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Official Statistics

Main findings: childcare providers and inspections as at 31 March 2025

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Applies to England

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This is the main findings report for the [childcare providers and inspections as at 31 March 2025](#) release. The following are also available:

- underlying data
- methodology
- pre-release access list

Summary

This release includes:

- the number of Ofsted-registered childcare providers on 31 March 2025 and their most recent inspection outcomes
- data on inspections and regulatory activity carried out until 31 March 2025

Summary of findings

On 31 March 2025:

- 60,400 childcare providers were registered with Ofsted, down by 1,370 (2%) since 31 March 2024. Most of this decline was due to a fall in the number of childminders
- the number of childminders registered with Ofsted had decreased by 1,250 (5%) since 31 March 2024, to 25,300 childminders. The percentage decline seen was in line with the previous financial year
- 1.29 million childcare places were offered by providers registered on the Early Years Register (EYR), up by 17,400 (1%) since 31 March 2024. Most of this increase was due to a rise in the number of places offered by childcare on non-domestic premises providers
- 98% of childcare providers had been judged good or outstanding at their most recent inspection, an increase of less than 1 percentage point since 31 March 2024

Introduction

The early years and childcare sector is primarily made up of private nurseries, pre-schools and childminders. The majority of childcare provision is registered directly with Ofsted, and the aggregated figures represent this. Data on provision registered with childminder agencies can be found in the [childminder agencies section of this page](#).

In this publication, we refer to 4 types of early years provision:

Childminders

These are people who look after children for payment or reward. Childminders have the option to register either with Ofsted or with a childminder agency.

In this report, 'childminders' includes both childminders with and without domestic premises; they are called 'childminders' and 'childminders without domestic premises' respectively in data files.

Childcare on non-domestic premises

These are nurseries, pre-schools, holiday clubs and other group-based settings.

Home childcarers

These are individuals who care for children wholly or mainly in the child's own home (for example, nannies).

Childcare on domestic premises

These are providers where 4 or more people look after children together in a home that is not the child's. Providers of childcare on domestic premises have the option to register either with Ofsted or with a childminder agency.

Further information about provider types is available in the [glossary](#).

Childcare in early years is also provided in the schools sector. It is offered in state-funded schools and independent schools. For more information, see the [early years provision in the schools sector section of this page](#).

Providers, places and registers

Number of providers

There were 60,400 childcare providers registered with Ofsted on 31 March 2025, down by 1,370 (2%) since last year.

The decrease in the number of providers in 2024–25 is consistent with the previous financial year (2023–24).

Figure 1: Childcare providers registered with Ofsted as at 31 March 2025, by provider type

Change since
31 March 2024

Childcare on non-domestic premises 27,500 providers	+470
Childminders 25,300 providers	-1,250
Home childcarers 7,360 providers	-600
Childcare on domestic premises 220 providers	+4

See [Notes](#) for rounding guidelines.

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

Joiners and leavers in the childcare sector over time

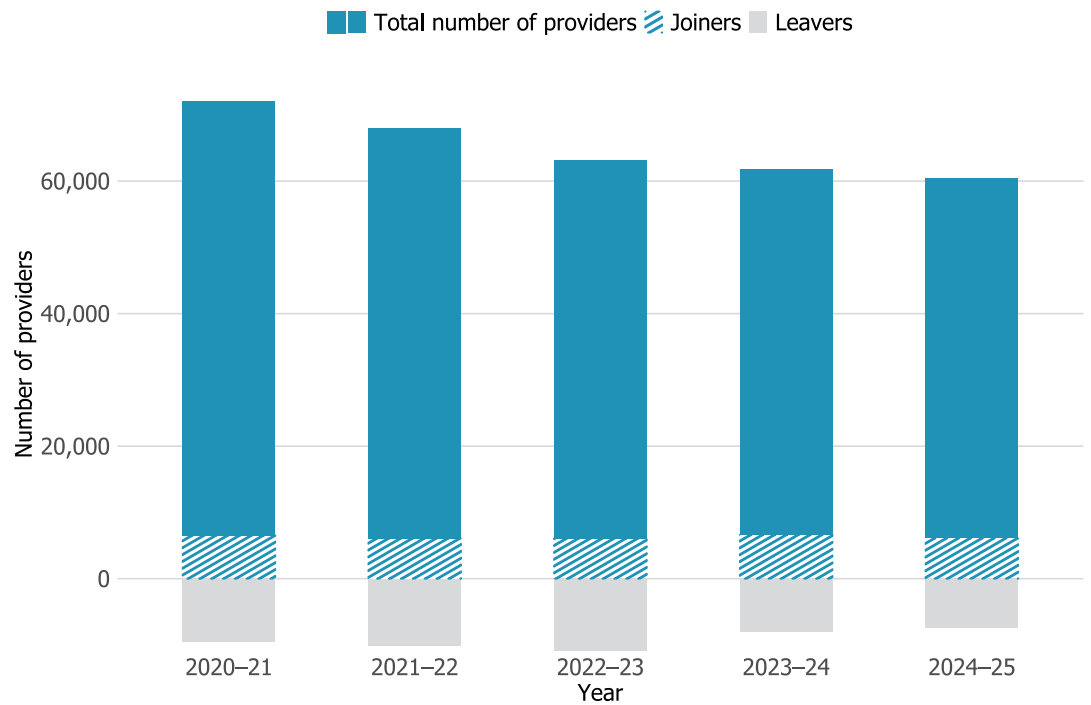
The number of active providers on our registers has been falling since before March 2020. This is because more providers are leaving the childcare sector than joining (see Figure 2) and is mainly due to a fall in the number of childminders [\[footnote 1\]](#).

