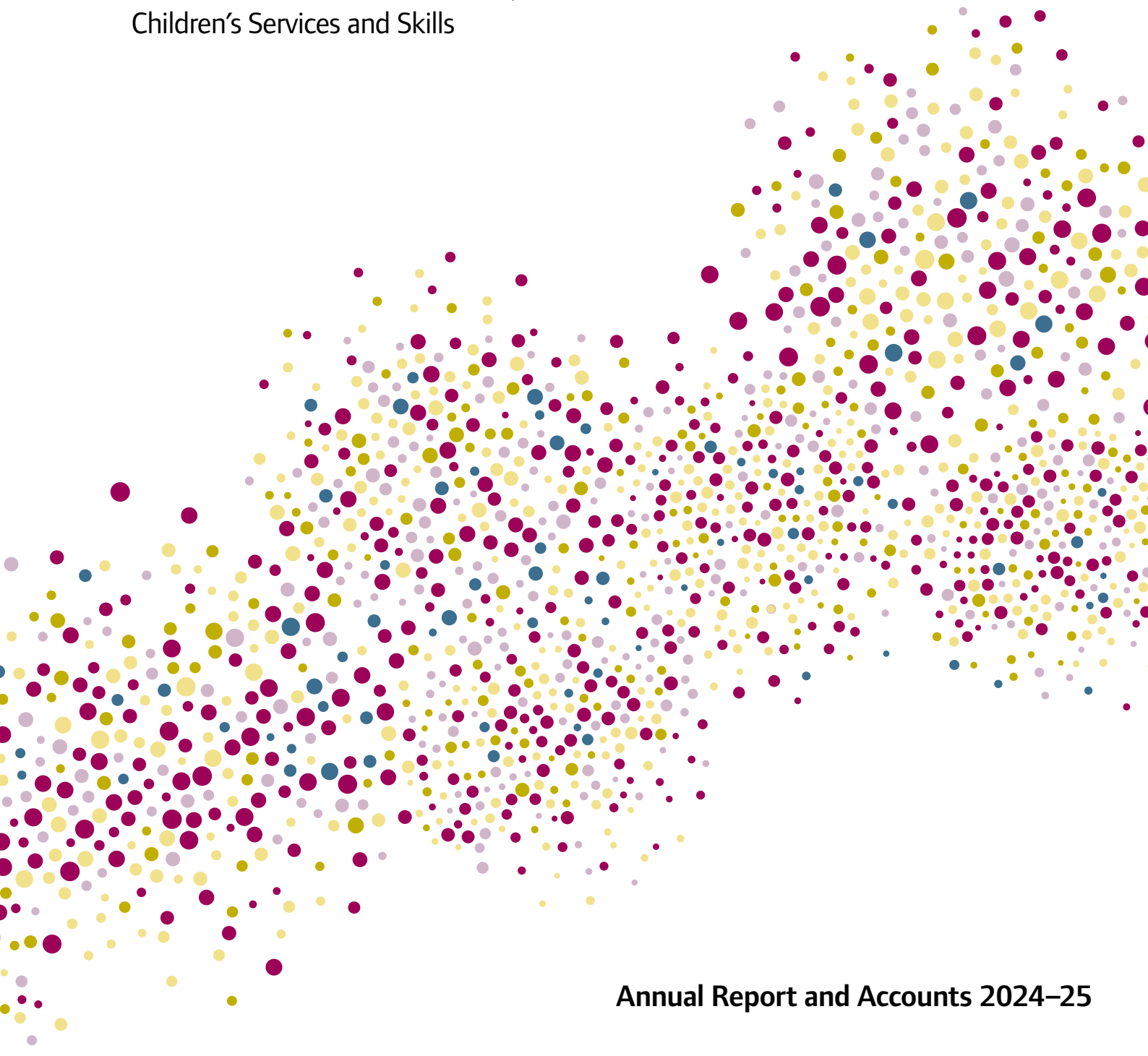


Office for Standards in Education,
Children's Services and Skills



Annual Report and Accounts 2024–25

Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills

Annual report and accounts 2024–25

For the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

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Overview by His Majesty's Chief Inspector

I am honoured to present this Annual Report and Accounts. It is my second as His Majesty's Chief Inspector and the first where I have been in the role for the full year. It covers an incredibly busy year for Ofsted, for the sectors we inspect and regulate, and for the country as a whole.

The two great themes of the year have been 'listening' and 'evolving'.

When I joined Ofsted, I described my intention to seek the views of the professionals we inspect and regulate and the parents, carers and children on whose behalf we do this work.

As the financial year began, our Big Listen was already underway. By the time it closed, we had heard from over 30,000 people and organisations. It was the biggest consultation in Ofsted's history, leading to immediate changes and ongoing reforms.

In April, the chair of Ofsted's board and I appointed Dame Christine Gilbert to lead an independent learning review. I want to thank Dame Christine again for carrying out her work with professionalism and integrity. The review complemented the Big Listen, helping to shape our future plans. We have since implemented many of her recommendations, and this work continues.

Listening to all our stakeholders meant opening ourselves to criticism, particularly from the education sector, which was calling for real and meaningful changes to the way Ofsted works. So even as we were analysing the responses to the Big Listen, we were able to take immediate steps to evolve inspection practice, while working hard to embed our values of professionalism, courtesy, empathy and respect across all areas of our work.

We have long recognised that some changes can be made unilaterally. But more fundamental change is only possible within the context of wider reform to the accountability system of which we are a part. As we considered the responses to the Big Listen, and developed our proposals for reform, the country elected a new government. Although Ofsted is independent, we undoubtedly play a part in delivering the government's priorities for education and social care. Among its manifesto commitments, Labour pledged to remove the 'overall effectiveness' grade and to introduce report cards. We moved quickly to support the new government with this agenda.

By September, we had worked with the Department for Education to remove the overall effectiveness grade from school inspections. We also pledged to develop and introduce report cards. These commitments came alongside many other reforms in our response to the Big Listen.¹

By the end of the financial year, we had published our proposals to improve our education inspections and begun consulting on them. So, we concluded the year as we had started it – by listening. Our proposals include new grades, report cards and tailored toolkits for different types of education provision. I believe they will be better for the sectors, for parents, and – most importantly – for children. As I write, we are analysing more than 6,500 responses to our detailed consultation.

But the ongoing process of evolution at Ofsted doesn't just hinge on formal exercises like the Big Listen or our education consultation.

1. 'Hearing feedback, accepting criticism and building a better Ofsted: the response to the Big Listen', Ofsted, September 2024.

Our work as the regulator and inspectorate in social care is often less heralded than our education role – but it is critical and transformative. Our stated focus on the most vulnerable children is best exemplified through our work in social care. Whether inspecting and regulating children’s homes, or the services of local authorities, we put the needs of children first. We continue to develop our practice to make sure we are serving their needs to the very best of our ability.

This year, we began inspections in a new area: supported accommodation. Unregulated and not inspected for many years, the arrangements for older children on the cusp of leaving the care system have been sporadic at best and often very lax indeed. This year we carried out 50 full inspections of supported accommodation providers.

We are also adapting our organisation and making use of new technology and techniques to develop our work. We have launched the Ofsted Academy, an initiative to improve our training, increase consistency, highlight best practice and become more transparent. We have established six national hubs to further improve our consistency and training, and to create more national oversight. We have held several complaints panels with external sector representatives to review whether we have handled a sample of complaints fairly and in line with our policy. And we continue to develop our ‘area insights’ work, including our award-winning ‘childcare deserts and oases’ project to model access to childcare in different parts of the country.²

We are determined to raise standards and improve lives for all, with disadvantaged and vulnerable children and learners at the heart of what we do. We’ve set out proposals to thread the theme of ‘inclusion’ through all the other areas we evaluate on education inspections. But we’re also aware of the power of Ofsted’s voice. By talking about inclusion, and raising the issue in the press, on stages and in publications, we can shift the dial and influence the national conversation – in the same way we did for the importance of curriculum over the last decade.

None of this work would have been possible without the incredible Ofsted staff and inspectors who do vital work in the best interests of children and learners every day. I am hugely grateful to them for their efforts.

I also want to thank the Ofsted board for their support and advice throughout the year. In particular, I want to thank Dame Christine Ryan for nearly five years’ service as chair of the board, which came to an end in March this year. Her help has been invaluable.

Dame Christine Gilbert has now been appointed to chair the Ofsted board and I’m very much looking forward to working with her in the future.

In the meantime, Sir Hamid Patel has stepped up as interim chair, pending Dame Christine Gilbert’s arrival. Sir Hamid has my gratitude both for taking on the interim role, and for a career of exemplary service to education.

I would like to end by thanking the committed professionals who care for England’s children and educate learners of all ages. They make an immeasurable difference to the lives and future prospects of millions of our citizens. As Ofsted continues to evolve, we will continue to listen – to them, to parents and carers and to the children we all ultimately serve.

Sir Martyn Oliver
His Majesty’s Chief Inspector

9 July 2025

2. ‘Childcare accessibility by neighbourhood’, Ofsted and the Office for National Statistics, June 2024.

Overview by the Chair

This has been a highly significant year for Ofsted, characterised by determined action to ensure that our work is always conducted sensitively, professionally and in the best interests of the learners served by the organisations we inspect.

