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Official Statistics

Main findings: childcare providers and inspections as at 31 August 2019

Published 19 November 2019

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This is the main findings report for the [childcare providers and inspections as at 31 August 2019](#) release, these are also available:

- [underlying data](#)
- [methodology](#)
- [pre-release access list](#)

Summary

This release contains:

- the number of Ofsted registered childcare providers and places and their most recent inspection outcomes on 31 August 2019

- the number of providers that have registered with Ofsted (joiners) and the number that have left (leavers) between 31 March 2019 and 31 August 2019

Number of registered providers and places

The number of childminders registered with Ofsted has continued to decrease.

There were 38,500 childminders registered with Ofsted on 31 August 2019. Numbers have been falling over an extended period and were down by 500 (1%) since 31 March 2019, and by 9,500 (20%) since 31 August 2015.

The overall number of childcare places on the Early Years Register has increased slightly.

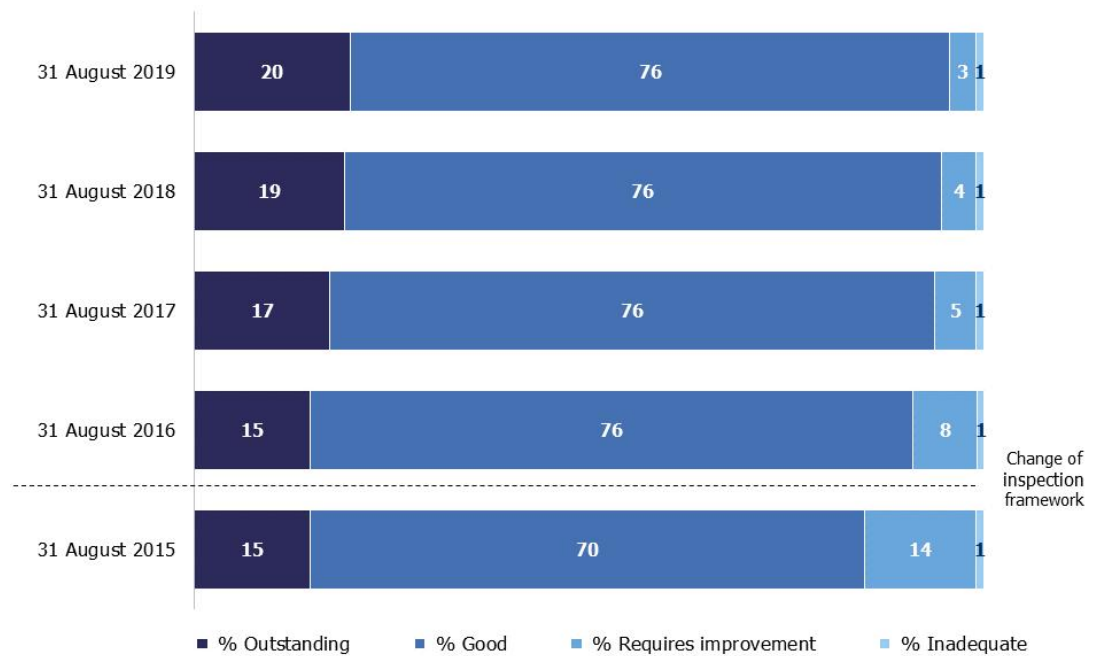
Despite the decreasing numbers of childminders, the number of childcare places increased by 1% since 31 March 2019, due to an increase in the number of places offered at non-domestic premises.

Registered early years providers: inspection outcomes

More than 9 in 10 providers on the Early Years Register were judged good or outstanding.

The proportion of childcare providers on the Early Years Register judged good or outstanding was 96%. This was only a slight increase since 31 March 2019, but represents an increase of 11 percentage points since 31 August 2015.

Figure 1: Overall effectiveness of active early years registered providers at their most recent inspection over time



A higher proportion of non-domestic providers were judged outstanding, compared with childminders.

At their most recent inspection, 23% of non-domestic providers were judged outstanding, compared with 17% of childminders. However, the proportion of providers judged either good or outstanding for these 2 provider types was fairly similar.

Introduction

The early years and childcare sector is primarily made up of private nurseries, pre-schools and childminders. There are 4 types of early years provision:

Childcare on non-domestic premises

Nurseries, pre-schools, holiday clubs and other group-based settings, usually registered on the Early Years Register (EYR) because they look after children aged 0 to 5.

Childminders

People who look after one or more children they are not related to for payment or reward. The care takes place in a home that is not the child's own. The

majority register on the EYR because they look after children aged 0 to 5, but those who look after 5 to 7 year olds need to register on the Childcare Register (CR).

