools	**(total)**	**39**	**62**	**38**	**0**	**0**
Primary schools	**(total)**	**2,468**	**6**	**71**	**18**	**5**
Of which	Local authority maintained	2,138	6	72	18	4
	Academy converters	226	12	71	11	5
	Sponsor-led academies	96	6	51	34	8
	Free schools	8	38	38	13	13
Secondary schools	**(total)**	**666**	**5**	**52**	**32**	**12**
Of which	Local authority maintained	277	4	48	37	11
	Academy converters	243	7	65	22	6
	Sponsor-led academies	131	4	37	38	21
	Free schools	7	0	43	43	14
	University technical colleges	6	0	33	50	17
	Studio schools	2	0	0	0	100
Special schools	**(total)**	**138**	**39**	**38**	**16**	**7**
Of which	Local authority maintained	108	34	43	17	6
	Academy converters	20	70	15	10	5
	Non-maintained special	8	38	38	25	0
	Free schools	2	0	50	0	50
Pupil referral unit	**(total)**	**48**	**8**	**56**	**25**	**10**
Of which	Local authority maintained	42	10	57	24	10
	Academy converters	4	0	50	50	0
	Free schools	2	0	50	0	50
All provision		**3,359**	**8**	**65**	**20**	**6**

1. Based on inspections conducted between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016 where a report was published by 30 September 2016.
2. Includes section 5 and section 8 deemed section 5 inspections.
3. Includes short inspections which did not convert to a full inspection. For these schools the overall effectiveness outcome is based on the previous full inspection.
4. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.
Source: Ofsted

Table 6: Overall effectiveness of open initial teacher education providers at their most recent inspection as at 30 June 2016, by phase and type

		Total number inspected	Percentage of providers			
			Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Early years ITT (EYTS)	**(total)**	**10**	**0**	**80**	**20**	**0**
Of which	Higher education institutes	9	0	78	22	0
	School centred initial teacher training	1	0	100	0	0
Primary QTS	**(total)**	**94**	**45**	**55**	**0**	**0**
Of which	Higher education institutes	59	37	63	0	0
	School centred initial teacher training	32	56	44	0	0
	TeachFirst	3	67	33	0	0
Secondary QTS	**(total)**	**105**	**33**	**67**	**0**	**0**
Of which	Higher education institutes	67	34	66	0	0
	School centred initial teacher training	35	26	74	0	0
	TeachFirst	3	100	0	0	0
Primary and secondary QTS	**(total)**	**17**	**53**	**47**	**0**	**0**
Of which	Higher education institutes	1	0	100	0	0
	School centred initial teacher training	9	44	56	0	0
	TeachFirst	6	83	17	0	0
	For profit provider	1	0	100	0	0
Initial teacher education in further education	**(total)**	**36**	**11**	**86**	**3**	**0**
Of which	Higher education institutes	28	14	86	0	0
	Initial teacher education in further education	8	0	88	13	0
All provisions		**262**	**34**	**65**	**1**	**0**

1. Based on inspections conducted and published by 30 June 2016.
2. In ITE partnerships where there are a small number of trainees across both primary and secondary phases, the report will provide one set of judgements covering both the primary and secondary age phases. In general, the number of providers inspected is not the same as the total number of partnerships inspected.
3. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.
Source: Ofsted

Table 7: Overall effectiveness of initial teacher education providers inspected between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016, by phase and type

		Total number inspected	Percentage of providers			
			Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Early years ITT (EYTS)	**(total)**	**14**	**0**	**57**	**43**	**0**
Of which	Higher education institutes	13	0	54	46	0
	School centred initial teacher training	1	0	100	0	0
Primary QTS	**(total)**	**27**	**44**	**52**	**4**	**0**
Of which	Higher education institutes	16	38	56	6	0
	School centred initial teacher training	8	50	50	0	0
	TeachFirst	3	67	33	0	0
Secondary QTS	**(total)**	**24**	**46**	**54**	**0**	**0**
Of which	Higher education institutes	15	33	67	0	0
	School centred initial teacher training	6	50	50	0	0
	TeachFirst	3	100	0	0	0
Primary and secondary QTS	**(total)**	**14**	**64**	**36**	**0**	**0**
Of which	School centred initial teacher training	8	50	50	0	0
	TeachFirst	6	83	17	0	0
Initial teacher education in further education	**(total)**	**9**	**11**	**78**	**11**	**0**
Of which	Higher education institutes	7	14	71	14	0
	Initial teacher education in further education	2	0	100	0	0
All provisions		**88**	**38**	**53**	**9**	**0**