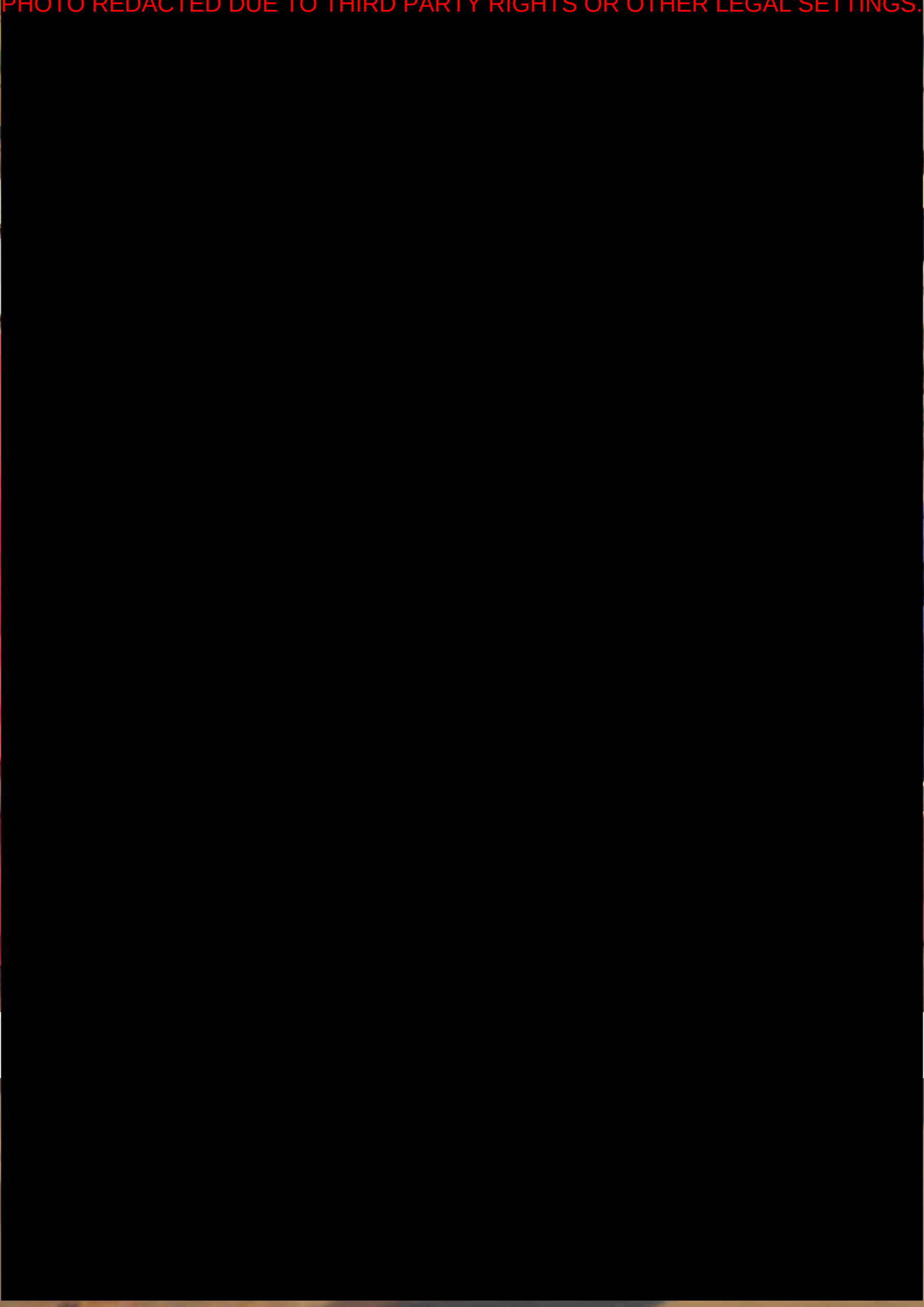
I have been honoured, initially as a board member, and latterly as interim chair, to play a part in developing the transformational agenda set out by Sir Martyn Oliver. His clear vision for a better Ofsted is compelling, and the range of initiatives he has introduced will underpin a robust, reliable and fair approach to inspection.

His Majesty's Chief Inspector's focus on getting provision right for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable is irrefutable. Ofsted is privileged to inspect a range of remits, seeing at first hand the provision made for many thousands of children and learners. The Ofsted Academy will systematically gather insights from the plethora of inspections and regulatory activities we carry out. This intelligence supports developments across the education and care sectors and highlights ways of improving the lives of those most in need of support.

At the end of a year which has seen significant revisions to the way they work, I would like to pay tribute to all our staff, who show tremendous resilience and positivity as they deal with internal and external change and challenge while continuing their vital operational roles. Their expertise, dedication, professionalism and conscientiousness will bring our plans for change to fruition.

My thanks also go to Dame Christine Ryan for her skilful leadership of the board and to my fellow board members for their support and insight. I echo Sir Martyn's welcome to Dame Christine Gilbert, who will join the Board as its new Chair in September. I look forward to working with her. Most importantly, I thank all those working in education and care for making a difference, day in day out, and to everyone who contributed to the Big Listen. Your voices have been heard.

Sir Hamid Patel CBE
Interim Chair



About us

Ofsted inspects services that provide education and skills for learners of all ages. We also inspect and regulate services that care for children and young people. We refer collectively to those we inspect as ‘providers’ (of education, skills or care).

Ofsted’s role is to make sure that those providers educating, training and caring for children and learners in England do so to a high standard. There are thousands of these organisations, and their work helps the next generation to realise its full potential.

How we carry out our role

We carry out our role through independent inspection and regulation using a workforce of directly employed inspectors as well as contracted inspectors, the vast majority being serving practitioners.

Our purpose is to bring about improvement in education provision for learners of all ages, as well as improvement in the help, protection and care of children and young people. We ground our inspection frameworks in evidence to help providers focus on the right things.

We inspect schools, further education (FE) and skills providers, early years and childcare providers, children’s social care, initial teacher education (ITE), early career framework (ECF) and national professional qualification (NPQ) lead providers and provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Inspection is an independent evaluation of the quality of provision. The inspection process, including the professional dialogue with leaders, helps providers to improve. It also allows us to aggregate and report on what we see across the country: what works well and what does not.

In early years and children’s social care, we are also the regulator. We have a wide range of tools, including inspection, to assess and respond to risks to children. As the regulator, we register early years and children’s social care providers, determining whether they are fit to run their services. We have ongoing oversight through notifications and responding when concerns are raised. We have a range of tools, including enforcement action, to restrict, suspend and ultimately close provision that is exceptionally poor or unsafe.

Performance summary

The performance summary for 2024–25 highlights important achievements, challenges and progress towards our objectives and targets.

This past year has been one of significant reflection and change for Ofsted. Throughout the year, we have listened to the views of parents and carers, children and young people and the sectors that we inspect and regulate. We have built on the changes to inspection practices we made last year and have worked hard to embed our core values of professionalism, courtesy, empathy and respect.

The Big Listen, Ofsted’s largest ever consultation, ran from January to May 2024.³ Throughout this period, we heard the views of over 30,000 people. We received over 20,000 written responses to our consultation, including from 4,300 children through our bespoke children’s consultation. We heard from a further 4,000 parents, 7,000 professionals and 4,000 members of the public through externally commissioned research. We also spoke to parents, professionals, and children and young people in care through focus groups carried out by independent researchers. We also commissioned an independent learning review by Dame Christine Gilbert into Ofsted’s response to the tragic death of Ruth Perry and accepted a number of recommendations in full.

In response to what we heard in the Big Listen, we made changes to inspection practice in May and September 2024.

In May, we made changes to ungraded school inspections, removing the subject ‘deep dive’ to reduce the burden on subject leaders and allow more time for professional dialogue. We also changed our inspection report website to show more clearly all sub-judgements for schools, along with an overall effectiveness grade, giving a more rounded picture.

In September, we made further changes to reduce pressure on school leaders. In response to a change in government policy, we removed the overall effectiveness grade from all graded inspections, including early years provision in state schools and [academies](#) for children aged two and above, and maintained nursery schools. We also implemented a new policy to give notice for all routine school inspections on a Monday.

We made some changes to how we inspect safeguarding in schools to reduce the anxiety surrounding inspection, while always putting children first. In September, we clarified in our handbooks what inspectors are looking for when they review a school’s single central record when inspecting safeguarding. We also introduced a new ‘suspend and return’ policy, which means inspectors can suspend an inspection to allow a school to resolve issues with safeguarding, as long as that is the only issue in the school.⁴

In response to what we heard in the Big Listen, in September we created six national hubs to centralise some of our processes and practices. The aim of these hubs is to streamline processes and improve consistency across all the regions we operate in.⁵ We have also reviewed our regional structure.

3. You can read Ofsted’s response to the Big Listen consultation: ‘[Hearing feedback, accepting criticism and building a better Ofsted: the response to the Big Listen](#)’, September 2024.

4. To align with the changes being made across Ofsted, we will remove the single-word judgement for overall effectiveness by April 2026 for inspections of local authority children’s services and the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service. We will also consider the changes required for those we inspect under the social care common inspection framework.

5. You can find out more about our national hubs in the ‘[Big Listen action monitoring report: December 2024](#)’, updated March 2025, Ofsted.

One of our new hubs is the ‘area insights and provider intelligence’ hub. This connects inspectors and experts centrally to consider intelligence about localities, groups and providers. It also supports our ‘area insights’ work to recognise better where providers do great work in challenging circumstances, and to point out how local and national decision-makers can address local issues.