Childcare on domestic premises

Where 4 or more people look after children together in a home that is not the child's. The majority are registered on the EYR and some are registered on the CR, depending on the age of the children they look after.

Home childcarers (nannies)

Individuals who care for children aged 0 to 18 wholly or mainly in the child's own home. They are not required to register with Ofsted, though they may choose to do so on the Voluntary Childcare Register (VCR).

Childcare on non-domestic premises and childminders make up the majority of early years provision registered with Ofsted. Further information about provider types is available in the [glossary](#).

Childminders have the option to either register with Ofsted or a childminder agency. Childminder agencies have the responsibility of inspecting the childminders registered with them. More information about childminder agencies is provided in the [childminder agencies](#) section.

Childcare in early years also occurs in the schools sector. This takes place in state-funded schools and independent schools. Since May 2015, childcare on non-domestic premises that are part of a school are not required to register on the EYR if they are only looking after children aged 2 and over. For more information, see the [early years provision in the schools sector](#) section of this document.

Number of providers

Changes in provider numbers, by provider type

There were 76,200 childcare providers registered with Ofsted on 31 August 2019, down by 1% (400) since 31 March 2019¹. Since 31 August 2015, the number of providers has fallen by 13%, although numbers have been falling over a much longer period. Most of this overall decrease is due to a substantial fall in the number of childminders.

Note: Ofsted's common inspection framework (CIF) was introduced on 1

September 2015. Comparisons for data going back to 31 August 2012 can be found in our release for [childcare providers and inspections as at 31 August 2018](#) and releases prior to this.

Childminders

38,500 providers on 31 August 2019, down by 500 since 31 March 2019. This continues a downward trend, with 9,500 (20%) fewer providers than on 31 August 2015.

Childcare on non-domestic premises

27,500 providers on 31 August 2019, up by 200 providers since 31 March 2019. Numbers are fairly stable over time, with no change since 31 August 2015.

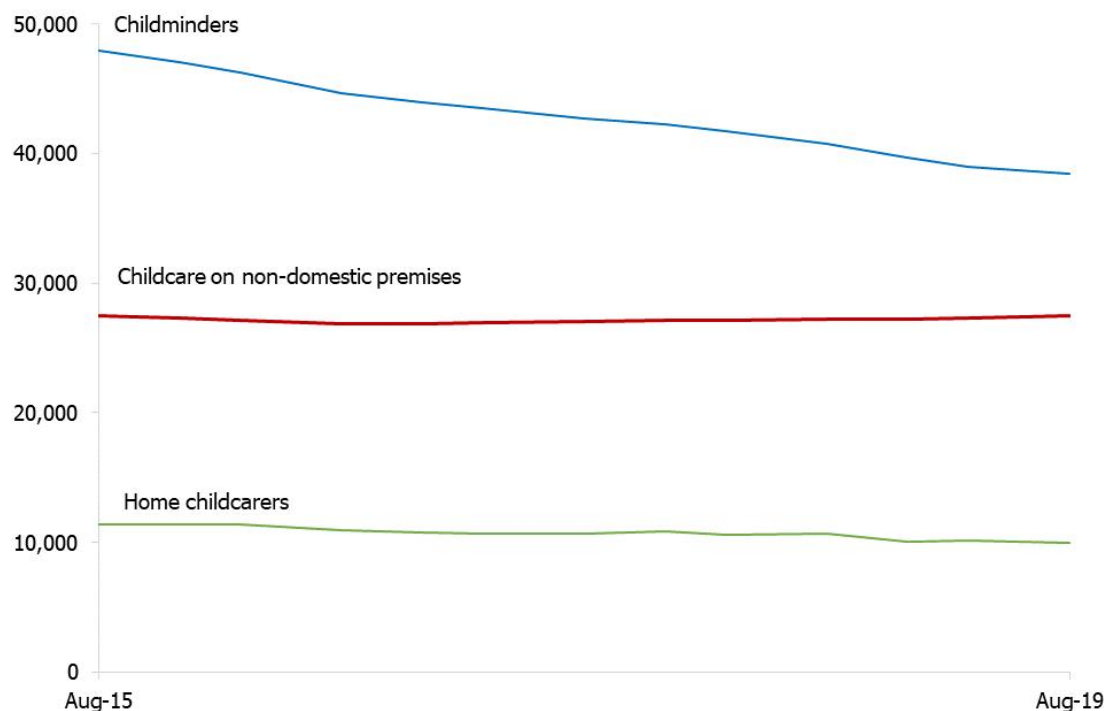
Home childcarers

10,000 providers on 31 August 2019, a decrease of more than 100 since 31 March 2019. Although the number of home childcarers has fluctuated over time, there are now 13% fewer than there were on 31 August 2015.