1. Based on inspections conducted by and published by 30 June 2016.
2. In ITE partnerships where there are a small number of trainees across both primary and secondary phases, the report will provide one set of judgements covering both the primary and secondary age phases. In general, the number of providers inspected is not the same as the total number of partnerships inspected.
3. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.
Source: Ofsted

Table 8: Overall effectiveness of open non-association independent schools at their most recent inspection as at 31 August 2016, by phase and type

		Total number inspected	Percentage of providers			
			Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Independent schools	(total)	578	13	56	18	13
Of which	Primary aged	222	15	57	16	12
	All-through	177	11	58	16	16
	Secondary aged	179	11	53	22	13
	Secondary aged (including all-through)	356	11	55	19	15
Independent special schools	(total)	420	16	61	16	7

1. Based on inspections conducted by 31 August 2016 and published by 30 September 2016.
2. Non-association independent schools are considered to cater for pupils of primary school age if the statutory high age which the school is registered for is 11 or under. Secondary non-association independent schools include those schools where the statutory high age is 12 or older. All through schools which cater for both the primary and secondary school age groups.
3. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.
Source: Ofsted

Table 9: Overall effectiveness of non-association independent schools inspected between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016, by phase and type

		Total number inspected	Percentage of providers			
			Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Independent schools	(total)	133	8	43	21	29
Of which	Primary aged	51	8	45	18	29
	All-through	43	9	40	23	28
	Secondary aged	39	5	44	23	28
	Secondary aged (including all-through)	82	7	41	23	28
Independent special schools	(total)	115	20	54	15	11

1. Based on inspections conducted between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016 where a report was published by 30 September 2016.
2. Non-association independent schools are considered to cater for pupils of primary school age if the statutory high age which the school is registered for is 11 or under. Secondary non-association independent schools include those schools where the statutory high age is 12 or older. All through schools which cater for both the primary and secondary school age groups.
3. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.
Source: Ofsted

Table 10: Overall effectiveness of further education and skills providers at their most recent inspection, as at 31 August 2016

		Total number inspected	Percentage of providers			
			Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement/ satisfactory	Inadequate
Colleges	(total)	311	20	57	19	4
of which	General further education colleges	207	14	57	23	6
	Sixth form colleges	89	36	53	11	0
	Specialist further education colleges	15	13	73	13	0
Independent specialist colleges	(total)	55	9	73	16	2
Community learning and skills providers	(total)	234	7	75	16	2
of which	Specialist designated institutions	11	36	55	9	0
	Not for profit organisations	84	10	70	18	2
	Local authority providers	139	3	80	16	1
Independent learning providers	(total)	411	12	71	15	3
of which	Independent learning providers	352	9	74	15	2
	Employer providers	59	27	53	12	8
16–19 academies	(total)	10	10	30	50	10
of which	16–19 academy converters	2	0	50	50	0
	16–19 free schools	7	14	29	43	14
	16–19 sponsor led academies	1	0	0	100	0
Further education in higher education institutions	(total)	25	32	68	0	0
Dance and drama colleges	(total)	18	78	17	6	0
All providers	(total)	1,064	15	66	16	3
Prisons and young offender institutions	(total)	80	5	30	53	13

1. The overall effectiveness of learning and skills and work activities in prisons and young offender institutions was introduced in March 2014; as at 31 August 2016, 34 prisons and young offender institutions had yet to receive this judgement and therefore are not included.
2. Judgements on further education in higher education institutions (HEIs) relate just to the FE provision being delivered within the HEI.
3. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100. Where the number of inspections is small, percentages should be treated with caution.
Source: Ofsted

Table 11: Overall effectiveness of further education and skills providers inspected between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016