In September, we launched the Ofsted Academy. The Ofsted Academy is developing an offer for all colleagues that enables Ofsted to attract, retain, train and develop inspectors, regulatory colleagues and administrative, professional and technical (APT) colleagues. The [Ofsted Academy page](#) is also where we publish many of our inspector training materials, making our work more transparent to those we inspect and regulate.

We published our response to the consultation and independent learning review in September 2024. This set out our commitment to changing and improving. In line with one of Dame Christine Gilbert’s recommendations, in December 2024 we published the first of our Big Listen action monitoring reports.⁶ These reports show our progress against all the actions we committed to in our Big Listen response. At each Ofsted board meeting, the board scrutinises the latest report, and we publish it shortly after. We have now published four Big Listen action monitoring reports.

We have also worked hard to improve our complaints process. In addition to the new ‘complaints about Ofsted’ hub, which brings all our complaints work into one central place, in January we introduced complaints panels for the schools and early years sectors. External sector representatives are part of the panels, including representatives from trade unions. They review whether we have handled a sample of complaints fairly and in line with our policy.

We have also worked to improve our provider contact helpline, so that we can address concerns before they become complaints. The helpline gives all providers the chance to speak to a senior member of Ofsted’s staff about any concerns that they have about their inspection and to resolve issues while the inspection is ongoing.

In February 2025, we launched our consultation on improving the way we inspect education. That closed in April, and we received over 6,500 responses. We will publish our response to the consultation in the autumn, and we will begin inspections under the updated framework in November 2025. We will be working towards changes in children’s social care from 2026.

6. ‘Big Listen action monitoring reports’, Ofsted, May 2025.

What Ofsted inspects

Remit	2024–25
State-funded schools	380 nursery schools
	16,700 primary schools
	3,420 secondary schools
	1,110 special schools
	330 alternative provision schools
Further education and skills	160 general FE colleges
	38 sixth-form and other colleges
	140 adult and community education providers
	1,220 independent learning providers (including employer providers)
	77 16 to 19 academies
	110 higher education institutions
	12 specialist FE colleges
	130 independent specialist colleges
	16 dance and drama colleges
	Ministry of Defence establishments
	120 prisons (which includes young offender institutions)
Independent schools	1,170 non-association independent schools
Early years	27,500 childcare on non-domestic premises providers (nurseries)
	32,900 childminders, home childcarers and other childcare on domestic premises providers
	7 childminder agencies (with 1,750 providers on roll)

Remit	2024–25
Social care	153 children’s services and local area partnerships
	13 secure children’s homes and 1 secure school
	1 secure training centre
	180 settings where children board (such as residential special schools)
	110 residential family centres
	340 fostering agencies
	58 adoption and adoption support agencies
	10 residential holiday schemes
	4,000 children’s homes (excluding secure children’s homes)
	890 supported accommodation providers
	The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass)
Teacher training	220 ITE providers
	9 ECF/NPQ lead providers

Notes:

1. The number of providers is based on providers open on 31 March 2025, except for the numbers of prisons, ITE and ECF/NPQ providers; these are based on providers open on 31 August 2024.
2. Numbers over 100 are rounded, except for local authority figures.

Statutory and government-agreed inspection targets

His Majesty’s Chief Inspector (HMCI) has met the statutory requirements for children’s social care inspections except for two residential holiday schemes for disabled children that did not operate this year. As these did not operate at any point in the year, it was not possible to inspect them.

Non-statutory obligations

There are no statutory obligations to inspect residential provision in residential special schools or boarding schools at a set frequency. However, we have an agreement with the Department for Education (DfE) to inspect each residential special school annually, and boarding schools every three years. We were unable to inspect five residential special schools, and one boarding school, because they were not accommodating children this year.

What we did this year

School inspections

We have been funded, through the Spending Review (2021), to inspect every school at least once between April 2021 and July 2025. To meet this commitment, we had to inspect schools that were previously graded good earlier than we otherwise would. It also meant we had to do more graded inspections (with larger inspection teams) and fewer ungraded inspections. Graded inspections enable inspectors to spend more time in schools, giving parents more assurance and having higher quality professional conversations with school leaders. We inspected 3,790 previously good schools in 2024–25; **1,660 were graded inspections**.^{7,8}

When routine inspection restarted after the pandemic and the legal exemption from inspection for outstanding schools ended, some of the 3,400 previously exempt outstanding schools had not been inspected for 15 years.⁹ We inspected 1,050 of them in the 2024–25 financial year, compared with 1,000 in 2023–24 and 770 in 2022–23.¹⁰

Further education and skills inspections

The FE and skills sector trains and educates learners aged 16 and over. Different types of providers offer a wide variety of education, training and apprenticeships to prepare learners for further study, employment or greater independence.

Ofsted has carried out full enhanced inspections of FE colleges, sixth-form colleges and designated institutions since September 2022. These enhanced inspections include a sub-judgement about how well each college is contributing to meeting skills needs. We have committed to inspecting all these provider types in this way at least once by July 2025. We are currently on track to complete this three-year undertaking. This year, we carried out 76 enhanced college inspections.

We also remain on track to inspect all other FE and skills providers at least once between April 2021 and September 2025. There was a shortfall of 140 inspections and visits in 2024–25, mainly because we carried out fewer demand-led monitoring visits. This was because fewer apprenticeship and skills bootcamp providers opened or stayed open long enough to be visited than we had planned for, which meant that fewer new provider monitoring visits were required. In addition to this, we inspected some providers early in 2023–24 after the plan for 2024–25 was set, and some providers closed during the year, particularly independent learning providers.

We completed nine test inspections to inform the development of the new framework. These were not in our planned inspection targets. We also carried out 270 full inspections and 55 short inspections of these providers this year. In addition, we did 160 new provider monitoring visits.

7. Based on inspections carried out between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, where the reports were published by 31 March 2025. This may not include all inspections carried out in the period, as some reports may not have been published by the cut-off point.

8. In the section 'What we did this year,' numbers over 100 are rounded except for workforce data.

9. For further details of the schools that were outstanding when the exemption ended, and dates of their last inspections, see '[A return to inspection: the story \(so far\) of previously exempt outstanding schools](#)', Ofsted, November 2022.

10. For all three years the numbers are based on inspections where reports were published by 31 March 2025. The numbers for 2022–23 and 2023–24 are therefore slightly higher than published in the previous Annual Report and Accounts, as some reports were published after the original cut-off point for that publication. Numbers for 2024–25 may not include all inspections carried out in the period, as some reports may not have been published by 31 March 2025.

Teacher development inspections

We inspect ITE providers, as well as lead providers of ECF and NPQ programmes.

Our frameworks evaluate how well these providers prepare teachers in subjects, phases and professional contexts. Where appropriate, we highlight areas for improvement.

Initial teacher education

We postponed the start of our ITE inspection cycle until the 2025/26 academic year, following a request by the Secretary of State for Education.¹¹ During the pause, we have so far carried out thematic monitoring visits of 38 providers, covering 51 phases, and plan to publish the thematic overview report in summer 2025.

The changes to inspections that we are consulting on will mean that all ITE providers are inspected under the same framework from January 2026.¹²

Early career framework and national professional qualification lead providers

This year, we completed our first round of full inspections of NPQ lead providers. We also began our second round of full inspections of ECF lead providers.

Area SEND inspections

Area SEND inspections evaluate the impact of a local area partnership's arrangements on the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with SEND. Our education and social care His Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) inspect SEND jointly with the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

This year, we did 29 full inspections. We were due to start monitoring inspections last year, but we postponed them while we reviewed the area SEND framework following our response to the Big Listen. We have now published our area SEND review and monitoring inspections will resume from summer 2025.¹³

Area SEND thematic visits

Preparation for adulthood

We published a thematic review in December on 'preparation for adulthood' arrangements across local areas.¹⁴ We visited six local areas for this, with five visits taking place this year.

The review focused on how partners in local areas work together to help children and young people with SEND prepare for adulthood.

We concentrated on four key themes for preparation for adulthood, based on the SEND code of practice: employment, independent living, community inclusion and health.

11. 'Ofsted to postpone initial teacher education inspection cycle', Ofsted, November 2024.

12. 'Improving the way Ofsted inspects education consultation', Ofsted, February 2025.

13. 'Area SEND review: what we heard and how we are improving', Ofsted, June 2025.

14. 'Preparation for adulthood arrangements in local areas: a thematic review', Ofsted and Care Quality Commission, December 2024.

Some of our findings were that:

- supported internships offer positive experiences for young people with an EHC plan; however, take-up from young people was often hampered because the EHC plan would end when they entered employment after the supported internship
- children with SEND who are in care or are care-experienced are more likely to benefit from strong relationships formed with dedicated practitioners
- there were gaps in provision, particularly in more rural areas; parents and carers were also not always aware of what activities were available in their community because the local area partnership had not communicated with them well
- young people with SEND too often experience a 'cliff edge' in support for their health needs when they turn 18.

We set out 16 recommendations for a range of government departments and local area partners.

Children not in school

We published guidance in January for thematic visits on children with SEND who are not in school.¹⁵ We will complete six visits of local areas, including three this year.

