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Official Statistics

Main findings: State-funded schools inspections and outcomes as at 31 August 2022

Updated 15 December 2022

Applies to England

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This is the main findings report for the [state-funded schools inspections and outcomes as at 31 August 2022](#) release. The following are also available:

- [underlying data](#)
- [methodology](#)
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Summary

This release includes:

- schools' most recent inspections and outcomes as at 31 August 2022
- data for inspections completed between 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022 and published by 7 October 2022
- revised data for inspections completed between 1 September 2021 and 31 December 2021

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on this release

Between 1 September 2021 and 18 February 2022, 262 inspections of state-funded schools were [deferred](#) because the schools requested a deferral for COVID-19-related reasons. This equates to 6% of the total number of inspections carried out in 2021/22. Deferred inspections are usually rescheduled as soon as practical, and most were completed by the end of the academic year.

Due to the rapid spread of the Omicron variant of COVID-19 in December 2021, we stopped inspecting schools one week earlier than originally planned, except for when there were safeguarding concerns. This was to allow schools time to put COVID-19 contingency measures in place ready for the spring term in January 2022.

Key findings

Eighty-eight per cent of all schools are good or outstanding.

Only 17% of previously exempt schools that had a graded inspection this year remained outstanding.

Seventy per cent of schools previously judged to require improvement improved to good or outstanding.

Schools at their most recent inspection

Eighty-eight per cent of all schools are good or outstanding.

Overall, 88% of all state-funded schools were judged good or outstanding at their most recent inspection. The proportion has increased from 86% in August 2021, and had been stable at 86% since 2019.

The proportion of good and outstanding primary schools increased from 88% to 89% this year, and the proportion of good and outstanding secondary schools increased from 77% to 80%.

Figure 1: Most recent overall effectiveness of schools, over time



Note: Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.

Data for each point in time has been revised and is now based on the current methodology, to include predecessor schools.

The number of requires improvement schools in earlier years includes schools that were judged satisfactory at their most recent inspection at that time.

Dotted lines on the chart indicate a change to the inspection framework in January and September 2012, September 2015 and September 2019.

Number of schools in brackets

View [data in an accessible table format](#).

Sixty-four per cent of all schools have not had a graded inspection in the last five academic years, and 14% have not had one in the last 10 academic years. This is due to a combination of factors, including:

- most inspections of good schools since 2015 have been ungraded inspections
- the government made outstanding primary and secondary schools exempt from routine inspection between 2012 to 2020
- inspections were paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- maintained schools that become academies are not inspected again until their third year as an academy

In 2021/22 we fully restarted all types of inspection. We resumed routine inspections of all outstanding schools and increased the proportion of good schools that receive a graded inspection. This means that the length of time since each school's last full graded inspection will gradually decrease.

Inspections between 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022

This academic year we have carried out:

- 2,325 graded inspections. This includes ungraded and monitoring inspections that converted to graded inspections
- 2,093 ungraded inspections
- 200 monitoring and urgent inspections

Of the 2,325 graded inspections that we have carried out this year, 370 more schools improved to good or outstanding from requires improvement or inadequate than declined to requires improvement or inadequate from good or outstanding.

This is the largest positive balance of outcomes that we have seen since 2015/16. It is the reason for the increase in the percentage of schools judged to be good or outstanding at their most recent inspection over the last year, which has gone from 86% to 88%. A key factor in this change is the large number of schools that improved from requires improvement to good this year.

Figure 2: The balance between the number of schools becoming good or outstanding and the number becoming requires improvement or inadequate



Note: Includes the number of schools that improved 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 number of schools that declined from good or outstanding to requires improvement or inadequate (plus those not previously inspected that were judged to require improvement or to be inadequate).

The dashed lines indicate that there were changes to the inspection framework in September 2015 and September 2019.

Number of schools in brackets

View [data in an accessible table format](#).

Inspections of previously exempt outstanding schools

Only 17% of previously exempt schools that had a graded inspection this year remained outstanding.