		Total number of inspections	Percentage of inspections			
			Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Colleges	(total)	108	2	53	34	11
of which	General further education colleges	82	1	50	34	15
	Sixth form colleges	23	4	65	30	0
	Specialist further education colleges	3	0	33	67	0
Independent specialist colleges	(total)	23	4	65	26	4
Community learning and skills providers	(total)	93	3	67	25	5
of which	Specialist designated institutions	2	0	50	50	0
	Not for profit organisations	28	7	61	21	11
	Local authority providers	63	2	70	25	3
Independent learning providers	(total)	161	2	70	18	9
of which	Independent learning providers	140	2	72	17	9
	Employer providers	21	5	57	24	14
16–19 academies	(total)	4	0	25	50	25
of which	16–19 academy converters	2	0	50	50	0
	16–19 free schools	2	0	0	50	50
	16–19 sponsor led academies	-	-	-	-	-
Further education in higher education institutions	(total)	3	0	100	0	0
Dance and drama colleges	(total)	18	78	17	6	0
All providers	(total)	410	6	62	24	8
Prisons and young offender institutions	(total)	42	5	36	48	12

1. Includes full inspections and short inspections that did not convert to a full inspection, where the provider remained good.
2. The number of inspections given for prisons and young offender institutions are for inspections published between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016.
3. Judgements on further education in higher education institutions (HEIs) relate just to the FE provision being delivered within the HEI.
4. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100. Where the number of inspections is small, percentages should be treated with caution.
Source: Ofsted

Table 12: Overall effectiveness of early years registered providers at their most recent full inspection, as at 31 August 2016

	Total number inspected	Percentage of providers			
		Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Early Years Register providers					
Childminder	34,382	13	76	10	1
Childcare on non-domestic premises	20,755	17	77	4	1
Childcare on domestic premises	151	26	62	12	1
All provision	**55,290**	**15**	**76**	**8**	**1**

1. Data refers to the judgement of 'How well does the setting meet the needs of children in the early years foundation stage?' from the EYFS framework that began in September 2008 and the subsequent 'overall effectiveness' judgement, as at 31 August 2016, published by 30 September 2016.
2. A small number of home childcarers are included in the all provision total which are not included as an individual provision type.
3. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.
Source: Ofsted

Table 13: Overall effectiveness of early years registered providers inspected between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016

	Total number inspected	Percentage of providers			
		Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Early Years Register providers					
Childminder	13,017	18	69	9	3
Childcare on non-domestic premises	7,679	18	63	11	8
Childcare on domestic premises	60	13	57	15	15
All provision	**20,761**	**18**	**67**	**10**	**5**

1. Includes all full Early Years Register inspections in this period, including re-inspections and inspections of providers who have since closed. Other inspection types such as no children on roll inspections and childcare inspections are not included.
2. Data includes inspections published by 30 September 2016.
3. A small number of home childcarers are included in the all provision total which are not included as an individual provision type.
4. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100. Where the number of inspections is small, percentages should be treated with caution.
Source: Ofsted

