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Official Statistics

State-funded schools inspections and outcomes as at 31 August 2019: main findings

Published 28 November 2019

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State-funded schools inspections and outcomes as at 31 August 2019

The [State-funded schools and inspections and outcomes as at 31 August 2019](#) release includes:

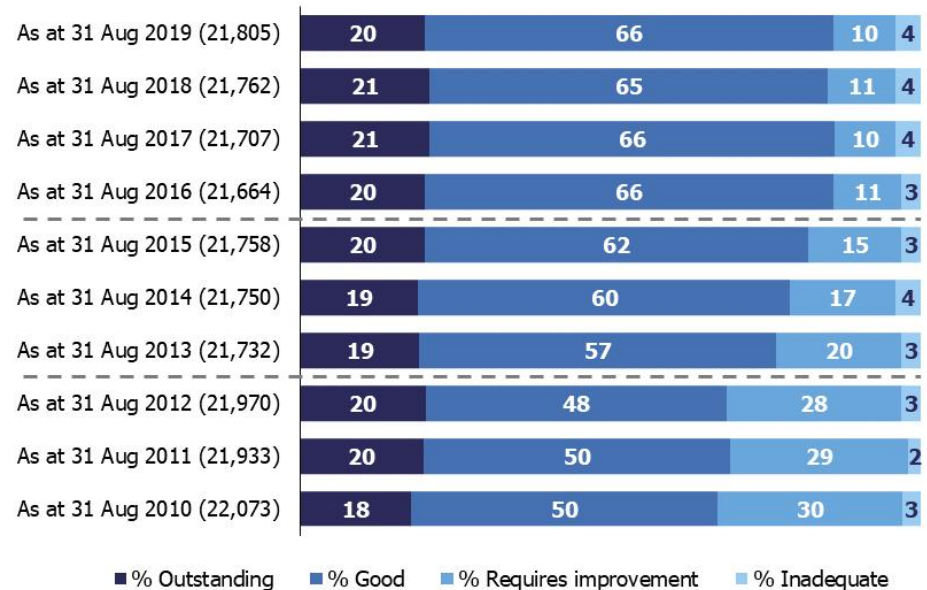
- schools' most recent inspections and outcomes as at 31 August 2019
- provisional data for inspections completed between 1 April and 31 August 2019
- revised data for inspections completed between 1 September 2018 and 31 March 2019

Introduction

Eighty-six per cent of all schools are good or outstanding. This proportion has remained fairly stable over the last 3 years but prior to that had climbed steadily from 68% in August 2010.

Only 16% of previously outstanding primary and secondary schools remained outstanding at inspection in 2018/19.

Figure 1: Overall effectiveness of state-funded schools at their most recent inspection, by year



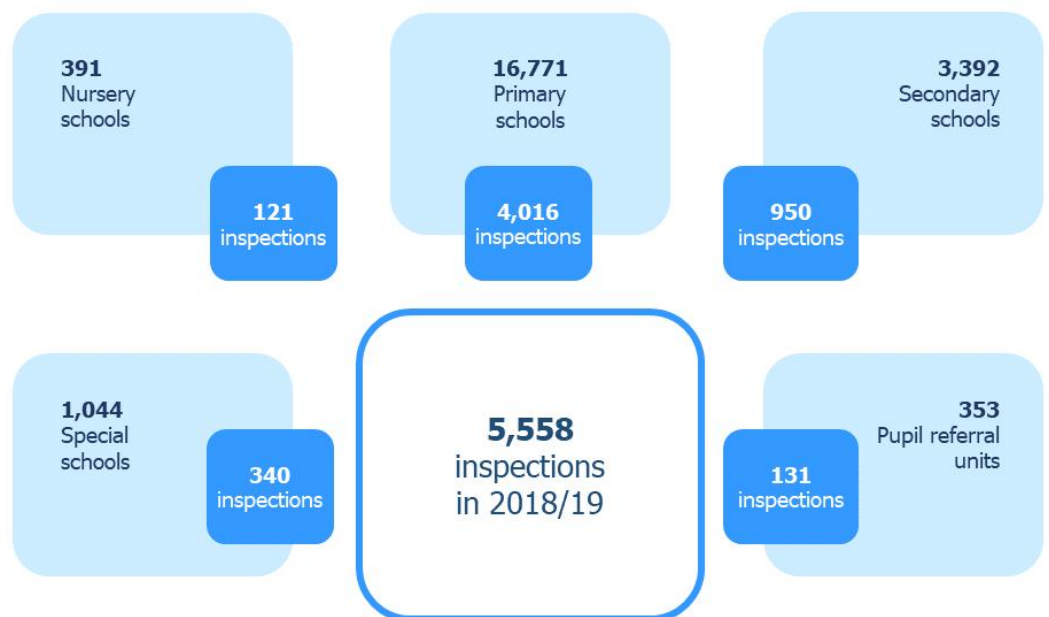
--- There were changes to the inspection framework in January 2012, September 2012 and September 2015