Between May 2012 and November 2020, outstanding primary and secondary schools were exempt from routine inspection. In this period we could still inspect these schools if we had cause for concern.

In 2021/22, we inspected nearly 500 schools that were previously exempt. Schools that had not been inspected since September 2015 had a graded inspection. Of these, 17% retained their outstanding grade, while 21% were judged requires improvement or inadequate. The remainder were judged to be good.

Fourteen per cent of previously exempt primary schools inspected this year remained outstanding, compared with 25% of secondary schools. Twenty-one per cent of the primary schools declined to requires improvement or inadequate, with the same proportion seen in secondary schools.

Figure 3: Outcomes of graded inspections of previously exempt schools in 2021/22



Note: Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.

Number of schools in brackets

View [data in an accessible table format](#).

Schools graded outstanding after September 2015 received ungraded inspections. These inspections cannot change the school's overall effectiveness grade, but can flag concerns that the school may no longer be outstanding. We carried out 130 ungraded inspections of previously exempt schools, and identified this concern in 59% of them. These schools will receive a graded inspection about 12 months after the ungraded inspection.

Figure 4: Outcomes of ungraded inspections of previously exempt schools in 2021/22



Note: Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.

Number of schools in brackets

Number of schools in brackets

View [data in an accessible table format](#).

For more detail on inspections of previously exempt schools, see the statistical commentary '[Return to inspection: the story \(so far\) of previously exempt outstanding schools](#)'.

Inspections of schools previously judged to be good

We carried out 2,726 inspections of previously good schools this year. Seventy per cent of these (1,898) were ungraded inspections where the school remained good. Five per cent showed signs of improving to outstanding and 17% were judged to remain good with concerns. These schools will receive a graded inspection next, within 12 months.

Another 793 schools received a graded inspection. These include ungraded inspections that converted to a graded one and urgent inspections that became a graded inspection. Most (749) were scheduled as graded inspections in the first place.

Fifty-eight per cent of schools were judged to remain good at these graded inspections, compared with 45% in 2019/20. Four per cent improved to outstanding and 38% declined to requires improvement or inadequate, compared with eight per cent that improved and 48% that declined in 2019/20.

Outcomes were poorer for secondary schools than primary schools. Forty-eight per cent of secondary schools declined to requires improvement or inadequate, compared with 35% of primary schools. See '[Schools commentary July 2022: schools that require improvement](#)' for more detail.

Figure 5: Outcomes of graded inspections of previously good schools in 2021/22 by phase



Note: Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.

Number of schools in brackets

View [data in an accessible table format](#).

Ungraded inspections of good schools cannot change a school's overall effectiveness grade, but they can flag that the school might improve to outstanding at its next graded inspection, or that there are concerns that the school may no longer be good. These schools will receive a graded inspection next. Ungraded inspections of good schools indicated that 5% might improve to outstanding, and concerns were identified at a further 17%.

Figure 6: Outcomes of ungraded inspections of previously good schools in 2021/22 by phase



Note: Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.

Number of schools in brackets

View [data in an accessible table format](#).

Inspections of schools previously judged to require improvement

Seventy per cent of schools previously judged to require improvement improved to good or outstanding.

Of the graded inspections that we carried out this year, 828 were inspections of primary and secondary schools that had previously been judged requires improvement. Of these, 70% had improved to good or outstanding, compared with 56% in 2019/20.

Improvement was most noticeable among secondary schools. This year, 66% of secondary schools improved from requires improvement compared with 42% in 2019/20. Of the primary schools inspected this year, 72% improved from requires improvement compared with 62% in 2019/20.

Figure 7: Grade movement for secondary schools previously judged to require improvement, by year



Note: We have not compared the data with the 2020/21 academic year, as we only carried out a small number of inspections during this year.

The dashed lines indicate that there were changes to the inspection framework in September 2015 and September 2019.

Number of schools in brackets

View [data in an accessible table format](#).