In 2024–25, 7,460 childcare providers left the sector and 6,090 joined, giving a net decrease of 1,370 providers. Most of this decline was due to a fall in the number of childminders.

In 2024–25, 1,620 childminders joined Ofsted's registers while 2,870 left, giving a net decrease of 1,250 (5%). Although more childminders joined and more left during 2023–24 (1,960 joining and 3,290 leaving respectively), the net percentage decrease was similar at 1,340 (5%).

The number of childcare on non-domestic premises providers registered has increased by 470 (2%) since 31 March 2024.

Figure 2: Joiners and leavers in the childcare sector, by financial year



Most leavers are provider resignations, and most joiners are new provider registrations. Some will be providers moving registers from the EYR to the Childcare Register (CR) or resigning from one register but remaining on the other.

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

Places

On 31 March 2025, there were 1.29 million childcare places offered by providers registered on the EYR, up by 17,400 (1%) since last year.

1.13 million of these childcare places were offered by providers of childcare on non-domestic premises, up by 26,100 (2%) since last year.

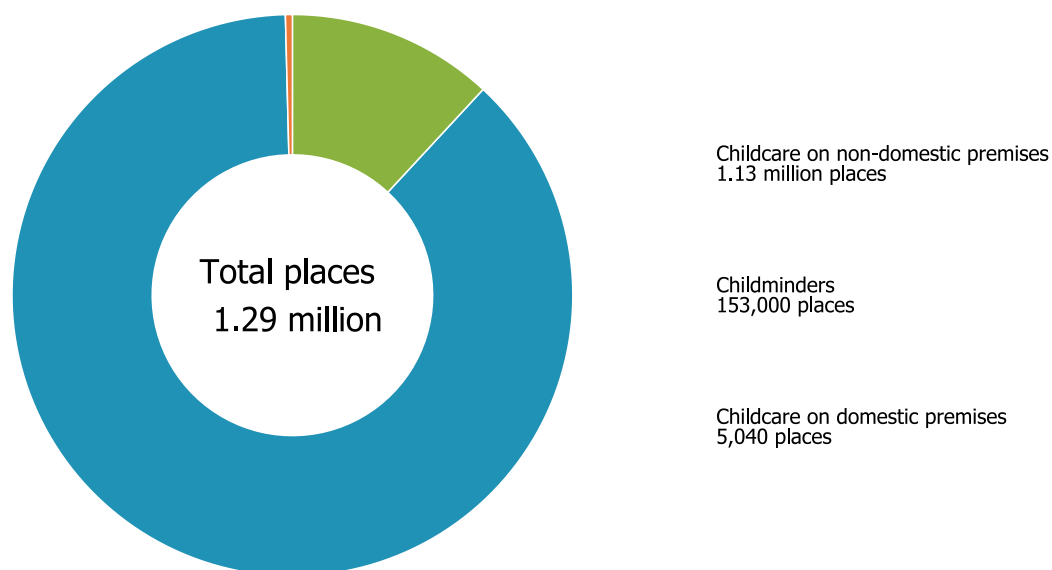
Data on places is reported for the 46,900 providers registered on the EYR and is first gathered at registration and updated at inspection.