Childcare on domestic premises

200 providers on 31 August 2019. Due to the small numbers, these are not included in [\(Figure 2\)](#).

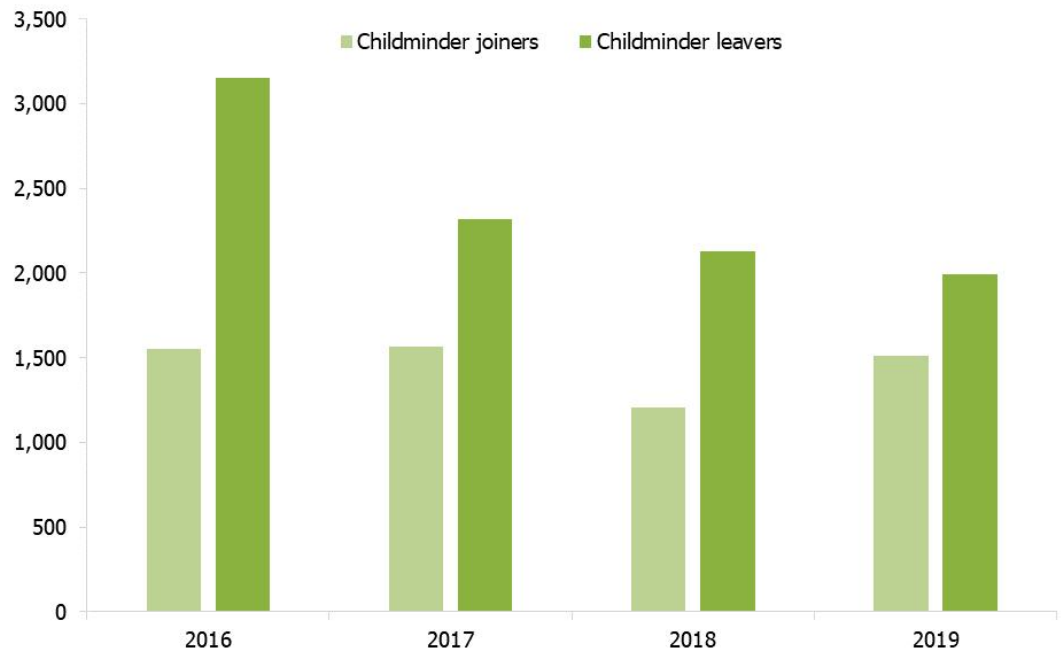
Figure 2: Childcare providers registered with Ofsted on any register over time, by provider type



Childminder movement in the sector over time

The decline in the number of childminders is due to a trend of more providers leaving than joining the childcare sector, even though the number of childminders leaving is decreasing compared with previous years ([Figure 3](#)).

Figure 3: Childminder movement within successive April to August periods



Data refers to childminders' movement between 1 April and 31 August in each year.

Since the previous official statistics (31 March 2019), 2,000 childminders have left the childcare sector and 1,500 joined: a net decrease of 500. The childminders who left during this period had been registered for almost 10 years on average (based on the assumption that the exact date they left the register was 31 August 2019).

While the number of childminder leavers has gradually decreased over time, the number of joiners in the current reporting period (1 April 2019 to 31 August 2019) was broadly in line with previous years. As a result, the difference between the number of joiners and leavers is much lower than it has been in previous similar reporting periods¹.