Annex 2: Primary performance by area

		Primary schools			
Local authority	Region	% of pupils in good or outstanding schools 2016	Change from 2015 (%pts)	Change from 2012 (%pts)	% of pupils in academies 2016
Kingston upon Thames	London	100	▲ 3	▲ 16	15
Lewisham	London	100	▲ 5	▲ 21	3
Southend-on-Sea	East of England	100	▲ 15	▲ 34	15
Enfield	London	99	▲ 12	▲ 38	6
Richmond upon Thames	London	99	▲ 6	▲ 8	5
North Tyneside	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	99	▼ -1	▲ 27	1
Greenwich	London	98	▲ 6	▲ 31	0
Camden	London	98	▲ 2	▲ 6	2
Redbridge	London	98	▲ 5	▲ 26	4
Warrington	North West	98	▲ 9	▲ 26	2
Bedford	East of England	97	▲ 3	▲ 12	23
Sutton	London	97	▲ 5	▲ 10	22
Newcastle upon Tyne	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	97	▬ 0	▲ 29	8
Westminster	London	97	▲ 2	▲ 32	20
Trafford	North West	97	▲ 2	▲ 7	10
Poole	South West	97	▲ 10	▲ 27	60
Cheshire East	North West	96	▲ 2	▲ 15	36
Hackney	London	96	▲ 6	▲ 41	7
Bexley	London	96	▲ 6	▲ 32	47
Hammersmith and Fulham	London	96	▲ 11	▲ 17	16
Waltham Forest	London	96	▲ 9	▲ 40	36
Bolton	North West	96	▲ 9	▲ 28	19
Gloucestershire	South West	96	▲ 3	▲ 23	20
Lancashire	North West	95	▲ 7	▲ 29	2
Barnet	London	95	▲ 2	▲ 4	11
Redcar and Cleveland	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	95	▲ 11	▲ 27	27
St Helens	North West	95	▲ 5	▲ 22	4
Leeds	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	95	▲ 5	▲ 27	11
Telford and Wrekin	West Midlands	95	▲ 7	▲ 42	6
Harrow	London	95	▲ 2	▲ 6	9
Halton	North West	95	▲ 4	▲ 20	5
Wigan	North West	95	▲ 2	▲ 15	12
Haringey	London	95	▲ 7	▲ 36	14
Swindon	South West	94	▲ 7	▲ 20	44
South Gloucestershire	South West	94	▲ 6	▲ 16	9

Primary schools					
Local authority	Region	% of pupils in good or outstanding schools 2016	Change from 2015 (%pts)	Change from 2012 (%pts)	% of pupils in academies 2016
Bury	North West	94	▲ 7	▲ 29	11
Durham	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	94	▲ 3	▲ 24	7
Torbay	South West	94	▬ 0	▲ 24	75
South Tyneside	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	94	▲ 2	▲ 33	10
Bournemouth	South West	94	▲ 1	▲ 33	84
Brent	London	94	▲ 3	▲ 28	16
Cheshire West and Chester	North West	94	▲ 4	▲ 20	7
Bristol	South West	93	▲ 6	▲ 36	39
Lambeth	London	93	▲ 3	▲ 9	3
Stockport	North West	93	▲ 3	▲ 9	5
Tameside	North West	93	▲ 13	▲ 37	18
Shropshire	West Midlands	93	▲ 8	▲ 34	9
Wandsworth	London	93	▲ 1	▲ 8	10
Solihull	West Midlands	93	▲ 5	▲ 17	17
Ealing	London	93	▲ 1	▲ 26	4
Lincolnshire	East Midlands	93	▲ 7	▲ 27	36
Cumbria	North West	93	▲ 5	▲ 19	13
Gateshead	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	93	▲ 2	▲ 18	4
Coventry	West Midlands	93	▲ 8	▲ 51	17
Somerset	South West	93	▲ 5	▲ 27	26
Surrey	South East	93	▲ 8	▲ 25	22
Manchester	North West	93	▲ 2	▲ 22	25
Sunderland	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	93	▲ 4	▲ 32	25
Devon	South West	92	▲ 6	▲ 20	24
Hounslow	London	92	▲ 6	▲ 21	8
Buckinghamshire	South East	92	▲ 3	▲ 15	11
Brighton and Hove	South East	92	▲ 3	▲ 20	3
Cornwall	South West	92	▲ 3	▲ 19	57
Tower Hamlets	London	92	▲ 2	▲ 18	9
Wiltshire	South West	92	▲ 4	▲ 19	27
Herefordshire	West Midlands	92	▲ 4	▲ 22	25
Oldham	North West	92	▲ 6	▲ 20	18
Stockton-on-Tees	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	92	▬ 0	▲ 21	25