Inspections between 1 September 2018 and 31 August 2019

We carried out 5,558 school inspections this year, the large majority were full inspections and section 8 inspections of good and non-exempt outstanding schools.

There are 21,951 state-funded schools as at 31 August 2019. Together these provide education for more than 8 million pupils. Forty per cent of schools are now academies. Eighty-two per cent of these are part of a multi-academy trust (MAT). This is an increase from 78% last year. More than half of all pupils are in an academy.

Figure 2: Number of state-funded schools as at 31 August 2019, and the number of inspections carried out in 2018/19¹



This year, we have carried out:

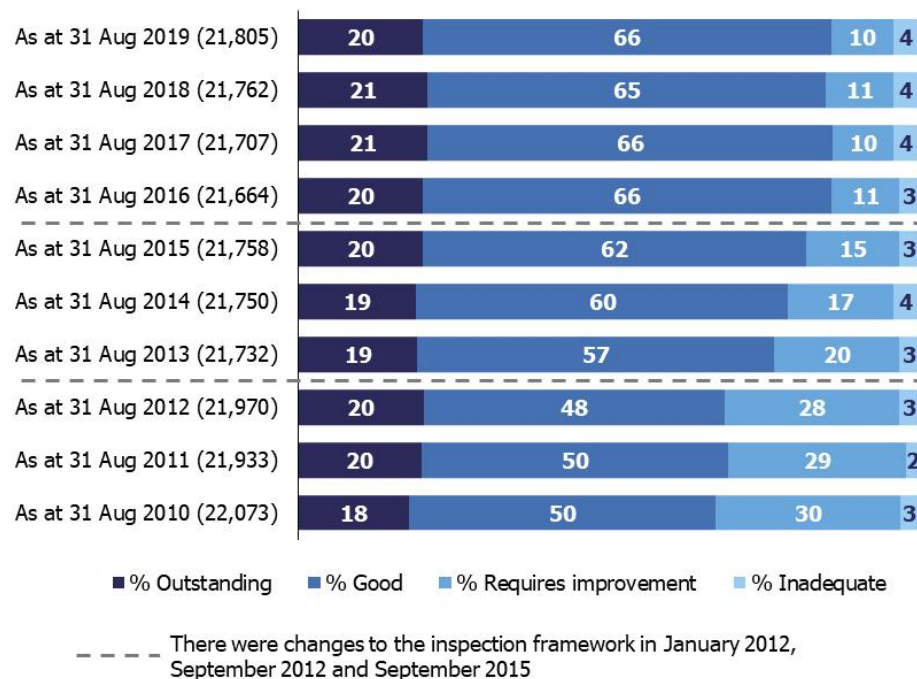
- 2,575 full inspections, including section 8 inspections of good and non-exempt outstanding schools and monitoring visits that became a full inspection
- 2,497 were inspections of good and non-exempt outstanding schools that did not convert to a full inspection

Schools at their most recent inspection

Eighty-six per cent of all schools are good or outstanding. This proportion has remained relatively stable over the last 3 years, but had climbed from 68% in August 2010 prior to that.