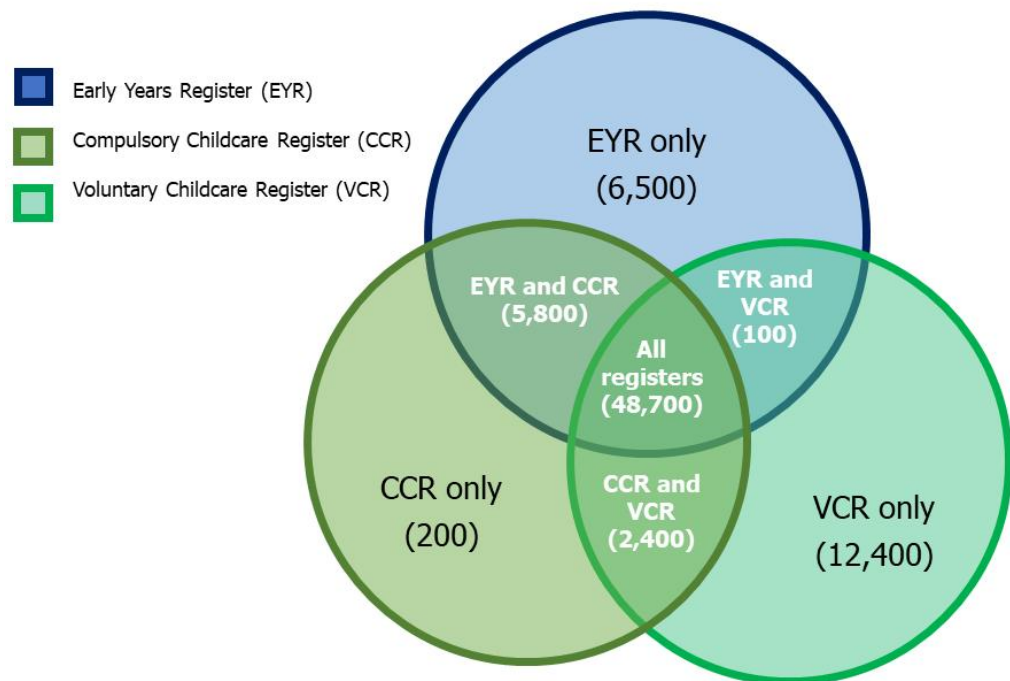
To note: most leavers are provider resignations and most joiners are new provider registrations but some will be providers moving between the early years and the childcare register.

Registers and places

On 31 August 2019, 80% (61,200) of Ofsted registered childcare providers were on the EYR ([Figure 4](#)). The remaining 20% were not on the EYR and so only appeared on the voluntary (VCR) and/or compulsory (CCR) parts of the Childcare Register (CR). More information about the different register types is available in the [glossary](#).

Registration by register

Figure 4: Venn diagram of Ofsted registered providers by the different registers for childcare



Places data is reported for the 61,200 providers registered on the EYR, with a high proportion of these (89%) also being registered on the CR.

When considering places data, it is important to note that it covers all places for children up to the age of 8 in providers registered on the EYR. This encompasses all EYR places for children under 5 and CCR places for 5- to 7-year-olds in these providers. For more methodological notes on places data, please see the [methodology and quality report](#) that accompanies this release.

Providers and places

Despite decreasing numbers of childminders, the number of childcare places has remained broadly stable since August 2015 ([Figure 5](#)). Childminder places decreased between April and August 2019. However, there was a large increase

in the number of places offered by childcare on non-domestic premises. This meant that the overall number of places increased by around 9,200 (less than 1%) since March 2019. On 31 August 2019, there were 1.3 million childcare places offered by providers on the EYR.

Number of childcare places by provider type, on 31 August 2019

Childcare on non-domestic premises

Offered 82% (1.1 million) of all childcare places, which is an increase of 2 percentage points since August 2015. On average each provider offered 45 places.

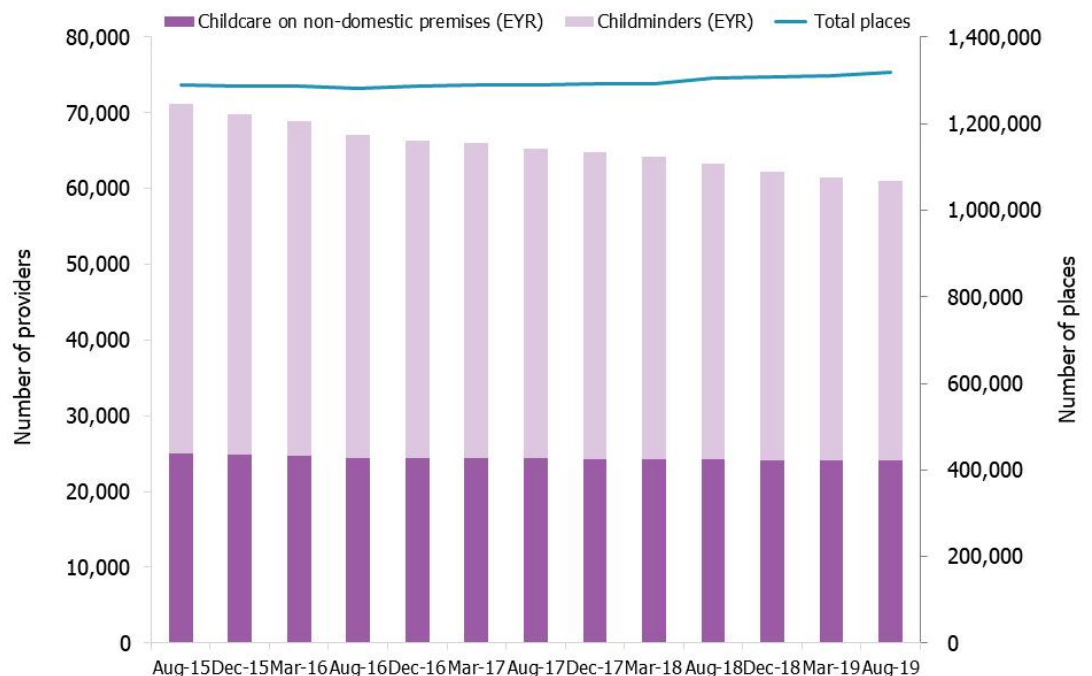
Childminders

Offered 18% (238,200) of all places, a decrease of 2 percentage points since August 2015. The average number of places offered by childminders was 6.5.