The purpose of these visits is to understand how local area partners – across health, education and children's social care – work together to meet the needs of children who are not in school. The visits follow a similar approach to area SEND inspections, using methods such as reviewing documents, tracking meetings and sampling visits. We also survey children, parents and carers.

We will use the insights from these visits to highlight issues to local and national government and to inform our own inspection practice.

Online education accreditation scheme

The online education accreditation scheme is a non-statutory scheme under which providers of full-time online education for school-age children in England can apply to the DfE for accreditation.

We do suitability checks on the proprietors of online education providers, carry out visits to online providers, and publish reports that set out whether online providers met the DfE's online education standards at the time of the visit.

This year, we visited seven providers. Of these, four providers met all of the standards for online education set by the DfE.

15. 'Thematic reviews of children not in school in local areas', Ofsted, January 2025.

Social care

Inspections of local authority children's services

Our approach to inspections of local authority children's services (ILACS) continues to be underpinned by three principles, which apply to all social care inspections. Inspection should:

- focus on the things that matter most to children's lives
- be consistent in our expectations of providers
- prioritise our work where improvement is needed most.

We have continued to inspect local authority children's services under the ILACS framework. We began the second cycle of ILACS – the first time a local authority inspection framework has been repeated in its entirety. Under the current arrangements, we are planning to begin a third cycle in April 2026. The successful iteration of the inspection framework has given us the confidence to assure the government that the framework can be rebalanced without significant change in response to the children's social care reform programme.

In January, we updated the evaluation criteria to reflect the focus on family group decision-making in our programme of reform. In April, we updated the framework further to take account of the [Children's social care: national framework](#). This was to help local authorities focus their improvement planning according to the expectations of the statutory guidance.

We will continue to rebalance ILACS in response to ongoing developments as part of the children's social care reforms, including updates to '[Working together to safeguard children](#)'. As we refresh ILACs, we will also be able to reflect positive changes from the education framework consultation, including an ILACS report card. This is in response to the government's policy to remove the overall effectiveness grade in school inspections.

Joint targeted area inspections

Joint targeted area inspections (JTAs) look at services for vulnerable children and young people. We inspect with CQC, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services and (depending on the theme) His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation.

We jointly assess how local authorities, the police, health, probation and youth offending services are working together in an area to identify, support and protect vulnerable children and young people. We look at how effectively local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements respond to themes we inspect.

This year, we:

- carried out four JTAs of the [multi-agency response to identifying initial need and risk](#)
- carried out one inspection of the multi-agency response to serious youth violence, and published our [thematic report of findings about serious youth violence](#) (this included findings from five inspections carried out in the previous year)
- published our framework for JTAs of the [multi-agency response to children who are victims of domestic abuse](#), and carried out five JTAs on this theme.

Supported accommodation

Throughout 2024, we continued to assess applications to register as providers of supported accommodation for looked-after children and care leavers aged 16 and 17. We have prioritised applications from providers that had submitted a complete application to Ofsted by 28 October 2023 and were therefore able to operate legally beyond that deadline.

By 31 March 2025, we had received a total of 1,640 complete applications. Of these, 170 had been withdrawn, refused or closed. By the same date, there were 890 active (registered) providers.

To allow us to continue to prioritise the exceptionally large volume of registration applications, we made a relatively slow start to inspecting providers in September 2024, as agreed with the government. We carried out 50 full inspections during 2024–25. The level of inspection activity will increase significantly in 2025–26.

Regulatory activity

As mentioned earlier, we are the regulator as well as the inspectorate for early years and children's social care. We take regulatory action, including enforcement action, where required.

Early years

Registered early years providers are required to notify us of certain events that affect the care of children. This year, we received 11,900 notifications from around 8,220 providers. This was a 7% increase in the number of notifications on the previous year. For 38% of notifications, either an inspection was brought forward or there was further regulatory action. During the year, there were 1,400 full early years regulatory inspections resulting from a regulatory case. Of these, 65% were carried out unannounced.

We also receive complaints and concerns about early years settings. We received 9,420 complaints this year, relating to 6,370 providers. This was a 5% increase on the previous year. In 72% of these cases, we either brought the inspection forward or took further regulatory action. See the section 'Responding to complaints and concerns' for full details on complaints for all inspection remits.

If we are concerned that children may be at risk of harm, we can suspend a provider's registration. This year, we have suspended 240 providers, slightly fewer than the previous year. Suspension gives us or other agencies, such as the police or the local authority, time to investigate concerns or carry out inquiries. It also gives time for us or the provider to take steps to reduce or remove any risk to children.

If a provider is unable to meet the requirements of registration, we will cancel its registration. This year, we cancelled 1,950 registrations. This included 1,810 cancellations due to non-payment of fees.

Children's social care

Regulated providers are required to notify Ofsted about serious incidents relating to children, and what they have done in response. The purpose of notifications is to keep us, as the regulator, informed about how incidents and issues are being managed.

This year, we received around 52,900 notifications from around 4,700 providers. Most of these were from children's homes, which form the majority of all social care providers.

Number of notifications and providers, 2024–25, by provider type

	Notifications	Providers
Children's home	42,500	3,800
Independent fostering agency	5,840	310
Supported accommodation provider	4,040	490
Residential family centre	470	83
Voluntary adoption agency	65	11
Total	52,900	4,700

Notes:

1. This may include duplicate notifications about the same event.
2. Numbers over 100 have been rounded.
3. Notifications are grouped by the reason for the notification. Nearly half of notifications were made under the 'other serious incidents' category, which settings use to notify Ofsted of an event that they feel is serious enough to be notifiable but that does not fit into any other category. This category captures serious incidents that do not fall under any of the other categories, which are set out in legislation. They could include, for example, a fire in the home, a child being taken to hospital or the death of a foster carer.

Intervention and enforcement

Unregistered children's homes

Providing an unregistered children's home is unlawful. We are concerned that the number of children being placed in unregistered children's homes has not decreased much in the past 12 months. The situation is compounded by the continuing lack of placements for children within the secure welfare sector. This year, there were approximately 42 referrals for each secure children's home placement.

We acknowledge that local authorities face many challenges in sourcing appropriate legal children's home places for children. Ninety-one per cent of local authorities that we surveyed said they often struggle to find suitable homes for children with complex needs.¹⁶ However, the fact remains that children with some of the most complex care needs are being placed in settings that have the least amount of regulatory and independent scrutiny and oversight. A recent report by the Children's Commissioner for England found that almost a third (31%) of the children in unregistered placements were subject to deprivation of liberty orders.¹⁷

Our records show that, this year, 86% (132) of local authorities were involved in placing children in unregistered provision. Of these 132 local authorities, 84% placed children in unregistered children's homes and 16% placed children in unregistered supported accommodation. This highlights the continuing need for bespoke legal placements for the children who need them most.

We want provision that should be registered with Ofsted to register. This year, we opened 870 cases concerning possible unregistered children's homes and 56 cases concerning possible unregistered supported accommodation. Most (680) of the unregistered children's homes were found to be illegal and should have been registered, and most (40) of the supported accommodation providers we investigated were unregistered.

16. 'How local authorities and children's homes can achieve stability and permanence for children with complex needs', Ofsted, January 2024.

17. 'Illegal children's homes', Children's Commissioner, December 2024.

In most cases where we have ‘reasonable belief’ that a home is illegal (unregistered), we issue a warning letter. The letter sets out the offence and requires providers to cease operating and apply for registration should they wish to operate in the future. It informs them that we may use our powers to take further action. It also gives information on how to apply for registration, including our priority application process.

The Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Bill currently proposes additional powers to allow us to fine providers operating illegally. This would strengthen our approach to tackling unregistered provision. In the meantime, we continue to use our virtual team to focus on criminal investigations and prosecutions.

Unregistered early years provision

We have enforcement and prosecution powers to manage unregistered early years provision. This year, we investigated 580 unregistered early years settings.