Eighty-six per cent of all schools are good or outstanding. This has increased from 82% since the introduction of the common inspection framework in 2015, but is unchanged from August 2018. Under the previous 2 inspection frameworks, the proportion had increased steadily from 68% in August 2010. That was mostly due to a decrease in the proportion that require improvement and an increase in the proportion judged to be good.

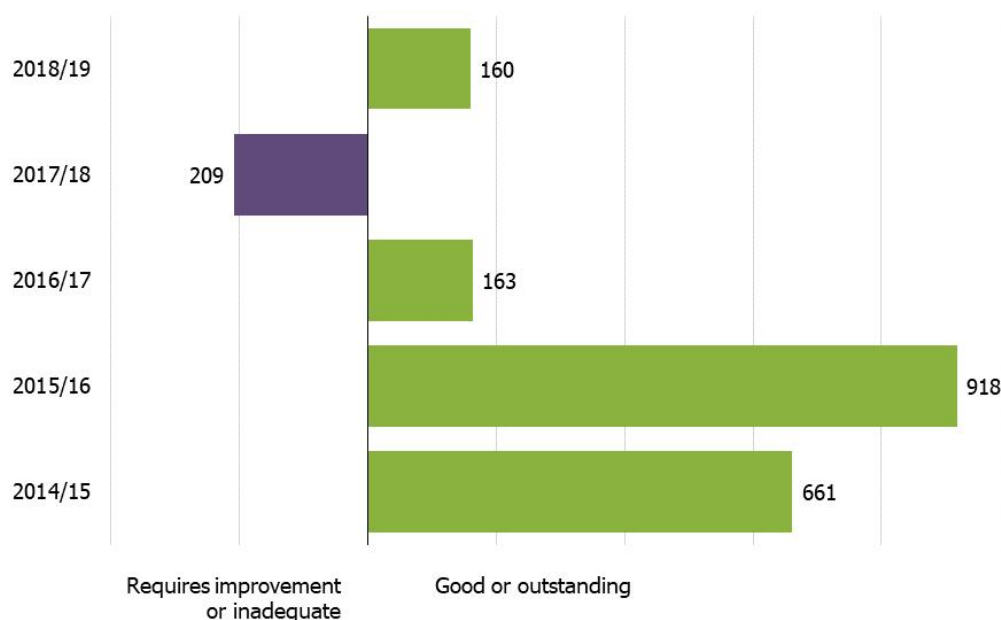
Figure 3: Overall effectiveness of state-funded schools at their most recent inspection, by year



More primary schools are good or outstanding than secondary schools: 87% compared with 76%. Additionally, 98% of nursery schools, 92% of special schools and 83% of pupil referral units (PRUs) are good or outstanding.

There is a small underlying increase in the proportion of good or outstanding schools since last year. This is because 160 more schools became good or outstanding than became inadequate or requires improvement in the year. The following chart shows the net difference between schools in these 2 categories over the past 5 years.

Figure 4: The balance between the numbers of state-funded schools becoming good or outstanding and the numbers becoming requires improvement or inadequate over time²



Inspections from September 2019 onwards are being carried out under the new [education inspection framework](#). This framework puts more focus on assessing whether a school has a well-designed and ambitious curriculum, and whether it has the same high ambition for all pupils. The first official statistics reporting on inspections carried out under the new framework will be published in [spring 2020](#).

Inspections of schools previously judged to be outstanding

Only 16% of the previously outstanding primary and secondary schools inspected this year remained outstanding.

One out of 5 schools were judged to be outstanding at their most recent inspection, which comes to 4,331 schools. Of these, 3,628 are primary and secondary schools.

We inspect most schools within 5 years of their last full inspection. However, in 2012 the government made outstanding primary and secondary schools exempt from routine inspection. This has resulted in over 1,000 schools that have not had a full inspection for at least 10 years. Of those not inspected in 10 years, 837 are primary schools and 169 are secondary schools. That is 29% of exempt primary schools, and 24% of exempt secondary schools.

Almost half (48%) of all exempt schools have not been inspected since

September 2012. More primary schools remain uninspected over this period: 50% compared with 41% of secondary schools.