Childcare on domestic premises

Offered less than 1% (5,100) of places². These are not shown in [Figure 5](#) due to the relatively small number of places offered. On average each provider offered 22 places.

Figure 5: Childcare providers and places on the Early Years Register over time, by provider type



Places data² from August 2018 onwards is recorded in an updated administrative system and captures slightly more childcare places than previously.

The average number of places offered by childminders was 6.5.

Note: for childminders, the maximum number of places they can offer if they do not have assistants is 6. All childminders are recorded as offering 6 places at registration.

Childminder provider numbers on the EYR have decreased by 20% since 31 August 2015, but the number of places offered by childminders has only decreased by 8%. This means that the individual childminders are each offering a higher number of places on average, even though there are fewer childminders and fewer places offered by childminders overall.

Inspection outcomes

New providers joining the EYR are normally inspected within 30 months of registration. The [Being inspected as a childminder or childcare provider](#) guidance provides more information about inspection. On 31 August 2019, 49,800 (81%) providers on the EYR had received a full inspection. These are excluded from the total number of providers on the EYR who have received an inspection. Most of the providers that have not yet been inspected joined the EYR within the last 2 years.

Note: a small proportion of providers may have received a No children on roll inspection (NCOR).

Proportion of providers on the EYR judged good or outstanding

On 31 August 2019, 96% of childcare providers on the EYR were judged either good or outstanding at their most recent inspection. This is a slight increase since 31 March 2019, but is a substantial increase from 31 August 2015, when the proportion was 85% ([Figure 1](#)).

The 2 main provider types on 31 August 2019

Childcare on non-domestic premises

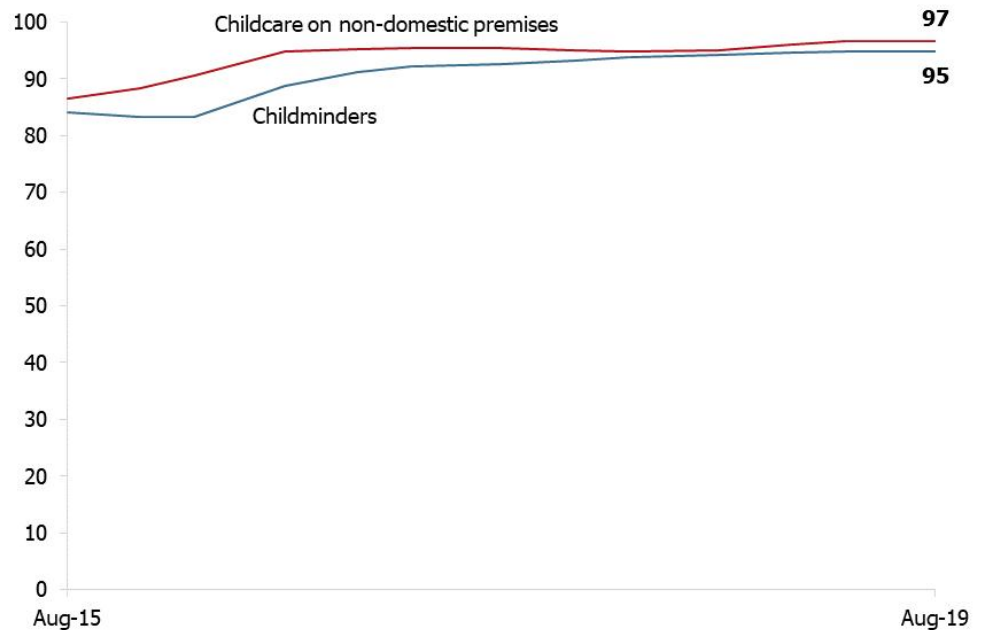
At their most recent inspection, 97% were good or outstanding, unchanged since 31 March 2019. This was made up of 73% of childcare on non-domestic

premises judged good and 23% outstanding.

Childminders

At their most recent inspection, 95% were good or outstanding, the same proportion as the end of March 2019. This was made up of 78% of childminders judged good and 17% judged outstanding.