Primary schools					
Local authority	Region	% of pupils in good or outstanding schools 2016	Change from 2015 (%pts)	Change from 2012 (%pts)	% of pupils in academies 2016
Rochdale	North West	92	▲ 8	▲ 17	5
North Yorkshire	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	92	▲ 8	▲ 24	9
Knowsley	North West	92	▬ 0	▲ 3	4
Central Bedfordshire	East of England	91	▲ 3	▲ 8	30
Wirral	North West	91	▲ 4	▲ 9	3
York	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	91	▲ 4	▲ 28	23
Sefton	North West	91	▲ 7	▲ 1	0
Salford	North West	91	▲ 9	▲ 19	7
Peterborough	East of England	91	▲ 6	▲ 31	22
Worcestershire	West Midlands	91	▲ 4	▲ 29	18
Barking and Dagenham	London	91	▲ 15	▲ 28	8
Bath and North East Somerset	South West	91	▲ 1	▲ 15	25
Hampshire	South East	91	▲ 7	▲ 16	3
Darlington	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	91	▲ 2	▲ 11	69
Hertfordshire	East of England	91	▲ 6	▲ 18	9
Essex	East of England	91	▲ 9	▲ 29	28
Liverpool	North West	91	▲ 7	▲ 14	2
Southwark	London	91	▲ 3	▲ 17	13
Windsor and Maidenhead	South East	91	▲ 14	▲ 6	23
Nottinghamshire	East Midlands	90	▲ 7	▲ 19	19
Islington	London	90	▲ 5	▲ 1	6
Sandwell	West Midlands	90	▲ 7	▲ 33	17
Newham	London	90	▲ 8	▲ 15	10
Calderdale	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	90	▲ 4	▲ 21	28
North Lincolnshire	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	90	▲ 12	▲ 25	25
Slough	South East	90	▲ 14	▲ 27	57
North Somerset	South West	89	▲ 3	▲ 27	14
Thurrock	East of England	89	▲ 17	▲ 40	72
Dudley	West Midlands	89	▲ 2	▲ 30	7
Leicestershire	East Midlands	89	▲ 4	▲ 21	50
Kirklees	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	89	▲ 5	▲ 18	11
Hartlepool	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	89	▲ 1	▲ 10	24
Kent	South East	88	▲ 7	▲ 33	29

Primary schools					
Local authority	Region	% of pupils in good or outstanding schools 2016	Change from 2015 (%pts)	Change from 2012 (%pts)	% of pupils in academies 2016
Merton	London	88	▲ 7	▲ 7	5
Kensington and Chelsea	London	88	▼ -3	▲ 15	4
East Sussex	South East	88	▲ 15	▲ 18	21
Kingston upon Hull	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	88	▲ 4	▲ 22	66
Reading	South East	87	▲ 15	▲ 34	19
Warwickshire	West Midlands	87	▲ 4	▲ 21	20
Hillingdon	London	87	▲ 8	▲ 12	29
Wakefield	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	87	▲ 4	▲ 34	45
Stoke-on-Trent	West Midlands	87	▲ 8	▲ 25	37
Milton Keynes	South East	87	▲ 5	▲ 20	20
Dorset	South West	87	▲ 9	▲ 3	23
Staffordshire	West Midlands	87	▲ 7	▲ 26	23
Middlesbrough	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	87	▲ 5	▲ 5	47
Blackpool	North West	86	▲ 8	▲ 9	54
Blackburn with Darwen	North West	86	▲ 2	▲ 15	11
Wokingham	South East	86	▲ 6	▲ 17	2
Southampton	South East	86	▲ 3	▲ 23	32
Leicester	East Midlands	86	▲ 14	▲ 23	12
Derbyshire	East Midlands	86	▲ 8	▲ 24	6
Norfolk	East of England	86	▲ 7	▲ 27	23
Barnsley	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	86	▲ 5	▲ 24	41
Portsmouth	South East	86	▲ 3	▲ 32	26
Northumberland	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	85	▼ -3	▲ 3	10
Suffolk	East of England	84	▲ 9	▲ 23	28
Medway	South East	84	▲ 23	▲ 30	35
Oxfordshire	South East	84	▼ -1	▲ 25	31
Bromley	London	84	▲ 7	▲ 14	84
East Riding of Yorkshire	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	84	▲ 7	▲ 28	7
Plymouth	South West	83	▲ 7	▲ 15	23
Croydon	London	83	▼ -3	▲ 19	44
Havering	London	83	▲ 6	▲ 4	12
Rotherham	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	82	▲ 7	▲ 19	41