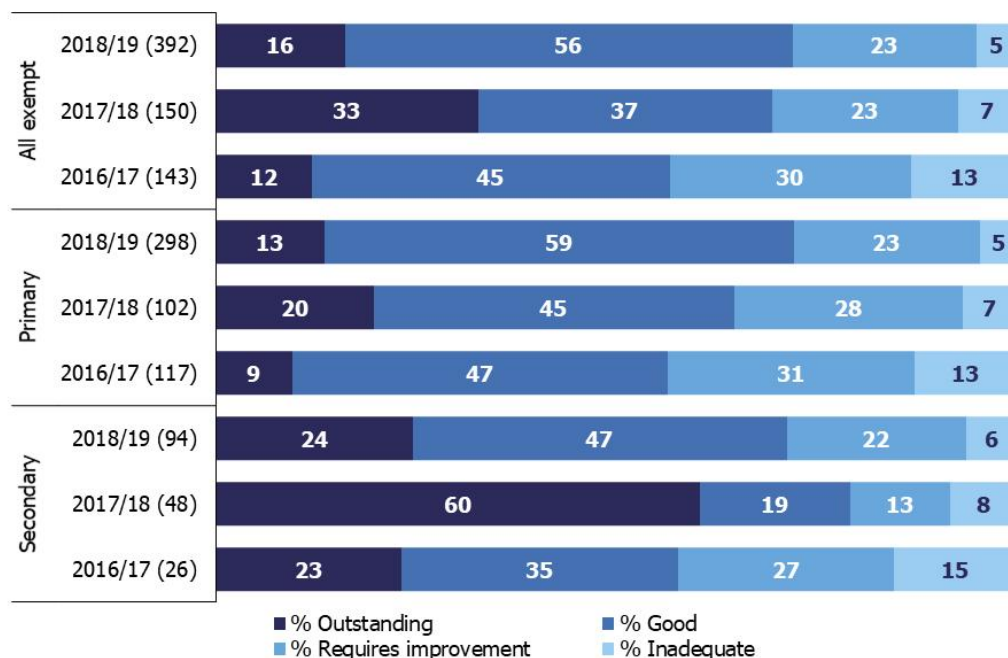
A quarter of exempt schools are academies that have not been inspected since converting to an academy. They inherited their exemption from their predecessor schools.

We can still inspect exempt schools if a risk assessment suggests that their performance has declined, if we have other concerns, or if the school has undergone a significant change. This year, we increased the number of exempt schools we inspected because of our concerns. We inspected 392 exempt schools in 2018/19, compared with 150 in 2017/18.

For many years, we raised concerns about what the exemption means for the quality of education and safeguarding in these schools and have argued that the exemption be brought to an end. In December 2018, the Department for Education (DfE) asked Ofsted to increase the proportion of exempt schools we inspect to 10% in the year. We have met that target, inspecting 392 of 3,800 schools that were exempt at the start of the year. On 1 September 2019, the government [announced](#) its intention to remove the exemption entirely.

Only 16% of the exempt schools we inspected this year remained outstanding. Over half (56%) declined to good, 23% to requires improvement and 5% to inadequate. A higher proportion of exempt primary schools declined than secondary schools: 87% compared with 76%.

Figure 5: Overall effectiveness of exempt schools at inspections in the last 3 academic years



Inspections of schools previously judged to be good

Eighty-three per cent of the previously good schools inspected this year remained good and 4% became outstanding.

Most previously good primary and secondary schools receive a section 8 inspection. Some will have a full inspection if a risk assessment, or a previous section 8 inspection, highlights concerns. Good schools that have had a change of circumstances, such as an amalgamation, may also receive a full inspection.

We inspected 3,345 previously good schools this year. One-thousand-and-seven had a planned full inspection. A further 2,310 had a section 8 inspection, of which 20 (1%) converted to a full inspection. A further 28 had a 'no formal designation' visit or an inspection following a parental complaint. Nine of these became a full inspection.

In total, 83% of previously good schools remained good, 4% became outstanding, 10% now require improvement and 3% became inadequate.

The proportion of section 8 inspections that converted to a full inspection has remained stable, at 1%, since January 2018. There was a policy change at this point that meant inspections only converted when there were concerns on safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education.

