Ofsted
Raising standards
improving lives

Official Statistics

Main findings: non-association independent schools inspections and outcomes in England

Published 20 November 2020

Contents
Summary
Introduction
Inspection outcomes profile as at 31 August 2020
Independent school standards
Safeguarding
Revisions
Notes
Glossary
Further information

Print this page

This is the main findings report for the Non-association independent schools inspections and outcomes in England as at 31 August 2020 release. The following are also available:

- underlying data and tables
- methodology
- pre-release access list

Summary

This release contains:

- the most recent inspections and outcomes as at 31 August 2020
- provisional data for inspections completed between 1 September 2019 and 31 August 2020
- revised data for inspections completed between 1 September 2018 and 31 August 2019

Ofsted carried out inspections from 1 September 2019 under the education inspection framework (EIF). This replaced the common inspection framework. Ofsted's new inspection handbook for schools, EIF, sets out the 'Ofsted Inspection Framework' (OIF) which is the framework for inspections of non-association independent schools.

Impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) on this release

Ofsted suspended routine inspections of education and skills providers from March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. Routine inspections resumed in September 2020. As a result, we have not been able to collect new inspection data since March 2020. This means that the inspection outcomes for non-association independent schools in this release are based on inspections that took place between 1 September 2019 and 31 August 2020. Inspection outcomes for the 2019 to 2020 academic year are based on inspections that took place between 1 September 2019 and 31 March 2020.

The inspection outcomes of independent schools have improved slightly, with 79% of inspected schools judged to be good or outstanding at 31 August 2020 compared with 78% at the same point in 2019.

We carried out 97 progress monitoring inspections in 2019/20, of which 57% failed to meet all the standards checked.

The most recent inspection outcomes for non-association independent faith schools continue to have weaker outcomes compared with non-faith schools.

Since EIF inspections were introduced in September 2019, we have inspected just under a quarter of open non-association independent schools, of which 63% have been judged good or outstanding.

Introduction

There are around 2,300 independent schools in England. Of these, Ofsted inspects non-association independent schools (NAIS) under the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Ofsted inspects the schools that are members of an association.

Nearly 1,100 non-association schools are inspected by us, which falls into 2 categories: independent secondary schools (97%) and other independent schools (3%).

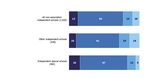
Inspection outcomes profile as at 31 August 2020

77%

of non-association independent schools are good or outstanding

By 31 August 2020, 1,022 non-association independent schools had received a standard inspection. The remaining schools have either recently opened or have moved from another inspectorate to Ofsted and are awaiting their first standard inspection.

The outcomes for non-association independent schools have improved slightly, with 79% of inspected schools judged to be good or outstanding at 31 August 2020 compared with 78% as at 31 August 2019. The best-per-cent of schools are judged regions improvement and 10% inadequate.



1. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.
2. Total number of schools with an overall effectiveness outcome is shown in brackets.
3. Red and 2 colours that a standard inspection outcome is shown in brackets and overall effectiveness judgement.
4. Scroll down to the left the underlying data in our format.

Download as the left the underlying data in our format.

Independent school secondary

Independent secondary schools continue to have stronger inspection outcomes than other independent schools. As at 31 August 2020, 79% of independent secondary schools were judged to be good or outstanding, compared with 78% of other independent schools. However, the gap between other independent schools and secondary schools has narrowed since 31 August 2019. Independent secondary schools and 97% of other independent schools were judged good or outstanding. The gap has continued to narrow since it was at its widest on 31 August 2017 (a 19 percentage point difference).

Figure 1: Overall effectiveness of non-association independent schools at their most recent inspection, as at 31 August 2020

1. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.
2. Total number of schools with an overall effectiveness outcome is shown in brackets.
3. Red and 2 colours that a standard inspection outcome is shown in brackets and overall effectiveness judgement.
4. Scroll down to the left the underlying data in our format.

Download as the left the underlying data in our format.