The number of childcare places has not changed at the same rate as the number of providers. This is because the declining number of providers is mostly due to the falling number of childminders, and childminders offer fewer childcare places than other providers on average. While the number of providers has decreased by 2% since 31 March 2024, the number of places has increased by 1%.

For methodological notes on places data, see the [methodology and quality report](#)

that accompanies this release.

Figure 3: Number of childcare places offered by providers on the EYR as at 31 March 2025, by provider type



See [Notes](#) for rounding guidelines.

Places include children up to age 7 where providers are registered on both the EYR and the CR.

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

Registers

On 31 March 2025, 46,900 (78%) of Ofsted-registered childcare providers were on the EYR. The remaining 22% were only registered on the CR.

Childcare providers can be registered on one or more of the following registers:

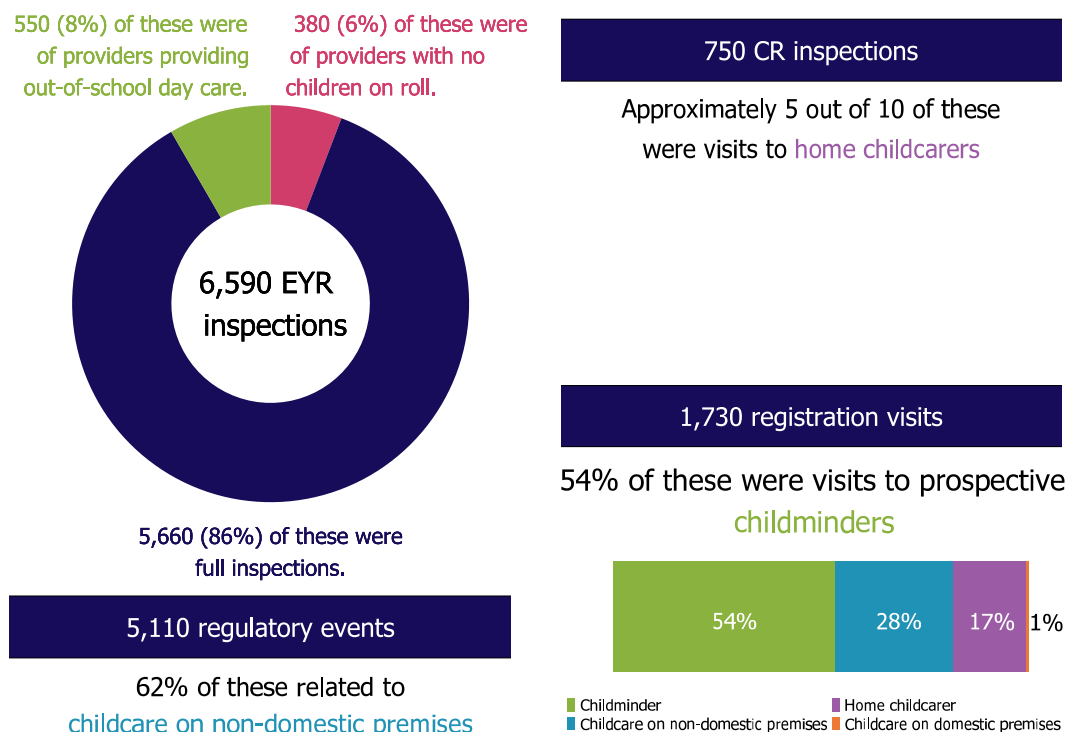
- Early Years Register (EYR)
- Childcare Register (CR), which is divided into 2 parts:
 - compulsory
 - voluntary

Further information about these registers is provided in the [glossary](#).

Inspections and regulatory activity between 1 September 2024 and 31 March 2025

Around 5,660 events were full inspections of providers registered on the EYR. The remaining 930 inspections of providers registered on the EYR were inspections of out-of-school settings or of providers with no children on roll at the time of inspection.

Figure 4: Inspections and regulatory activity between 1 September 2024 and 31 March 2025



See [Notes](#) for rounding guidelines.

Our agreement with the government is to inspect 10% of providers on the CR each financial year.

The regulatory events include face-to-face events as well as remote events via telephone call.

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

Outcomes of full EYR inspections between 1 September 2024 and 31 March 2025

Of the 5,660 full inspections of providers registered on the EYR carried

out since 1 September 2024, 91% resulted in a judgement of good or outstanding.

Of the inspections that were previously judged requires improvement or inadequate, 81% improved to good or outstanding at their next full inspection.