Revisions to previous release

The provisional data in the previous release related to inspections that took place between 1 September 2021 and 31 December 2021, with the reports published by 7 February 2022. Revised data for inspections in this period is provided in tables 1R and 2R of the data file accompanying this release: [State-funded schools inspections and outcomes as at 31 August 2022, charts and tables](#).

This revised data includes an additional 43 full inspections that had not been published by 7 February 2022 but were published by 7 October 2022. These inspections resulted in the following number of additional judgements at each overall effectiveness grade:

- 0 outstanding
10 good

- 17 requires improvement
- 16 inadequate

Table 1: Changes in overall effectiveness proportions for schools inspected between 1 September 2021 and 31 December 2021

Ofsted phase	Provisional % outstanding	Revised % outstanding	Percentage point change in % outstanding	Provisional % good	Revised % good	Percentage point change in % good	Provisional % requires improvement	Revised % requires improvement	Percentage point change in % requires improvement	Provisional % inadequate	Revised % inadequate	Percentage point change in % inadequate
Nursery	67	67	0	33	33	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Primary	5	5	0	61	60	-1	28	28	0	5	6	1
Secondary	10	9	-1	59	56	-3	27	29	2	4	6	2
Special	5	4	-1	33	31	-2	33	31	-2	29	35	6
Alternative provision	17	17	0	17	17	0	33	33	0	33	33	0
All schools	7	7	0	60	58	-2	28	29	1	6	7	1

Provisional data includes inspections published up to 7 February 2022 and revised data includes inspections published up to 7 October 2022.

We publish revisions to data in this publication in line with our [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. They 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](#). We carried out these inspections between 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022. This release includes all inspections published by 7 October 2022. It also includes the most recent inspections and outcomes for all schools that we have inspected, as at 31 August 2022.

Throughout this release, we use the term 'schools' to cover all local authority maintained schools, state-funded academies and non-maintained special schools in England that section 5 of the Education Act 2005 requires us to inspect.

We carried out inspections between September 2015 and August 2019 under the [common inspection framework](#).

Since September 2019, we have carried out inspections 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 the strengths and limitations of the statistics.

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

Graded, ungraded, monitoring and urgent inspections

Ofsted carries out inspections under sections 5 and 8 of the Education Act 2005.

We are required to inspect at prescribed intervals all schools to which section 5 applies. The regulations set the interval for graded inspections 'within 5 school years from the end of the school year in which the last inspection took place'. This interval was temporarily extended by 18 months when inspections were paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Section 8 enables His Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) to carry out inspections for a range of purposes. This includes monitoring visits to schools that are in a category of concern following a graded inspection. Inspectors 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.

Inspections carried out under section 8 include:

- ungraded inspections of schools judged to be good or outstanding at their most recent graded inspection
- monitoring inspections of schools judged as requires improvement, having serious weaknesses or requiring special measures
- urgent inspections, which include those with no formal designation and unannounced inspections in response to concerns about behaviour in a school

Ungraded inspections

Ungraded inspections are usually 2-day inspections, although some small primary schools may receive a 1-day inspection. These take place approximately every 4 years. The ungraded inspection determines whether the school continues to provide the same good or outstanding standard of education for pupils. It does not result in individual graded judgements. It also does not change the school's overall effectiveness grade. If there are serious concerns, we convert the ungraded inspection to a graded inspection, where inspectors will make the full set of graded judgements.

Since November 2017, some previously good schools are subject to a graded inspection instead of an ungraded inspection if our risk assessment tells us that an ungraded inspection would be highly likely to convert to a graded inspection. For example, this applies if a school has undergone significant change, such as changing its age range, or if we have concerns that the quality of provision may have deteriorated significantly.

Since January 2018, ungraded inspections are only converted to a graded inspection if there are serious concerns. If an ungraded inspection is not converted, there are additional outcomes if the school remains either good or outstanding, and the next inspection will be a graded inspection.