Regions

Across the 9 regions, the number of non-association independent schools varies greatly. This ranges from 248 schools in London to 31 in the North East.

Figure 2: Overall effectiveness of non-association independent schools at their most recent inspection by region, as at 31 August 2020

1. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.
2. Total number of schools with an overall effectiveness outcome is shown in brackets.
3. Red and 2 colours that a standard inspection outcome is shown in brackets and overall effectiveness judgement.
4. Regions are presented in alphabetical order.
5. Scroll down to the left the underlying data in our format.

Download as the left the underlying data in our format.

The regions with the highest proportion of schools judged good or outstanding are the North East (97%), the East of England (96%) and the East Midlands (95%). The lowest-per-cent of schools are in London (79%) and the South West (79%).

London and the East of England have the highest proportions of inadequate schools, 14% and 13% respectively. However, the regional results are quite variable from year to year. For example, in April 2019, the West Midlands had 14% of its schools inspected as inadequate schools (14%), but, in August 2020, this had fallen to 0%.

Independent faith schools

As at 31 August 2020, we have inspected 289 independent faith schools[1][2] and 733 independent non-faith schools.

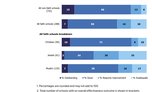
Faith schools accounted for 44% of all inspected non-association schools, followed by Christian schools (36%) and Jewish schools (12%). The number of inspections of Christian schools has increased since we started inspecting in September 2019. This means that the number of pupils attending inspected schools (85,800) is approximately 3 times those attending Christian schools (31,310).

Non-association independent faith schools continue to have weaker inspection outcomes than non-faith schools. At their most recent standard inspection, 74% of faith schools were judged to be good or outstanding, compared with 83% of non-faith schools. Of the inspected schools, 12% were inadequate.

Also, 18% of non-association independent faith schools are judged inadequate compared to just 6% of non-faith schools.

Inspection outcomes are cross-faith groups. Christian schools have better outcomes than other faith schools, with 80% judged good or outstanding. Jewish schools and only 6% of other faith schools. This is the same proportion as seen in previous years.

Figure 3: Overall effectiveness of non-association independent schools at their most recent inspection by faith, as at 31 August 2020



1. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.
2. Total number of schools with an overall effectiveness outcome is shown in brackets.
3. Red and 2 colours that a standard inspection outcome is shown in brackets and overall effectiveness judgement.
4. There are 3 schools classed as 'Other faith'. They are not shown on the breakdown but are included in the total for all faiths.
5. Scroll down to the left the underlying data in our format.

Download as the left the underlying data in our format.

Safeguarding

Effective safeguarding is critical for a school's overall effectiveness judgement. The proportion of schools with effective safeguarding is now at its highest since it was introduced with the common inspection framework in September 2015. As at 31 August 2020, 94% of inspected schools were judged to have met most requirements, compared with 91% at the same point in 2019 and 86% on 31 August 2016.

Inspection reports of independent special schools have effective safeguarding (96%) compared with other independent schools (91%). Faith schools fare better than non-faith schools (96% compared with 91%). Jewish schools are judged to have effective safeguarding compared with 5% of non-faith schools. All schools with ineffective safeguarding were judged as inadequate overall.

Independent school standards

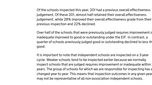
Non-association independent schools are expected to comply with the 8 parts of the government's independent school standards (ISS). At their most recent standard inspection, 17% of schools were found not to meet all the standards, compared with 18% at the same point in the previous year.

If a school fails to meet any of the ISS, it cannot meet standards relating to the quality of education provided to its pupils. Of the schools that fail to meet the standards, most failures are judged to be minor and do not prevent a school from being a high level of non-compliance (17%). The standards relating to the quality of education provided to pupils have the most non-compliance (16%). The standards relating to the welfare, health and safety of pupils are next (12%).