Primary schools					
Local authority	Region	% of pupils in good or outstanding schools 2016	Change from 2015 (%pts)	Change from 2012 (%pts)	% of pupils in academies 2016
Cambridgeshire	East of England	82	▲ 4	▲ 16	21
West Berkshire	South East	82	▲ 13	▲ 3	4
Northamptonshire	East Midlands	82	▲ 8	▲ 23	47
Birmingham	West Midlands	82	▲ 4	▲ 14	31
Luton	East of England	82	▲ 3	▲ 19	15
Nottingham	East Midlands	80	▲ 5	▲ 9	48
Sheffield	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	80	▲ 8	▲ 15	31
West Sussex	South East	79	▲ 3	▲ 9	23
Derby	East Midlands	78	▲ 6	▲ 35	11
Wolverhampton	West Midlands	78	▲ 4	▲ 25	25
Doncaster	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	77	▲ 13	▲ 17	22
Rutland	East Midlands	76	▼ -12	— 0	71
Bradford	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	76	▲ 9	▲ 11	16
Walsall	West Midlands	73	▲ 2	▲ 14	18
Bracknell Forest	South East	72	▲ 8	▼ -3	2
North East Lincolnshire	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	71	▲ 4	▲ 15	81
Isle of Wight	South East	69	▲ 5	▲ 4	7

1. Based on inspections conducted by 31 August 2016 where the report was published by 30 September 2016.
2. The Isles of Scilly and the City of London are excluded.
Source: Ofsted and Department for Education

Annex 3: Secondary performance by area

	Secondary schools				
Local authority	Region	% of pupils in good or outstanding schools 2016	Change from 2015 (%pts)	Change from 2012 (%pts)	% of pupils in academies 2016
Bracknell Forest	South East	100	▲ 26	▲ 45	17
Ealing	London	100	▬ 0	▲ 15	36
Hackney	London	100	▲ 1	▲ 36	56
Haringey	London	100	▬ 0	▲ 34	44
Islington	London	100	▬ 0	▲ 18	22
Kensington and Chelsea	London	100	▬ 0	▬ 0	78
Kingston upon Thames	London	100	▲ 11	▲ 16	95
Lambeth	London	100	▬ 0	▲ 28	52
Merton	London	100	▲ 12	▲ 55	30
Redbridge	London	100	▲ 10	▲ 6	40
Sutton	London	100	▲ 13	▬ 0	81
Waltham Forest	London	100	▲ 27	▲ 24	35
Wandsworth	London	100	▬ 0	▲ 7	86
Southwark	London	99	▼ -1	▲ 12	86
Wiltshire	South West	99	▲ 6	▲ 21	88
Bath and North East Somerset	South West	98	▲ 3	▲ 9	82
Dorset	South West	97	▲ 5	▲ 17	56
Newcastle upon Tyne	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	97	▲ 11	▲ 26	60
Bristol	South West	96	▲ 4	▲ 35	82
Cheshire East	North West	96	▲ 6	▲ 10	74
Harrow	London	96	▲ 1	▼ -4	82
Surrey	South East	95	▲ 1	▲ 27	65
Southend-on-Sea	East of England	95	▲ 9	▲ 19	96
Bromley	London	95	▼ -5	▲ 1	95
Devon	South West	95	▲ 10	▲ 22	64
Somerset	South West	95	▲ 14	▲ 32	74
Essex	East of England	95	▲ 9	▲ 35	92
York	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	95	▲ 1	▲ 18	32
Tower Hamlets	London	95	▲ 11	▲ 16	9
Worcestershire	West Midlands	94	▲ 6	▲ 24	79
Barnet	London	93	▲ 5	▲ 2	73
Barking and Dagenham	London	93	▲ 10	▲ 24	28
South Tyneside	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	93	▲ 1	▲ 31	41
Trafford	North West	92	▲ 1	▼ -8	75