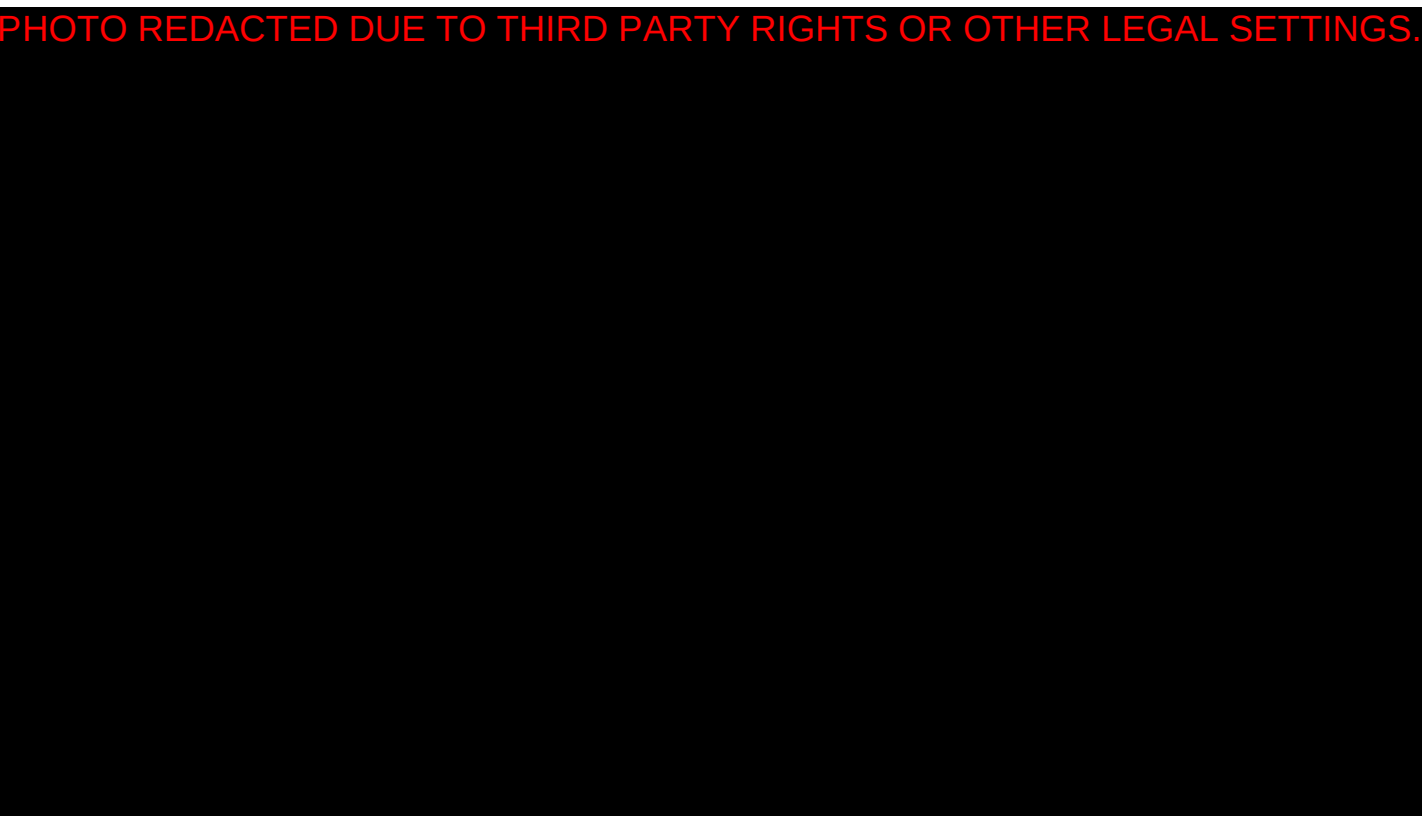
Some of these were deemed unregistered as the legal entity owning them had changed, which requires a new registration, but they were still fundamentally operating as before. Where there were no concerns about a new provider, we expedited the process.

Unregistered schools

Our unregistered schools team continued to investigate suspected unregistered schools this year. The team carried out 90 inspections under section 97 of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The aim of these inspections is to establish whether a criminal offence has been committed and to gather evidence if it has.

We continue to work closely with the DfE to prepare for the implementation of important provisions in the Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Bill for unregistered schools.

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Research and aggregation of insights

Ofsted has a unique view of the education and children's social care system through the hundreds of inspections and regulatory visits we carry out every week. We publish what we learn from these visits and carry out wider research and evaluation to help fill knowledge gaps and help policymakers, decision-makers and practitioners to improve practice.

This year, we released the following publications about education:

- The 'Independent review of teachers' professional development in schools: phase 2 findings' received wide coverage in the trade press, featured in the Confederation of School Trust's members briefing, and has since been cited in several academic papers.¹⁸ The findings also informed the toolkit on developing teaching that was published as part of the consultation on improving the way Ofsted inspects education.
- 'Maintaining quality early years provision in the face of workforce challenges' has informed early years inspector training and a DfE toolkit for the early years sector.¹⁹
- 'Best start in life part 3: the 4 specific areas of learning' has also received wide press coverage, precipitating articles by leading sector organisations such as Nursery World and PACEY.²⁰
- The 'Education inspection framework: implementation review' has driven key changes, such as updated guidance for inspecting smaller schools, and has shaped the current Ofsted reform programme, including a continued focus on curriculum-based education quality.²¹ The latter was also informed by the report on 'Curriculum quality: evaluating the impact of the education inspection framework'.²²

The following reports on social care helped to drive change in Ofsted and beyond:

- 'Multi-agency responses to serious youth violence: working together to support and protect children': the findings contributed to cross-sector discussions about the scale and nature of serious youth violence and have led to changes in various inspection frameworks to make them more child-focused and trauma-informed.²³
- 'Good decisions: supporting children aged 16 and 17 who need help when they are homeless': findings from this research will inform changes to the ILACS framework, such as including the joint homelessness protocol in the Annex A request, increasing the focus on advocacy and improving the data on pathways for homeless children.²⁴

18. 'Independent review of teachers' professional development in schools: phase 2 findings', Ofsted, May 2024.

19. 'Maintaining quality early years provision in the face of workforce challenges', Ofsted, May 2024.

20. 'Best start in life part 3: the 4 specific areas of learning', Ofsted, October 2024.

21. 'Education inspection framework: implementation review', Ofsted, February 2025.

22. 'Curriculum quality: evaluating the impact of the education inspection framework', Ofsted, March 2025.

23. 'Multi-agency responses to serious youth violence: working together to support and protect children', Ofsted, November 2024.

24. 'Good decisions: supporting children aged 16 and 17 who need help when they are homeless', Ofsted, February 2025.

The DfE commissioned Ofsted to carry out:

- a review of the quality of careers advice and guidance that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are receiving in FE providers, which informed inspection practices by emphasising the need for tailored career support in SEND settings²⁵
- research on how schools and FE colleges that are early adopters of artificial intelligence (AI) are using it to support teaching and learning and to manage administrative systems and processes, and the role leaders are playing in embedding AI and managing risks associated with its use.²⁶ Emerging findings have informed the direction for inspector training and operating guidelines on providers' use of and response to AI. A report will be published in summer 2025.

The Big Listen consultation was unprecedented in scale and inclusivity. Ofsted commissioned the organisations below to expand the reach of the consultation and hear voices from a wide and diverse group of stakeholders:

- IFF Research gathered the views of the professionals we work with
- Coram Voice, Career Matters and Catch 22 organised focus group discussions for us with children in care and care leavers, including in young offender institutions
- NatCen gathered the views of parents and carers.

In response to the Ofsted Big Listen, we commissioned further independent research to inform Ofsted's plan for reform:

- research on how education and social care professionals understand vulnerability²⁷
- behavioural research and cognitive testing on how we can best hear from children, learners, parents, carers and provider staff during inspection.²⁸

25. 'Navigating post-16 careers guidance: supporting learners from lower socioeconomic backgrounds', Ofsted, April 2025.

26. 'Ofsted research on artificial intelligence in education: terms of reference', Ofsted, December 2024.

27. 'Commissioned research on vulnerability and inclusion: terms of reference', Ofsted, October 2024.

28. 'Commissioned research to hear from children and learners, parents and carers, and staff during inspection: terms of reference', Ofsted, January 2025.

Official statistics and management information

This year, we released over 60 sets of timely and high-quality official statistics, management information and transparency data, as well as data commentaries.²⁹ These publications give detailed analysis and narratives to provide an important window into the work of the organisation, and are produced in line with the Code of Practice for Statistics.³⁰ We regularly review our statistics to ensure they continue to meet the needs of our users.

In addition to our routine statistical releases, we also released five commentaries that give greater insight into areas of our work. The commentaries focused on:

- childcare accessibility by neighbourhood, working with the Office for National Statistics (ONS)³¹
- regulatory activity in children's homes³²
- the largest national providers of private and voluntary social care³³
- changes in access to childcare in England³⁴
- unregistered children's social care providers in England.³⁵

More detail about the impact of our statistical commentaries can be found on pages 41 to 42.

In line with our published policy for revisions, we have made a small number of changes to releases during the course of the year.³⁶

29. View the whole collection at [‘Statistics at Ofsted’](#).

30. ‘Code of Practice for Statistics’, UK Statistics Authority, May 2022.

31. ‘Childcare accessibility by neighbourhood’, ONS and Ofsted, June 2024.

32. ‘Regulatory activity in all types of children's homes between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024’, Ofsted, July 2024.

33. ‘Largest national providers of private and voluntary social care (March 2024)’, Ofsted, October 2024.

34. ‘Commentary: Changes in access to childcare in England’, Ofsted, October 2024.

35. ‘Unregistered children's homes’, Ofsted, November 2024.

36. ‘Statement on revisions for official statistics’, Ofsted, October 2023.

Workforce

We continue to take part in the Civil Service People Survey. This annual survey looks at civil servants' attitudes towards, and experience of, working in government departments. The survey runs in the autumn. This year, 80% of Ofsted staff responded. The Employee Engagement Index (EEI) captures how staff feel about Ofsted. Our EEI score was 64% this year, a slight decrease from our score of 68% last year. The benchmark score for the whole Civil Service was 65%.

Like last year, the 2024–25 Civil Service pay remit guidance allowed for one of the highest awards in recent years. We were able to offer pay increases of between 4.5% and 8% across our workforce, ensuring we offered the maximum organisational award permitted by the pay guidance.

The size and shape of Ofsted's workforce have remained broadly similar to last year. We have ongoing controls on recruitment and use technology to increase productivity and efficiency wherever possible. Where we have recruited, we have seen a considerable increase in applications, across both inspection and APT roles.

We are committed to being an inclusive workplace and an organisation that embraces people from all backgrounds and supports individuals' diversity. We continue to promote equality of opportunity and ensure that our policies take account of our duties under the Equality Act and are based on robust data analysis. We take action to address inequalities where we find them. The Ofsted Academy is ready to launch the 'Catalyst' initiative to improve our recruitment of underrepresented groups.