Of the 2,290 section 8 inspections that did not convert, 1,760 (77%) confirmed that the school remains good and did not require further inspection. A further 280 (12%) confirmed the school remains good but indicated it might improve at a full inspection. These schools will have a full inspection next, usually within 1 to 2 years. Another 250 (11%) also confirmed the school remains good but indicated it might decline at a full inspection. These schools will also have a full inspection next, within the same timescales.

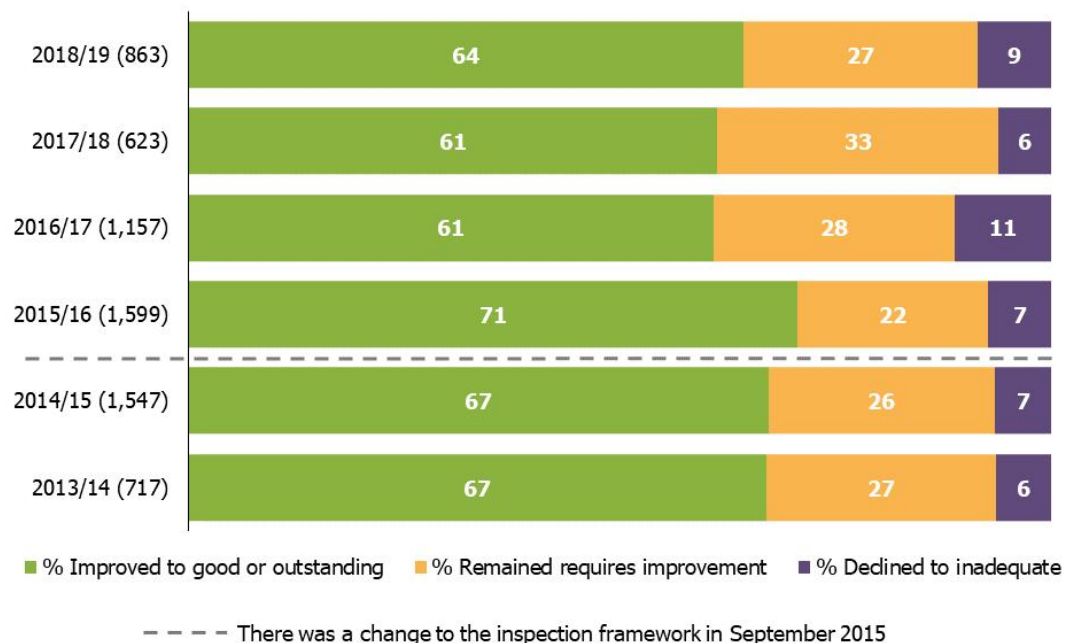
Inspections of schools previously judged to require improvement

Schools that require improvement will receive a full inspection, usually within 27 months of their most recent inspection, and some may receive monitoring visits.

We have carried out 863 full inspections this year of schools that were previously judged to require improvement. Two per cent of these schools improved to outstanding, and 63% to good. A further 27% remained requires improvement and 9% declined to inadequate.

Overall, 64% improved to good or outstanding. That is a small increase from 61% that improved in the 2 previous academic years. Nine per cent declined to inadequate this year, an increase from 6% last year.

Figure 6: Grade movement for state-funded schools previously judged to require improvement, by year



A much higher proportion of primary schools improved from a previous requires improvement judgement this year than secondary schools: 70% compared with 46%. Only 6% of primary schools declined to inadequate, compared with 17% of secondary schools. This difference in the rate of improvement between the 2 education phases has remained largely consistent for the last 6 years.

Inspections of schools previously judged to be inadequate

Only 12% of schools that were previously judged to be inadequate remained inadequate at inspections in the year. Forty-two per cent improved to requires improvement, 43% to good and 3% to outstanding.

Inadequate schools may also receive a full inspection and monitoring visits. We have carried out 200 full inspections this year of schools that were previously judged inadequate. Twelve per cent of schools remained inadequate at these inspections. A further 42% improved to requires improvement, 43% to good and 3% to outstanding.