Secondary schools					
Local authority	Region	% of pupils in good or outstanding schools 2016	Change from 2015 (%pts)	Change from 2012 (%pts)	% of pupils in academies 2016
Slough	South East	92	▲ 7	▲ 19	70
North Lincolnshire	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	92	▲ 7	▲ 49	71
Luton	East of England	92	▬ 0	▲ 6	57
Enfield	London	92	▼ -1	▲ 4	42
Peterborough	East of England	92	▲ 8	▲ 9	76
Cheshire West and Chester	North West	91	▲ 7	▲ 5	47
Rotherham	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	91	▬ 0	▲ 24	77
North Tyneside	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	91	▲ 4	▲ 26	22
Gloucestershire	South West	91	▲ 5	▲ 18	88
Blackburn with Darwen	North West	90	▲ 14	▲ 33	73
Medway	South East	90	▲ 1	▲ 13	96
Hammersmith and Fulham	London	90	▲ 2	▼ -10	81
Camden	London	90	▲ 8	▲ 16	9
West Berkshire	South East	90	▲ 17	▲ 22	63
Thurrock	East of England	89	▬ 0	▲ 7	94
Newham	London	89	▼ -2	▲ 23	35
Wokingham	South East	89	▼ -9	▲ 12	70
Hertfordshire	East of England	89	▲ 4	▲ 21	78
Solihull	West Midlands	88	▲ 7	▲ 27	86
North Somerset	South West	88	▼ -6	▲ 8	88
North Yorkshire	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	88	▲ 8	▲ 19	32
Hounslow	London	87	▼ -8	▼ -13	82
Warwickshire	West Midlands	87	▲ 1	▲ 25	76
Bedford	East of England	87	▲ 7	▲ 17	88
Bournemouth	South West	87	▼ -13	▲ 15	100
Westminster	London	87	▬ 0	▲ 5	91
Kirklees	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	87	▲ 15	▲ 14	58
Croydon	London	86	▲ 11	▲ 14	74
Kent	South East	86	▲ 2	▲ 17	74
Plymouth	South West	86	▲ 4	▲ 7	91
Wirral	North West	86	▲ 14	▲ 14	73
North East Lincolnshire	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	86	▲ 9	▲ 44	100
Oxfordshire	South East	85	▼ -3	▲ 11	89

Secondary schools					
Local authority	Region	% of pupils in good or outstanding schools 2016	Change from 2015 (%pts)	Change from 2012 (%pts)	% of pupils in academies 2016
Leicestershire	East Midlands	85	▲ 3	▲ 8	97
West Sussex	South East	84	▲ 5	▲ 18	41
Hartlepool	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	84	▲ 37	▲ 39	70
Nottingham	East Midlands	84	▲ 1	▲ 18	92
Lancashire	North West	84	▬ 0	▲ 20	28
Central Bedfordshire	East of England	83	▲ 7	▲ 27	83
Lincolnshire	East Midlands	83	▲ 7	▲ 3	92
Cornwall	South West	83	▲ 2	▬ 0	62
Hampshire	South East	83	▲ 1	▲ 5	48
Cumbria	North West	83	▲ 6	▲ 26	66
Richmond upon Thames	London	83	▲ 3	▲ 3	86
Brent	London	83	▲ 15	▬ 0	86
Hillingdon	London	82	▲ 1	▲ 3	92
Nottinghamshire	East Midlands	81	▲ 1	▲ 18	92
Bolton	North West	81	▲ 5	▲ 11	31
Leeds	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	81	▲ 2	▲ 16	53
Greenwich	London	80	▼ -9	▲ 10	53
Wolverhampton	West Midlands	80	▲ 3	▲ 10	75
Buckinghamshire	South East	80	▲ 6	▲ 2	80
Herefordshire	West Midlands	80	▼ -7	▼ -10	65
East Sussex	South East	80	▼ -2	▲ 1	57
Milton Keynes	South East	79	▲ 4	▲ 11	65
Sheffield	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	79	▬ 0	▲ 16	79
Redcar and Cleveland	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	79	▲ 1	▲ 11	68
Dudley	West Midlands	78	▲ 15	▲ 12	57
Shropshire	West Midlands	78	▲ 5	▲ 9	60
Durham	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	77	▼ -1	▼ -1	50
Norfolk	East of England	77	▲ 10	▲ 32	75
Birmingham	West Midlands	76	▲ 2	▲ 8	61
Bexley	London	76	▼ -9	▼ -1	100
Bury	North West	76	▲ 2	▼ -11	0
Walsall	West Midlands	76	▲ 9	▲ 16	84
Staffordshire	West Midlands	76	▲ 6	▲ 10	54