The Ofsted Academy launched on 2 September 2024, centralising all training, learning and development for the workforce. We have created a set of standards for training content, delivery and evaluation, and have developed a standardised approach to commissioning training.

This year, we also increased our focus on reflective practice across all inspection remits. We held structured conversations and informal peer discussions, and set up a feedback loop to promote ongoing learning and to share best practice.

We embedded line management standards, developed a new leadership framework and focused on career and professional development.

In March, we launched our new career and development portal for all professions, and are developing a new inspection and regulation accreditation model and career pathway. Currently, 1.3% of our staff are on apprenticeships, but we are working towards 5%.

Staff turnover remains higher than the Civil Service target, at 10.9%. During the last 12 months, a total of 113 inspectors left Ofsted across all of our remits. Many returned to their own sector but continue to work with us as contracted Ofsted Inspectors.

Digital developments

We responded to priorities emerging from the Big Listen and Dame Christine Gilbert's independent review, while maintaining secure, up-to-date services and meeting urgent policy requirements.

Our digital work this year included:

- updating systems to support policy developments (including introducing childcare reforms and removing the overall effectiveness judgement for school inspections) and to support the updated education inspection framework and report cards for autumn 2025
- starting work on a regulated provider self-service system, an updated regulatory data model and a new regulation case management system
- rolling out an updated electronic evidence-gathering tool for school and FE and skills inspections, optimised for offline/online working
- looking into opportunities to safely, securely, ethically and legally use AI to make our work more efficient, improve quality and accuracy, and reduce cost
- closing our remaining on-premises hosting facility, in line with our cloud adoption strategy, and continuing to remove remaining technical debt
- developing a new cyber-security strategy and assessing ourselves against the National Institute of Standards and Technology's cyber-security framework
- ensuring our end-user devices remain secure, rolling out new devices where required, upgrading all to Windows 11, and rolling out Windows Hello and Autopilot to improve user experience and make devices easier to manage.

We are developing a new digital, data and technology strategy and roadmap aligned to Ofsted's strategic priorities and the wider government digital and data strategy. The strategy will set out a number of priorities, including:

- **new and improved digital services for colleagues, customers and providers**, including those supporting our regulatory work where we know we can make improvements to our regulatory case management arrangements, the way in which providers and the public interact with us, and, in the process, drive efficiencies
- **better data to power decision-making**, ensuring that high-quality data informs improved internal reporting, prioritisation and risk assessment tools, and new external digital services for providers and the public
- **efficient, secure, sustainable and supportable technology**, ensuring live service availability, removing any remaining technical debt and continuing to improve our cyber-security and information management arrangements
- **enabling innovation and efficiency through AI and automation**, supporting Ofsted's approach to AI and linking up with other government departments and agencies to share learning and insights³⁷
- **building a digital culture, skills and capacity that unlock transformation**, updating our operating model where necessary, ensuring we can attract and develop the people we need, and that we support digital skills and development across Ofsted.

Following a successful settlement of the Spending Review in June 2025, Ofsted has secured funding to invest in a new regulatory case management system. This will provide essential support to regulatory and safeguarding work in the early years and children's social care remits. Prioritisation decisions will be made through Ofsted's routine governance arrangements, ensuring we focus on developments that best support organisational priorities.

37. Full detail about Ofsted's approach to using AI can be found online: '[Ofsted's approach to AI](#)', Ofsted, April 2024.

Performance analysis

The performance analysis is a detailed explanation of our performance this year, with evidence to support the performance summary. This includes our corporate performance and performance against our strategy.

Corporate performance

Each year, we set targets for the number of inspections and visits we will carry out.

Comparison of actual volumes with planned volumes

This year, we carried out slightly fewer inspections than we had planned in some types of provision, but more in total than last year.

Ofsted has legal duties to inspect specified institutions within certain timeframes. These are referred to as statutory targets and form part of the overall planned inspection targets for the year. This year, we met all of our statutory targets.

Remit	Total inspections in plan	Year-end total	% of plan delivered
State-funded schools	7,001	6,471	92%
Independent schools	499	433	87%
FE and skills	969	818	84%
Early years	12,262	11,488	94%
Area SEND	41	37	90%
ECF and NPQ lead providers	12	9	75%
ITE	51	58	114%
Social care regulatory	4,044	3,969	98%
Supported accommodation	130	50	38%
ILACS	109	98	90%

We also completed test inspections to help develop the updated framework. We completed 39 short visits and 58 full visits (of normal inspection length) to state-funded schools, and nine visits to FE and skills providers in February and March 2025. These were not in our targets.

Reasons for not meeting internal targets

State-funded schools – We paused routine inspections between December 2023 and January 2024 so that we could give all inspectors mental health awareness training. The pause resulted in a shortfall of 417 (6%) inspections at the end of the 2023–24 year. We prioritised those at the start of this year and added them to our 2024–25 targets. In September 2024, we paused routine inspections again so we could implement the changes needed to remove the overall effectiveness judgement. We were unable to do 341 planned inspections during this period.

Independent schools – The shortfall is mainly due to providers closing or moving to be inspected by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI), and the pause in inspection in September 2024.

FE and skills – The shortfall is mainly because fewer apprenticeship and skills bootcamp providers opened or stayed open long enough to be visited compared with our planning assumptions, so we did fewer new provider monitoring visits. Further detail is provided on page 14.

Early years – The shortfall is mainly due to providers closing. There were also 144 providers that we did not inspect for reasons outside of our control, such as where the provider was not looking after children because of long-term sickness or maternity leave, or where we had notified the provider that we intended to cancel their registration because we had not been able to contact them. Very often, these providers have had no children on roll for an extended period and/or have ceased to pay registration fees, so we believe it is unlikely that they are operating. We inspected a further 75 providers late because they had begun operating again after being out of scope for inspection. We inspected them as soon as possible.

Area SEND – The shortfall is mainly due to pausing monitoring visits during the Big Listen, as agreed with the Secretary of State.

ECF and NPQ lead providers – The shortfall is because we had assumed that three new providers would open. They did not.

ITE – The over-delivery is mainly due to the pause in inspections during spring 2025, which resulted in 31 planned inspections not taking place. We replaced them with 38 thematic monitoring visits.

Social care regulatory – The shortfall is mainly because our estimates of the number of providers that would open, close or need a reinspection was different from the actual number. Some providers did not need an inspection for various reasons, for example because they had no children on roll or did not operate during the year.

Supported accommodation – We did fewer inspections than planned because we prioritised registration visits to new applicants. Further detail is provided on page 18.

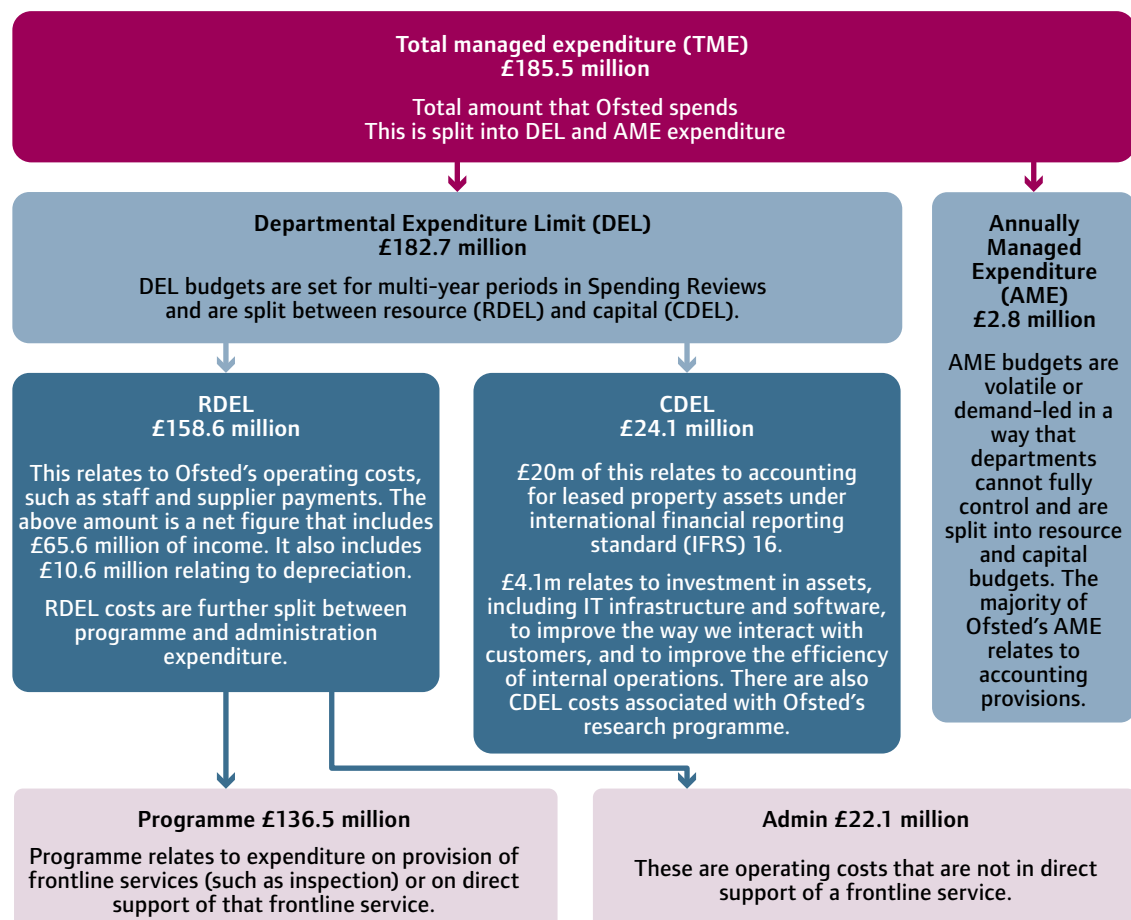
ILACS – The shortfall is due to a range of factors, including complexities in scheduling multi-inspectorate inspections like JTAs and issues with inspector capacity. We also needed to change some of the planned inspections at short notice, which means they are rescheduled for the next year.