Figure 6: Percentage of childminders and non-domestic providers judged good or outstanding at their most recent full inspection over time



Note: percentages may not sum due to rounding.

Changes in the proportion of childminders judged good or outstanding

Since the beginning of August 2016, Ofsted has prioritised inspections for childminders who had previously received a judgement of requires improvement (RI) or inadequate. On 31 August 2019, 92% of childminders who were previously judged RI or inadequate improved to good or outstanding at their most recent inspection.

The quality of those leaving the sector may have also contributed to the rise in good or outstanding providers. Providers leaving the sector are more likely to have been judged requires improvement or inadequate at their most recent inspection than those that remain. Of the providers inspected since September 2015 who then left the sector, 18% had received a judgement of requires

improvement or inadequate at their most recent EYR inspection, compared with only 4% of all active providers.

Changes in the proportion of childcare on non-domestic premises judged good or outstanding

Over time, the proportion of childcare on non-domestic premises judged good or outstanding has increased. Part of this increase can be attributed to a change in the childcare inspection policy. Since November 2013, all childcare on non-domestic premises with a judgement of requires improvement must be re-inspected within 12 months. This means that non-domestic providers have had more opportunity to demonstrate improvement than they did previously.

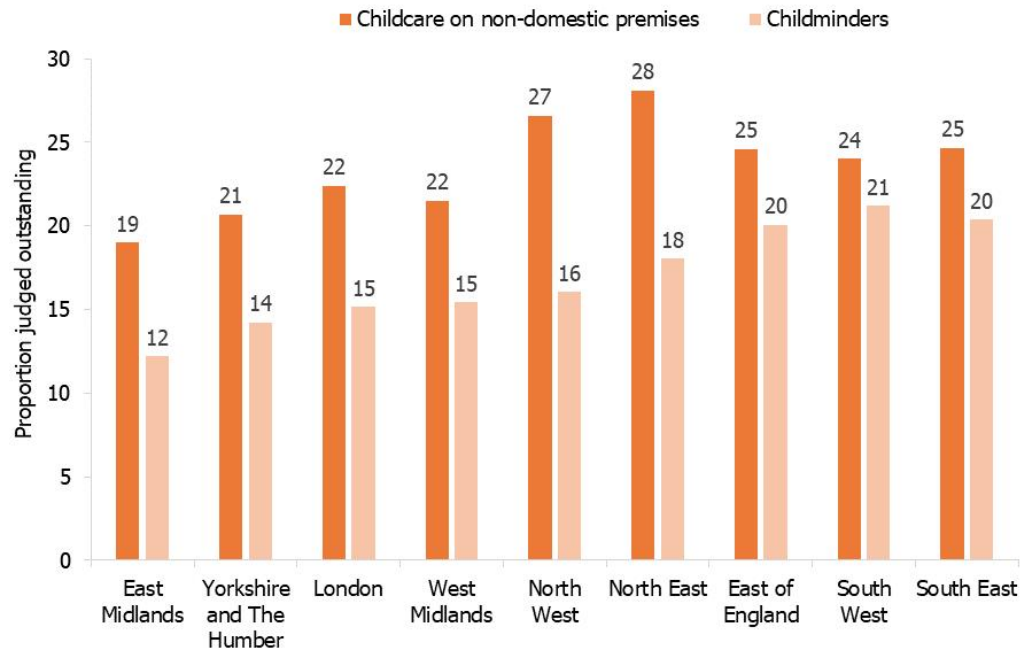
Regional inspection outcomes

On 31 August 2019, all regions had fairly similar proportions of providers judged good or outstanding. The North East and the South West had the highest proportion (97%) and London the lowest (94%). The East of England, the South East and the South West all had the highest proportion of providers judged outstanding (22%) and the East Midlands had the lowest (15%).

There was a higher or equal proportion of non-domestic providers judged good or outstanding compared with childminders in all regions. London had the largest difference between non-domestic providers (96%) and childminders (92%) judged good or outstanding. In the South West, 97% of each provider type were judged good or outstanding.

On a national level, the difference in the proportion of non-domestic providers judged outstanding (23%) compared with childminders (17%) was notably more pronounced. There was also a wide variation in the difference between the proportion of outstanding childminders and non-domestic providers across the regions (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Percentage of childminders and non-domestic providers judged outstanding on 31 August 2019, by region



You can find additional information on local authorities and parliamentary constituencies in the [provider-level data file accompanying this release](#).