Schools maintained by LAs are issued with a directive academy order (DAO) by the regional schools commissioner (RSC) if they are judged to be inadequate. The order requires them to close and an academy sponsor supports them to re-open as a sponsored academy. The process of matching the school to a sponsor

and it re-opening as an academy can be complicated and take a long time. Compared with last year, there are fewer schools with a DAO (168 compared with 220), but a slight increase in the number of schools remaining open for a very long time (51 still open after 18 months, and 39 after 24 months).

Sometimes, when a school is still open a long time after its DAO was issued, we may take the decision to inspect it again. At this inspection, the school may demonstrate that it has improved and is no longer inadequate. It is at the discretion of the RSC as to whether the DAO is rescinded. Out of the 168 schools with DAOs currently open, 97 have had a full inspection since the DAO was issued, and 27 of these improved to good or requires improvement.

Revisions to previous release

The provisional data in the previous release relates to inspections that took place between 1 January 2019 and 31 March 2019, with the reports published by 30 April 2019. Revised data for inspections in this period is provided in tables 1R and 2R of the Excel file accompanying this release: [State-funded schools inspections and outcomes as at 31 August 2019, charts and tables](#) accompanying this release.

This revised data includes an additional 120 full inspections that had not been published by 30 April but were published by 30 September 2019. These inspections resulted in the following number of additional judgements at each overall effectiveness grade:

- 12 outstanding
- 44 good
- 29 requires improvement
- 35 inadequate

As a consequence, the proportion of all schools judged good between 1 September 2018 and 31 March 2019 changed from 53% to 51%, the proportion that require improvement from 32% to 31% and the proportion judged inadequate from 8% to 9%.

For primary schools, the proportion judged good changed from 56% to 55%, the proportion that require improvement from 31% to 30% and the proportion judged inadequate from 6% to 7%.

For secondary schools, the proportion judged outstanding changed from 8% to 7%, the proportion judged good from 42% to 41%, the proportion that require improvement from 36% to 37% and the proportion judged inadequate from 14% to 15%.

For special schools, the proportion judged outstanding changed from 25% to

24%, the proportion judged good from 35% to 34%, the proportion that require improvement from 27% to 26% and the proportion judged inadequate from 13% to 16%.

For pupil referral units, the proportion outstanding changed from 22% to 21%, the proportion good from 57% to 58% and the proportion that require improvement from 9% to 8%.

There were also an additional 74 section 8 inspections.

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

Notes

The purpose of these official statistics is to disseminate the data on school standards collected through Ofsted's role as an inspectorate. They provide information about how the judgements of schools have changed over time and vary across different phases of education and different parts of the country.

This official statistics release reports on the outcomes of state-funded school inspections carried out under sections 5 or 8 of the [Education Act 2005](#). These [inspections](#) were carried out between 1 September 2018 and 31 August 2019. This release also includes the most recent inspections and outcomes for all schools that have been inspected, as at 31 August 2019.

Throughout this release, the term 'schools' is used to cover all LA-maintained schools, state-funded academies and non-maintained special schools in England that Ofsted is required to inspect under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Inspections between September 2015 and August 2019 were carried out under Ofsted's common inspection framework: [common inspection framework](#).

From September 2019, inspections have been carried out under the [education inspection framework](#).

You can find an explanation of the main uses of this data, further contextual information and the arrangements for quality assurance in the [methodology report](#). This report provides information about strengths and limitations of the statistics.

Where percentages are quoted in this report, figures have been rounded and may not add to 100.

Glossary

Academies

Academies are publicly funded independent schools. Academies do not have to follow the national curriculum and can set their own term times. They still have to follow the same rules on admissions, special educational needs and exclusions as other state schools.

Academies get money directly from the government, not the LA. They are run by an academy trust, which employs the staff. Some academies have sponsors such as businesses, universities, other schools, faith groups or voluntary groups. Sponsors are responsible for improving the performance of their schools.

Academies include converter and sponsor-led academies, free schools, university technical colleges and studio schools.

Academy converters

Academy converters are schools that have opted to become academies. Most of these were good or outstanding LA-maintained schools before they became an academy.