Funding and financial performance

Ofsted is funded by Parliament through the Supply Estimates process. You can read [more information about Supply Estimates](#).

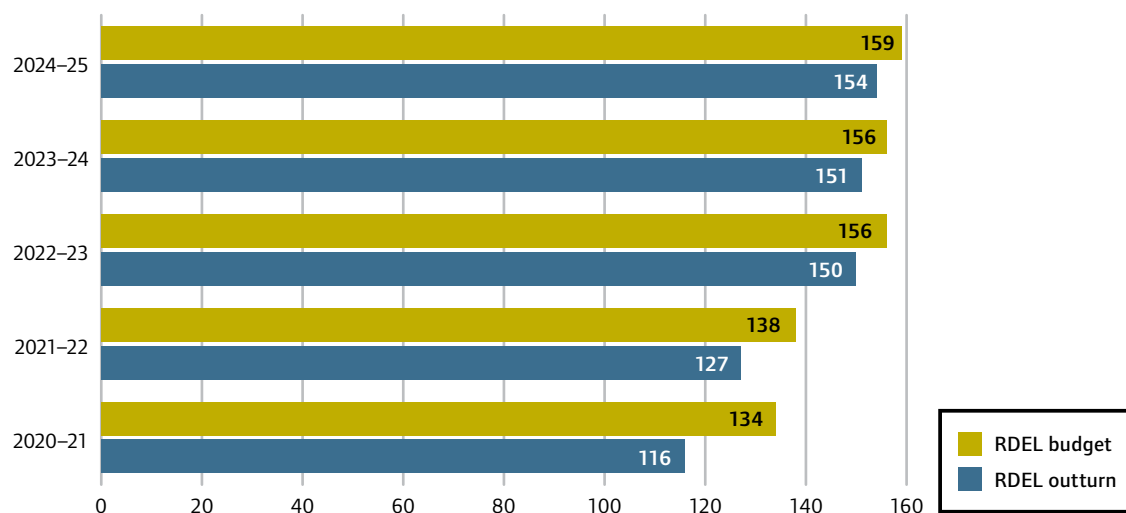
Our Estimate includes both funding we receive directly from Parliament and income we are allowed to keep to offset our spending. This income is from fees that we charge to some providers we inspect and charges to other government departments for work we carry out on their behalf. We have more information on our fees and charges in the financial statements section.

The following diagram shows the breakdown of our overall Supply Estimate funding:



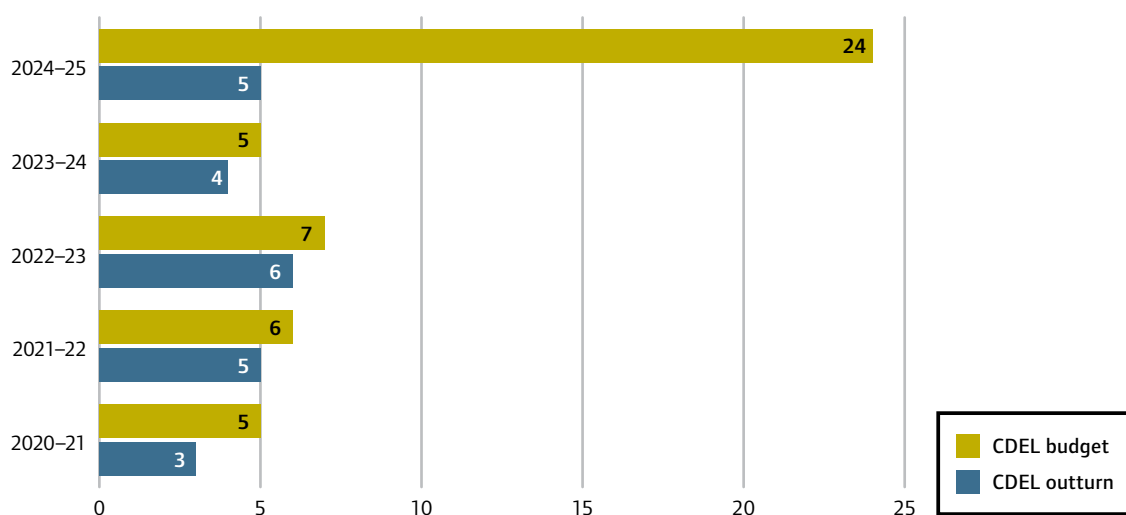
The following graphs show our management of RDEL and CDEL funding over the last five years.

Financial performance against RDEL budget 2020–21 to 2024–25 (£m)



We have consistently managed to stay within the RDEL limit. The underspend in 2024–25 is £4.7 million (3%). Underspends were larger in 2020–21 and 2021–22 because of the impact of the pandemic on our variable costs, such as travel. More information on this is in our ARAs for those years.³⁸

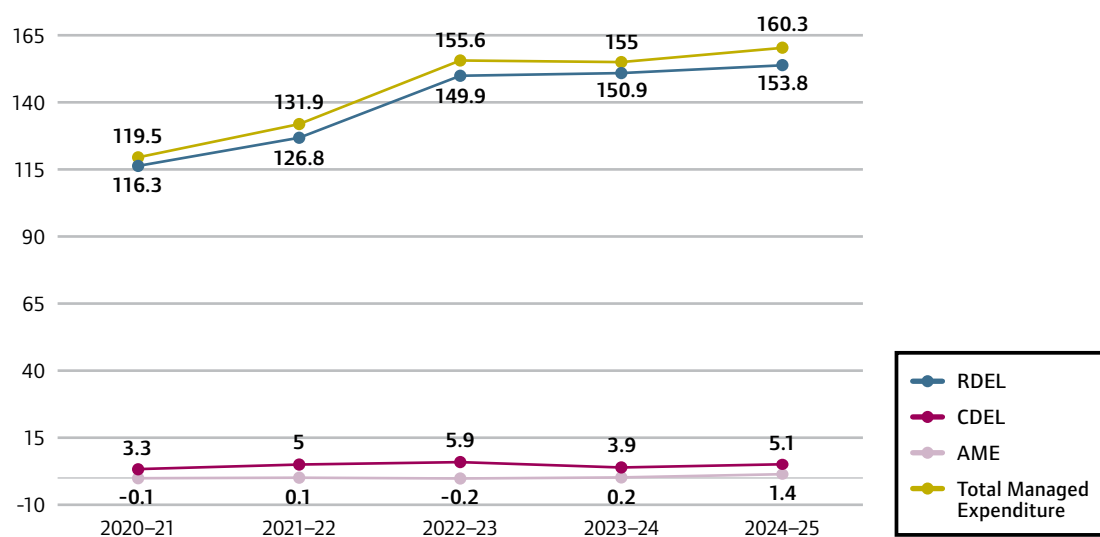
Financial performance against CDEL budget 2020–21 to 2024–25 (£m)



We have consistently managed to stay within the CDEL limit. The underspend in 2024–25 is £19 million (79%). All of the underspend is due to changes in expected timing and value of leases for administrative buildings. When Ofsted enters into a new lease, we are required to capitalise its full life cost as an asset. High-level assumptions, made when these budgets were set, have changed due to events beyond Ofsted's control.