Childminder agencies

Childminder agencies were introduced in September 2014, enabling new childminders to choose to register with Ofsted directly or register with an agency. Existing childminders could also choose to deregister with Ofsted and register instead with a childminder agency. Childminder agencies have the responsibility of inspecting the childminders who are registered with them, with Ofsted inspecting the childminder agencies.

Childminder agencies are only eligible for inspection when they have childminders on roll. There are only 2 overall effectiveness inspection outcomes: 'effective' and 'ineffective'. On 31 August 2019, 11 childminder agencies were registered with Ofsted. Of these, 6 had childminders on roll and were therefore eligible for inspection. Of the 6 childminder agencies, 5 have been inspected to date and all have been judged 'effective'.

Data for childminder agencies is available in the [provider level data file accompanying this release](#).

Early years provision in the schools

sector

Early years provision also occurs in the schools sector. This takes place in state-funded schools. Nurseries within schools that are only looking after children aged 2 and over are exempt from registration on the EYR. Nurseries looking after children aged younger than 2 are still required to register on the EYR and are therefore covered in the previous sections.

In state-funded schools, other than nursery schools, early years provision is given its own judgement as part of the overall inspection of the school. On 31 August 2019, there were around 10,700 state-funded schools with an early years judgement at their most recent school inspection. Of these, 82% were judged good or outstanding on the overall effectiveness of the school and 89% were judged to be good or outstanding for early years provision.

There are several reasons why schools that received an early years judgement may not be representative of all schools with early years provision. For instance, Ofsted did not provide separate graded judgements on the overall effectiveness of early years between January 2012 and August 2014. Furthermore, short inspections will confirm whether the overall effectiveness is good or outstanding, but will not provide or update a previous early years provision judgement.

On 31 August 2019, there were 391 state-funded nursery schools in England. Of the 389 that have been inspected, 98% received a grade of good or outstanding at their most recent inspection ([Table 1](#)). This was made up of a very large proportion (64%) of nursery schools judged outstanding and 34% judged good.

Table 1: Overall effectiveness of open state-funded nursery schools on 31 August 2019

	All inspected nursery schools	Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	Inadequate
Number of nursery schools inspected	389	248	134	7	0
Percentage of inspected nursery schools	100	64	34	2	0

For more information on school inspections and outcomes, please refer to [Ofsted's management information on state-funded schools inspections and outcomes](#).

Many independent schools also provide nursery provision. On 31 August 2019, there were 259 non-association independent schools with an early years judgement at their most recent standard inspection. Of these, 76% were judged

good or outstanding on the overall effectiveness for early years. For more information on non-association independent schools inspections and outcomes, please see Ofsted's [official statistics on non-association independent schools](#).

Please note that Ofsted only inspects non-association independent schools. Association independent schools are inspected by the [Independent Schools Inspectorate](#) (ISI).

Notes

An explanation about main uses of this data, further contextual information and the arrangements for quality assurance is provided in the [methodology and quality report](#) accompanying this release.

The methodology and quality report also provides information on the strengths and limitations of the statistics.

Revisions to previous release

The [provisional data in the previous release](#) related to inspections which took place between 1 January 2019 and 31 March 2019 and were published by 30 April 2019. A revised list of inspections in this period is provided in Tables 14–19 of the '[Childcare providers and inspections charts and tables](#)' document for this [release](#). This revised data includes 29 inspections that were published by 30 September 2019 (that were not published by 30 April 2019).

These revisions did not result in any changes to the main findings identified in the previous publication.

Revisions to data in this publication are published in line with [Ofsted's revisions policy for official statistics](#).

Common inspection framework (CIF)

Inspections from 1 September 2015 were carried out under the [common inspection framework](#) (CIF), meaning that the inspection judgements are common across the early years, schools and further education and skills remits. Ofsted evaluates the overall quality and standards of the early years provision in line with the principles and requirements of the [early years foundation stage statutory framework](#). Inspectors judge the overall effectiveness of the early years provision, considering 4 judgements:

- quality of teaching, learning and assessment
- personal development, behaviour and welfare
- effectiveness of leadership and management
- outcomes for children

Ofsted is required to inspect all providers that were on the Early Years Register (EYR) on 1 August 2016 at least once by 31 July 2020. Providers that register after this date will normally be inspected within 30 months of registration.

Glossary

Registers

Under the [Childcare Act 2006](#), childcare providers register on either or both of 2 registers:

Early Years Register (EYR)

The EYR is for providers that care for children in the early years age group, from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday. Registration is compulsory for these providers and they must meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage (EYFS).

Ofsted inspects all providers on the EYR on a 4-year cycle. The last inspection cycle ran from 1 September 2012 to 31 July 2016. The current inspection cycle runs from 1 August 2016 to 31 July 2020.