Between May 2012 and November 2020, outstanding primary and secondary schools were exempt from routine inspection. In November 2020, the government lifted its exemption. The [school inspection handbook](#) provides further details about inspections of formerly exempt outstanding schools.

Glossary

Definitions of terms are in the [statistical glossary](#).

Further information

Contacts

If you are a member of the public and have any comments or feedback on this publication, contact Louise Butler on 03000 131 457 or the schools data and analysis team on inspectioninsight@ofsted.gov.uk.

Press enquiries should be sent to our press team on pressenquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the following for their contribution to this statistical release: Chris Foley, Matthew Spencer and Sam Trapp.

Annex: data tables for figures

Data for figure 1: Most recent overall effectiveness of schools, over time

	Number of schools	% Outstanding	% Good	% Requires improvement	% Inadequate
As at 31 Aug 2010	22,073	18	50	30	3
As at 31 Aug 2011	21,933	20	50	29	2
As at 31 Aug 2012	21,970	20	48	28	3
As at 31 Aug 2013	21,732	19	57	20	3
As at 31 Aug 2014	21,750	19	60	17	4
As at 31 Aug 2015	21,758	20	62	15	3
As at 31 Aug 2016	21,664	20	66	11	3
As at 31 Aug 2017	21,707	21	66	10	4
As at 31 Aug 2018	21,762	21	65	11	4
As at 31 Aug 2019	21,807	20	66	10	4
As at 31 Aug 2020	21,776	19	67	10	4
As at 31 Aug 2021	21,724	19	67	10	3
As at 31 Aug 2022	21,725	18	70	9	3

See [Figure 1](#)

Data for figure 2: The balance between the number of schools becoming good or outstanding and the number becoming requires improvement or inadequate

Academic year	Number of schools	Balance
2014/15	5,041	661
2015/16	2,401	918
2016/17	2,821	163
2017/18	2,466	-209
2018/19	2,575	161
2019/20	1,551	54
2020/21	97	32
2021/22	2,325	370

See [Figure 2](#)

Data for figure 3: Outcomes of graded inspections of previously exempt schools in 2021/22

Phase	Number of schools	% Outstanding	% Good	% Requires improvement	% Inadequate
Secondary	104	25	54	14	7
Primary	263	14	65	18	3
All previously exempt schools	367	17	62	17	4

See [Figure 3](#)

Data for figure 4: Outcomes of ungraded inspections of previously exempt schools in 2021/22

Phase	Number of schools	% School remains outstanding	% School remains outstanding concerns
Secondary	23	43	57
Primary	107	40	60
All previously exempt schools	130	41	59

See [Figure 4](#)

Data for figure 5: Outcomes of graded inspections of previously good schools in 2021/22 by phase

Phase	Number of schools	% Outstanding	% Good	% Requires improvement	% Inadequate
All schools	793	4	58	28	10

Nursery	7	43	43	14	0
Primary	601	3	62	27	8
Secondary	141	5	47	33	15
Special	37	3	35	30	32
Alternative provision	7	14	57	14	14

See [Figure 5](#)

Data for figure 6: Outcomes of ungraded inspections of previously good schools in 2021/22 by phase

Phase	Number of schools	% School remains good: improving	% School remains good	% School remains good: concerns
All schools	1,898	5	78	17
Nursery	14	14	79	7
Primary	1,532	4	77	18
Secondary	279	6	82	11
Special	52	10	79	12
Alternative provision	21	5	67	29

See [Figure 6](#)

Data for figure 7: Grade movement for secondary schools previously judged to require improvement, by year

Academic year	Number of schools	% Improved to good or outstanding	% Remained requires improvement	% Declined to inadequate
2014/15	376	45	39	16
2015/16	302	55	29	16
2016/17	262	44	34	22
2017/18	183	46	44	9
2018/19	204	46	38	17
2019/20	134	42	41	17
2020/21	13	85	0	15
2021/22	230	66	25	9

See [Figure 7](#)

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