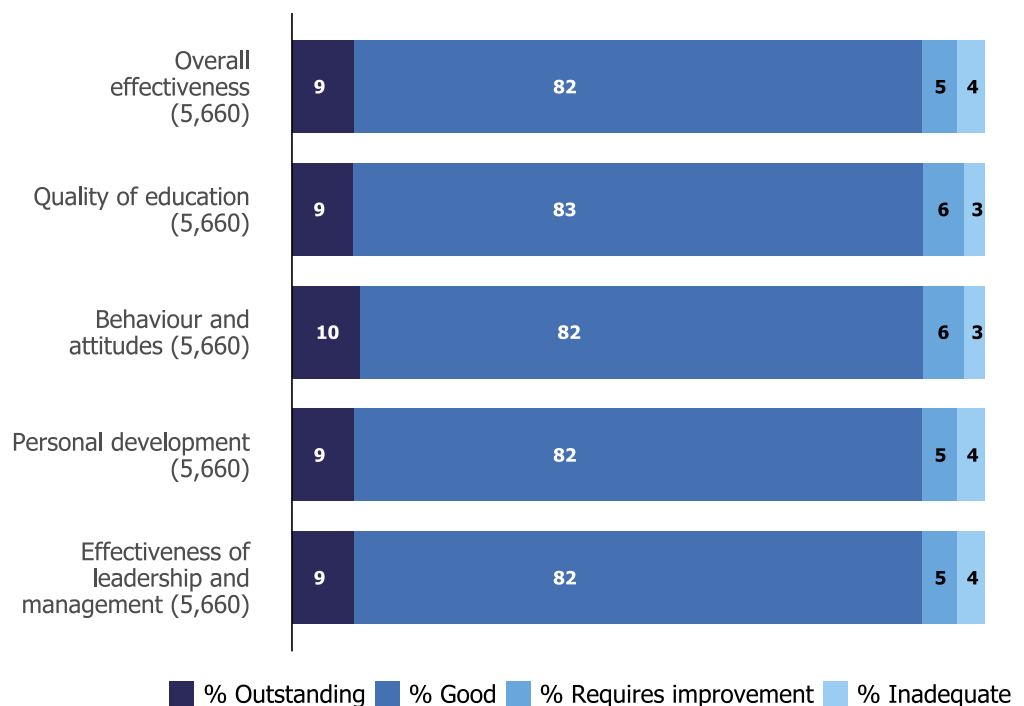
Key judgements

As part of a full inspection under the [education inspection framework \(EIF\)](#), an early years provider is graded on 4 key judgements:

- quality of education
- behaviour and attitudes
- personal development
- leadership and management

Of the full EYR inspections carried out since 1 September 2024, 91% resulted in a judgement of either good or outstanding overall. All these inspections were good or outstanding for their quality of education and behaviour and attitudes.

Figure 5: Overall effectiveness and key judgement outcomes of full EYR inspections carried out between 1 September 2024 and 31 March 2025



Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.

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

Providers' inspection outcomes are likely to vary, depending on their previous overall effectiveness judgement. Providers that were previously judged good or outstanding were more likely to receive a good or outstanding judgement at their next inspection. Therefore, the overall effectiveness profile of providers may vary year on year, depending on which have been selected for inspection in the year to date.

Of the full EYR inspections carried out, 1,460 (26%) were first inspections, and 490 (9%) were inspections of providers previously judged requires improvement or inadequate.

Safeguarding

Of the 5,660 full EYR inspections carried out since 1 September 2024, 97% resulted in a judgement of effective for safeguarding.

While inspectors do not give a separate grade for safeguarding practice, there is a written judgement in the inspection report on whether arrangements for safeguarding children are effective.

Most recent inspections of providers on the EYR

Of the EYR providers that have received a full inspection, 98% were judged good or outstanding at their most recent one. This is an increase of less than 1 percentage point since 31 March 2024.

Changes to the proportion of providers judged good and outstanding are influenced by providers previously judged requires improvement or inadequate:

- improving at their next inspection to good or outstanding
- ceasing to provide childcare, through resignation or cancellation.

On 31 March 2025, 36,100 (77%) of eligible providers on the EYR had received a full inspection under the [EIF](#).

Childminder agencies

Childminders and childcare on domestic premises providers can choose to register with Ofsted directly or to register with a childminder agency.

Ofsted inspects childminder agencies. The childminder agencies are responsible for carrying out annual quality assurance visits to the providers who are registered with them.