Childcare Register (CR)

The CR is for providers that care for children from birth to 18 years. It has 2 parts:

- Compulsory Childcare Register (CCR) – for providers caring for children from 1 September after the child's fifth birthday up until their eighth birthday
- Voluntary Childcare Register (VCR) – for providers for whom registration is not compulsory, for example nannies, or providers that care for children aged 8 and over

Providers that are registered on either part of the Childcare Register do not need to submit their places information to Ofsted.

For providers registered on the Childcare Register, Ofsted inspects a sample of 10% of active providers per year.

Early years foundation stage (EYFS)

The [EYFS](#) is the statutory framework for the early education and care of children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday.

Childcare providers

Childcare providers care for at least one individual child for a total of more than 2 hours in any one day. This is not necessarily a continuous period. They must register on the CCR to care for children under the age of 8, although there may be some exceptions to this. They can register on the VCR to care for older children.

Domestic premises

These are any premises that are wholly or mainly used as a private dwelling: in other words, someone's home.

Childcare providers on domestic and non-domestic premises

If 4 or more people look after children at any one time in someone's home, they are providing childcare on domestic premises, not childminding.

Childcare providers on non-domestic premises are people or organisations providing care for individual children in premises that are not someone's home. These premises can range from converted houses to purpose-built nurseries.

Childminder

This is a person who is registered to look after one or more children, to whom they are not related, for reward. Childminders work on domestic premises alongside no more than 2 other childminders or assistants. They must register if they care for children under the age of 8, and can choose to register if they care for older children. They care for:

- children on domestic premises that are not usually the home of one of the children unless they care for children from more than 2 families, wholly or mainly in the homes of the families
- at least one individual child for a total of more than 2 hours in any day (not necessarily a continuous period)

Childminder agencies

Childminder agencies were introduced in September 2014 as an alternative registration option for childminders. Childminders who register with an agency no longer need to register or be inspected by Ofsted, although the agency itself will receive an inspection.

Childminder agencies are only eligible for inspection by Ofsted when they have childminders on roll. Childminder agencies have the responsibility of inspecting the childminders who are registered with them.

Home childcarers

Home childcarers are usually nannies who care for children of any age up to their 18th birthday wholly or mainly in the child's own home, and care for children from no more than 2 families. They are not required to register with Ofsted, though they may choose to do so on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register.

Inspection cycles

All providers on the Early Years Register which were registered before the start of Ofsted's 4-year inspection cycle are inspected within the cycle. The previous inspection cycle ran from 1 September 2012 to 31 July 2016. The current inspection cycle runs from 1 August 2016 to 31 July 2020. New providers joining the EYR are normally inspected within 30 months of registration. For providers on the CCR, a sample of 10% of active providers are inspected per year.

No children on roll (NCOR)

If there are no children present on the day of the provider's inspection, they receive an NCOR inspection. The inspector will make a judgement on the 'Overall quality and standards of the early years provision', with 3 possible outcomes:

- met

- not met - actions
- not met - enforcement action

Number of places

Registered places are the number of children that may attend the provision at any one time. Registered places are not the number of places occupied, nor the number of children who may benefit from receiving places through providers offering sessions at different times of the day. Place numbers are only collected for providers on the EYR. Provider type averages are used to estimate the number of places for a very small number of providers whose place numbers are not available at the time of the analysis. There may also be small discrepancies in totals due to rounding.

Joiners and leavers

Joiners are childcare providers that have registered with Ofsted during this reporting period. Most of these are new registrations, but Tables 3 and 4 and Chart 1 within the 'Childcare providers and inspections charts and tables' document also include providers with re-activated registrations and those that have changed provider type or register. At local authority or regional level, this may also include providers that have relocated into a new geographical area.

Leavers are mostly childcare providers that have left Ofsted during the reporting period. Most of these are resignations, but some are also providers that have had their registration cancelled or have changed provider type or register. At local authority or regional level, this may also include providers that have relocated out of a geographical area.

Further information

Ofsted publishes the following information on the inspection of early years providers:

- [Early years and childcare statistics](#)
- [Common inspection framework: education, skills and early years from September 2015](#)
- [Regulation of services on the Childcare Register](#)

Contact for comments or feedback

If you have any comments or feedback on this publication, please contact Anita Patel on 03000 130 914 or Anita.Patel@ofsted.gov.uk.

Annual Report

Findings from our forthcoming Annual Report will be published on 21 January 2020.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the following for their contribution to this statistical release: Louis Noble, Giada Maugeri, Lucy Conway and Helen Woodley.

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1. numbers are rounded to the nearest 100 [↔](#) [↔](#)²
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