Secondary schools					
Local authority	Region	% of pupils in good or outstanding schools 2016	Change from 2015 (%pts)	Change from 2012 (%pts)	% of pupils in academies 2016
Stockport	North West	75	▲ 1	▲ 19	41
Calderdale	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	75	▼ -2	▲ 20	80
Manchester	North West	75	▲ 1	▲ 34	62
Sefton	North West	74	▲ 2	▼ -1	57
Southampton	South East	74	▼ -8	▲ 6	31
Salford	North West	73	▲ 14	▲ 9	34
Middlesbrough	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	73	▲ 18	▲ 39	82
Torbay	South West	72	▲ 14	▼ -28	78
Leicester	East Midlands	72	▼ -8	▼ -4	12
Halton	North West	71	▲ 1	▲ 11	56
Wakefield	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	71	▬ 0	▲ 8	92
Suffolk	East of England	71	▲ 1	▼ -2	75
Telford and Wrekin	West Midlands	71	▲ 6	▲ 4	51
Darlington	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	70	▲ 1	▼ -3	100
Wigan	North West	69	▼ -5	▼ -26	28
Stockton-on-Tees	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	69	▲ 17	▲ 11	82
St Helens	North West	68	▲ 12	▲ 16	23
Gateshead	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	68	▼ -16	▼ -6	74
Coventry	West Midlands	68	▲ 11	▼ -12	80
Northamptonshire	East Midlands	68	▲ 7	▲ 21	95
Windsor and Maidenhead	South East	67	▲ 6	▼ -10	87
Derby	East Midlands	67	▼ -6	▲ 25	59
Oldham	North West	66	▲ 30	▼ -19	56
Barnsley	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	66	▲ 7	▲ 48	27
Rutland	East Midlands	66	▲ 2	▼ -34	100
Sunderland	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	64	▼ -6	▲ 21	78
East Riding of Yorkshire	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	64	▼ -4	▲ 23	37
Cambridgeshire	East of England	63	▲ 17	▼ -7	100
Brighton and Hove	South East	63	▼ -18	▲ 4	13
Sandwell	West Midlands	62	▲ 5	▲ 7	70
Derbyshire	East Midlands	62	▲ 10	▲ 4	45

Secondary schools					
Local authority	Region	% of pupils in good or outstanding schools 2016	Change from 2015 (%pts)	Change from 2012 (%pts)	% of pupils in academies 2016
Rochdale	North West	62	▼ -15	▬ 0	26
Kingston upon Hull	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	61	▼ -4	▲ 17	63
Warrington	North West	60	▼ -1	▼ -6	73
Portsmouth	South East	60	▼ -11	▲ 28	56
Reading	South East	59	▼ -9	▼ -14	79
Poole	South West	58	▼ -10	▼ -21	66
Northumberland	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	58	▲ 3	▼ -1	48
Havering	London	57	▲ 1	▼ -9	84
Lewisham	London	54	▼ -11	▼ -13	29
Stoke-on-Trent	West Midlands	53	▲ 2	▲ 11	83
Tameside	North West	53	▲ 3	▲ 19	50
Doncaster	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	52	▲ 15	▲ 9	100
South Gloucestershire	South West	51	▼ -3	▼ -2	89
Liverpool	North West	48	▼ -9	▼ -29	47
Swindon	South West	47	▼ -5	▼ -5	91
Bradford	North East, Yorkshire and the Humber	44	▲ 2	▲ 16	53
Blackpool	North West	42	▲ 7	▼ -4	100
Isle of Wight	South East	26	▲ 3	▼ -74	49
Knowsley	North West	0	▬ 0	▼ -46	63

1. Based on inspections conducted by 31 August 2016 where the report was published by 30 September 2016.
2. The Isles of Scilly and the City of London are excluded.
Source: Ofsted and Department for Education