Academy converters retain their latest inspection grade, even if the most recent inspection was of the predecessor school.

Sponsor-led academies

Sponsor-led academies are academies that have sponsors such as businesses, universities, other schools, faith groups or voluntary groups. Sponsors are responsible for improving the performance of their schools.

Free schools

Free schools are funded by the government and are not run by the LA. They are set up on a not-for-profit basis by charities, universities, and community and faith groups, among others.

Free schools are 'all-ability' schools, so cannot use academic selection processes like a grammar school. They can set their own pay and conditions for staff and change the length of school terms and the school day. Free schools do not have to follow the national curriculum.

LA-maintained schools

Maintained schools are funded by the government and run by the LA. They must follow the national curriculum.

Section 5 and section 8

Inspections are carried out under sections 5 and 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Ofsted is required to inspect at prescribed intervals all schools to which section 5 applies. The regulations set the interval for section 5 inspections 'within 5 school years from the end of the school year in which the last inspection took place'. The exceptions to this requirement are schools that are exempt from section 5 inspection (known as 'exempt schools').

Section 8 enables Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) to carry out inspections for a range of purposes, including monitoring visits by HMI to schools that are in a category of concern following a section 5 inspection. HMI may also visit schools to aid HMCI in keeping the Secretary of State informed or to contribute to reports on, for example, the teaching in a curriculum subject or a particular aspect of the work of schools. Section 8 is also used to enable HMCI, if she has concerns, to carry out an inspection of those outstanding schools that are exempt from routine inspection under section 5.

Inspections carried out under section 8 include:

- section 8 inspections of schools judged to be good at their most recent section 5 inspection and those outstanding schools that are not exempt from section 5
- monitoring inspections of schools judged as requires improvement, having serious weaknesses or requiring special measures
- any inspection carried out in other circumstances if the inspection has no specific designation
- unannounced behaviour inspections

Section 8 inspections of schools judged to be good at their most recent section 5 inspection and those outstanding schools that are not exempt from section 5

These section 8 inspections are either 1 or 2 day inspection and take place approximately every 4 years. The section 8 inspection determines whether the school continues to provide the same good or outstanding standard of education for pupils. The inspection does not result in individual graded judgements nor

does it change the overall effectiveness grade of the school. If there are serious concerns, the section 8 inspection is converted to a full inspection, when inspectors will make the full set of graded judgements required under section 5.

From November 2017, around 20% of previously good schools are subject to a full section 5 inspection instead of a section 8 inspection if our risk assessment tells us that a section 8 inspection would be highly likely to convert. For example, this applies if a school underwent significant change, such as changing its age range, or if the quality of provision may have deteriorated significantly.

From January 2018, section 8 inspections are only converted to a full inspection if there are serious concerns. If a section 8 inspection does not convert, there are additional outcomes if the school remains either good or outstanding, but the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection.

Contacts

If you have any comments or feedback on this publication, please contact Louise Butler on 03000 131 457 or [the schools data and analysis team](#) if you are a member of the public. Press enquiries should be sent to our [press team](#).



Findings from our forthcoming Annual Report will be published on 21 January 2019.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the following for their contribution to this statistical release: Clair Simpson, Chris Foley, Andrew Baker, James Jordan and Kim Chamberlain.

Using this guide

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This will open a search box in the top right hand corner of the page. Type the word you are looking for in the search bar and press enter.

The word will then be highlighted in yellow where every it appears in the guidance. Click on the enter key to move to the next word found.

How to print a copy of the guidance

Click on Ctrl + P or Command + P on a Mac

You have an option to print the full guide or select a page range. You can also choose to save the guide as a PDF.

1. Number of schools open on 31 August 2019. Includes all section 5 and section 8 inspections carried out between 1 September 2018 and 31 August 2019 that had a report published by 31 August 2019. [↵](#)
2. Includes the number of schools improving from requires improvement or inadequate to good or outstanding (plus those not previously inspected that were judged to be good or outstanding); and then deducts the numbers of schools declining from good or outstanding to requires improvement or inadequate (plus those not previously inspected that were judged to require improvement or to be inadequate). [↵](#)

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