Childminder agencies are only eligible for inspection when they have providers on roll. There are only 2 overall effectiveness inspection outcomes: effective and ineffective. On 31 March 2025, there were 7 childminder agencies registered with Ofsted. Of these, 4 had providers on roll and were therefore eligible for inspection. Of these, 3 have been inspected. All were judged to be effective.

Early years provision in the schools sector

Early years provision can also be offered by state-funded and independent schools. For more information on school inspections and outcomes, see our statistics on [state-funded school inspections and outcomes](#). For more information on non-association independent school inspections and outcomes, see our [statistics on non-association independent schools](#).

Please note that Ofsted only inspects non-association independent schools. The [Independent Schools Inspectorate](#) inspects association independent schools.

Notes

We explain the main uses of this data and the arrangements for quality assurance, and provide further contextual information, 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.

Rounding

Numbers in this report are rounded as follows:

- numbers under 100 are not rounded
- numbers between 100 and 1,000 are rounded to 2 significant figures
- numbers over 1,000 are rounded to 3 significant figures

Education inspection framework

On 1 September 2019, we began inspecting under the [EIF](#). The EIF helps to support consistency across inspections of early years and childcare providers, maintained schools, academies, non-association independent schools and further education and skills providers in England. We evaluate 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, taking into account 4 judgements:

- quality of education
- behaviour and attitudes
- personal development
- effectiveness of leadership and management

Glossary

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

Further information

We publish the following information on the inspection of early years providers:

- [early years and childcare statistics](#)
- [EIF](#)
- [framework for the regulation of providers on the Childcare Register](#)

Contact for comments or feedback

If you have any comments or feedback on this publication, contact Anita Patel on

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the following for their contribution to this statistical release: Richard Smith, Anna Ruddock, Alison Merrett and Mundeep Gill.

Annex: data tables for figures

This section contains the underlying data in an accessible table format for all figures.

Data for Figure 1: Childcare providers registered with Ofsted as at 31 March 2025, by provider type

Provider type	Number of providers on 31 March 2025	Change since 31 March 2024
Childcare on non-domestic premises	27,500	+470
Childminders	25,300	-1,250
Home childcarers	7,360	-600
Childcare on domestic premises	220	+4

See [Figure 1](#).

Data for Figure 2: Joiners and leavers in the childcare sector, by financial year

Year	Joiners	Leavers	Total number of providers
2020–21	6,550	9,570	72,000
2021–22	6,090	10,100	68,000
2022–23	6,090	10,900	63,200
2023–24	6,630	8,070	61,800

2024–25 6,090 7,460 60,400

See [Figure 2](#).

Data for Figure 3: Number of childcare places offered by providers on the EYR as at 31 March 2025, by provider type

Provider type	Number of places on 31 March 2025	% of total places on the EYR
All providers	1.29 million	100%
Childcare on non-domestic premises	1.13 million	88%
Childminders	153,000	12%
Childcare on domestic premises	5,040	less than 1%

See [Figure 3](#).

Data for Figure 4: Inspections and regulatory activity between 1 September 2024 and 31 March 2025

Activity type	Number of events	Details
EYR inspections	6,590	5,660 (86%) of these were full inspections. 550 (8%) were visits to providers providing out-of-school day care. 380 (6%) were visits to providers with no children on roll.
CR inspections	750	Approximately 5 out of 10 of these were visits to home childcarers.
Registration visits	1,730	54% of these were visits to prospective childminders intending to register on the EYR or CR. 28% were visits to childcare on non-domestic premises providers. 17% were visits to home childcarers. 1% were visits to childcare on domestic premises providers.
Regulatory events	5,110	62% of these related to childcare on non-domestic premises providers.

See [Figure 4](#).

Data for Figure 5: Overall effectiveness and key judgement outcomes of full EYR inspections carried out between 1 September 2024 and 31 March 2025

Judgement outcome	Number of inspections	% providers judged outstanding	% providers judged good	% providers judged requires improvement	% providers judged inadequate
Overall effectiveness	5,660	9	82	5	4
Quality of education	5,660	9	83	6	3
Behaviour and attitudes	5,660	10	82	6	3
Personal development	5,660	9	82	5	4
Effectiveness of leadership and management	5,660	9	82	5	4

<>

See [Figure 5](#).

1. [‘A focus on childminders’](#), Ofsted, September 2023. [↩](#)

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