We continue to monitor schools that did not meet all standards at their most recent inspection. These additional inspections are called progress monitoring inspections. We carried out 97 progress monitoring inspections in 2019/20, of which 57% failed to meet all the standards checked. This is a similar proportion to previous years.

EIF inspections outcomes (1 September 2019 to 31 August 2020)

Since the introduction of the EIF on 1 September 2019, there have been 254 standard inspections of non-association independent schools carried out (just under a quarter of open schools). This is a similar proportion to the number suspended in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Of the schools inspected in 2019/20, 5% of schools were judged outstanding, 54% good, 37% requires improvement and 4% inadequate. The proportion of schools judged good or outstanding (59%) is slightly lower than in the previous 2 academic years (60% in both 2019 and 2018/19).



Of the schools inspected this year, 28% had a previous overall effectiveness judgement. Of these 28%, almost half retained their overall effectiveness judgement (49%). Of the remaining schools, 22% declined and 29% improved from their previous inspection and 22% declined.

Over half of the schools that were previously judged requires improvement or inadequate improved their overall effectiveness judgement. This is consistent, a quarter of schools previously judged good or outstanding declined to less than good.

It is important to note that independent schools are inspected on a 3-year cycle. This means that the proportion of schools that have inspected and impact schools that are judged requires improvement or inadequate within 2 years. The group of schools for which we are responsible for inspecting has also changed since the EIF. Some of the schools inspected under the EIF have not had no representation of all non-association independent schools.

The effectiveness of leadership and management had the same proportion of schools judged good or outstanding as overall effectiveness (59%). In 2019/20, under the previous framework, effectiveness of leadership and management had a higher proportion of schools judged good or outstanding. Of the new judgements, behaviour and attitudes and personal development had the highest proportion of schools judged good or outstanding (62%). This is higher than in 2019/20 (60%). Quality of the personal development, behaviour and attitudes in 2019/20 (62%) is also higher than in previous years.

Total number of inspections is shown in brackets.

Download as the left the underlying data in our format.

Revisions

Provisional data introduced that, between 1 September 2018 and 31 August 2019, 450 standard inspections were inspected. Of these, 4 inspections inspection reports that were published by 30 September 2019. Based on published reports, 1 school was in the 2018 to 2019 academic year and 3 in the 2019 to 2020 academic year. Of these, 2 were inspected in 2019 to 2020.

The addition of this extra inspection did not change the profile of overall effectiveness for schools inspected in the 2018 to 2019 academic year.

Revisions have been published to date in this publication in line with Ofsted's revision policy for official statistics.

Notes

Data in this report is from inspections up to 31 August 2020. If the report was published on 31 August 2020, it would include inspection reports published by 30 September 2020. Over the report on the previous inspection. If available is used as the school's most recent inspection. Big data, charts and tables in this report are based on inspections that took place between 1 September 2019 to 31 August 2020 and published by 30 September 2020.

From September 2019, data in this official statistics release reflects judgements made under inspections carried out under sections 8B, and 16(5) and 109(2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The regulations set out the requirements for the inspection of schools in England. The inspections in the schools meets the requirements of the Education Independent School Standards Regulations 2014 referred to as the independent school standards.

The accompanying methodology and quality report for this release sets out the main uses of this data. Further contextual information and arrangements for quality assurance. It also provides information about strengths and limitations of the statistics.

Glossary

Definitions of terms are in our glossary.

Further information

Contact for comments or feedback

If you have any comments or feedback on this publication please contact Anita Patel on 0300 123 1914 or Anita.Patel@ofsted.gov.uk.

Annual report

We will publish findings from our forthcoming Annual Report on 1 December 2020.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the following for their contribution to this statistical release: Alison Bateman, Tim Hitchwood, Helen Woodiss, Richard Smith and Jay Ivina.

1. A school is defined as a faith school based on whether they have declared themselves as such on their Ofsted registration form. Ofsted does not collect this information directly on Get Information About Schools (GIAS).

OGL All content is available under the Open Government Licence v3.0, except where otherwise stated
© Crown copyright