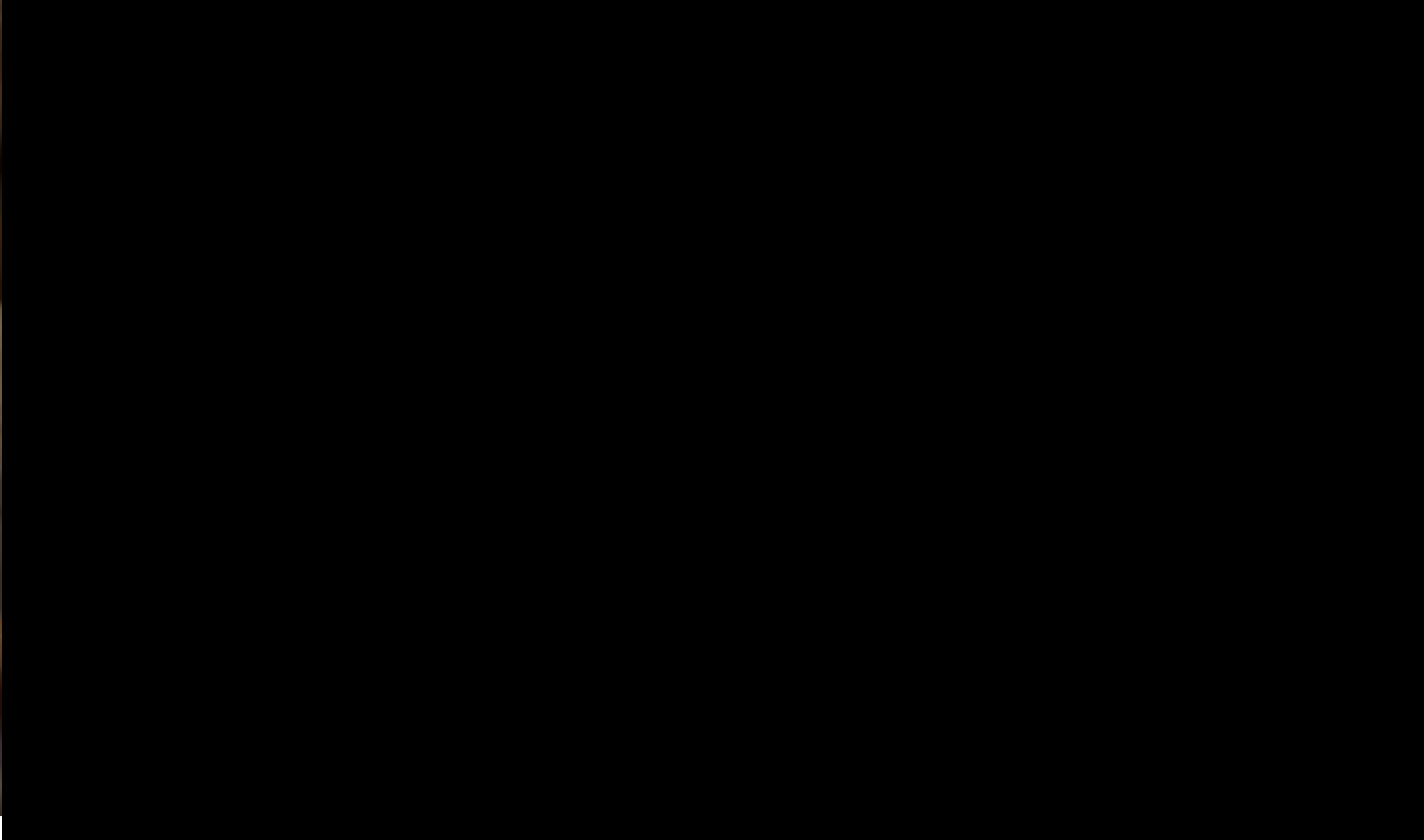
38. 'Ofsted corporate annual reports and accounts', Ofsted, July 2022 (updated July 2024).

TME trend analysis outturn 2020–21 to 2024–25 (£m)



Ofsted's 2024–25 TME outturn is £40m more than in 2020–21. This is mainly because the pandemic led to a pause in routine inspection activity, which only returned to normal levels in 2022–23. In addition to this, Ofsted has been funded to carry out higher levels of inspection and regulation since 2022–23. This has included inspections of previously exempt outstanding schools and of supported accommodation for children in care.

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Spend by remit

The following table provides further context for the above information on funding and financial performance. It shows our RDEL expenditure in 2024–25, broken down into the remits we inspect and regulate. It also shows this as a proportion of the total public expenditure in England for each remit.

	Gross operating expenditure* (millions) 2024–25	Proportion of total expenditure 2024–25	Total public spending in England (millions) 2023–24 **	Ofsted spending in 2024–25 as proportion of total public spending in 2023–24
Schools (Ofsted costs include schools, ITE, independent schools and area SEND)	80	38%	58,881	0.1%
FE and skills	25	12%	12,162	0.2%
Social care	60	29%	14,692	0.4%
Early years	44	21%	3,996	1.1%
Total	209	100%	89,701	0.2%

* Total costs for each remit are made up of direct inspection and other costs, plus apportioned operational and corporate costs.

Figures may not sum due to rounding.

** Estimated based on publicly available data from 2023–24.

Fraud and error

Ofsted has no incidents of fraud or error to report.

We review fraud risks regularly to identify changes in our level of risk and put appropriate controls in place.

We report any fraud that we detect and prevent to the Cabinet Office on a quarterly basis.

To reduce the risk of error, we carry out timetabled actions each month to review the accuracy and validity of financial reporting and forecasting. This includes detailed variance analysis, as well as reviews with multiple stakeholders and reporting to directors and the executive committee. In addition, the Government Internal Audit Agency carries out an audit of our core financial controls each year. In 2024–25, it gave an assurance opinion of ‘substantial’.

Climate change adaptation and sustainability

Ofsted has reported on climate-related financial disclosures consistent with HM Treasury's disclosure application guidance. The guidance aligns with the Task Force on Climate Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD)'s recommendations, and it interprets and adapts the framework for the UK public sector.

We have complied with the TCFD's recommendations and disclosures around metrics and targets. Climate-related issues are covered by our existing governance and risk management frameworks and through our climate adaptation strategy.

We plan to make disclosures for strategy in future reporting periods, in line with the implementation timetable.

Over the course of the Ofsted strategy, we will fulfil government expectations and requirements to reduce our impact on the environment in line with the Greening Government Commitments (GGC). Our climate change adaptation strategy enables us to understand our vulnerabilities and increase our resilience to climate-related events and indirect impacts. The strategy sets out more specific arrangements for governance and risk management. It designates responsibility to coordinate the climate adaptation strategy from the Accounting Officer to the Chief Financial Officer. Implementing the strategy means that our climate-related risks have been assessed by HMCI and the executive committee. We will report them to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) in 2025–26. The nature of our operations means that climate is **not a principal risk** to Ofsted.

In line with the GGC, we measure and report on greenhouse gas emissions from leased office space (Scope 2) and business travel (Scope 3), waste management, paper usage and water consumption. In working towards net zero by 2050 we aim to achieve the following targets:

- Reduce the overall greenhouse gas emissions from a 2017–18 baseline³⁹ alongside the following sub-target:
 - reduce emissions from domestic business flights by 30% from a 2017–18 baseline and report the distance travelled by international business flights.
- Reduce the overall amount of waste generated by 15% from a 2017–18 baseline alongside the following sub-targets:
 - reduce the amount of waste going to landfill to less than 5% of overall waste
 - increase the proportion of waste which is recycled to at least 70% of overall waste
 - reduce government's paper use by at least 50% from the 2017–18 baseline.
- Reduce water consumption by at least 8% from a 2017–18 baseline.

2024–25 analysis of key metrics

Comparing this year's outturn with the 2017–18 baselines and targets, we found:

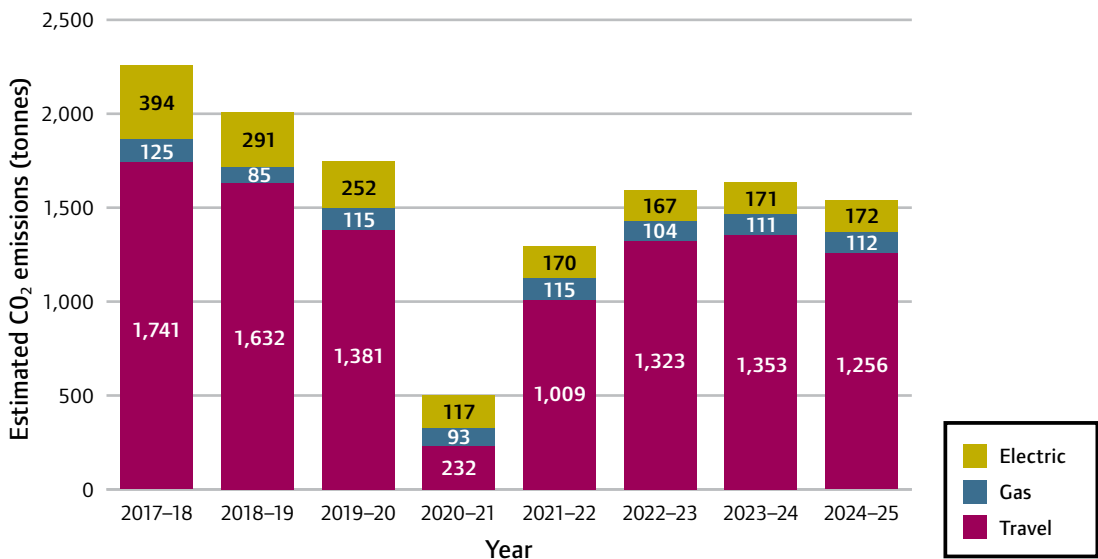
- greenhouse gas emissions (CO₂) have reduced by 32%
- overall waste has reduced by approximately 25% (target reduction 15%)
- water usage has reduced by approximately 54% (target reduction 8%).

39. 2017–18 is used as the baseline year in line with the requirements of HM Treasury's 'Sustainability reporting guidance: 2024–25', July 2024.

This year, CO₂ emissions, waste and water usage have remained lower than pre-pandemic levels. Ofsted and other departments within our shared buildings have moved to more hybrid ways of working. This has reduced the overall water and waste consumption.

The lower levels of waste and water usage that we reported in 2020–21 were mainly due to more staff working remotely and not travelling as much during the pandemic.

Mitigating climate change: working towards net zero by 2050



Note: Some figures are estimates based on data provided to Ofsted as a minor occupier of larger, shared properties.

Compared with 2017–18, we have reduced our CO₂ emissions by 32% overall. Of this:

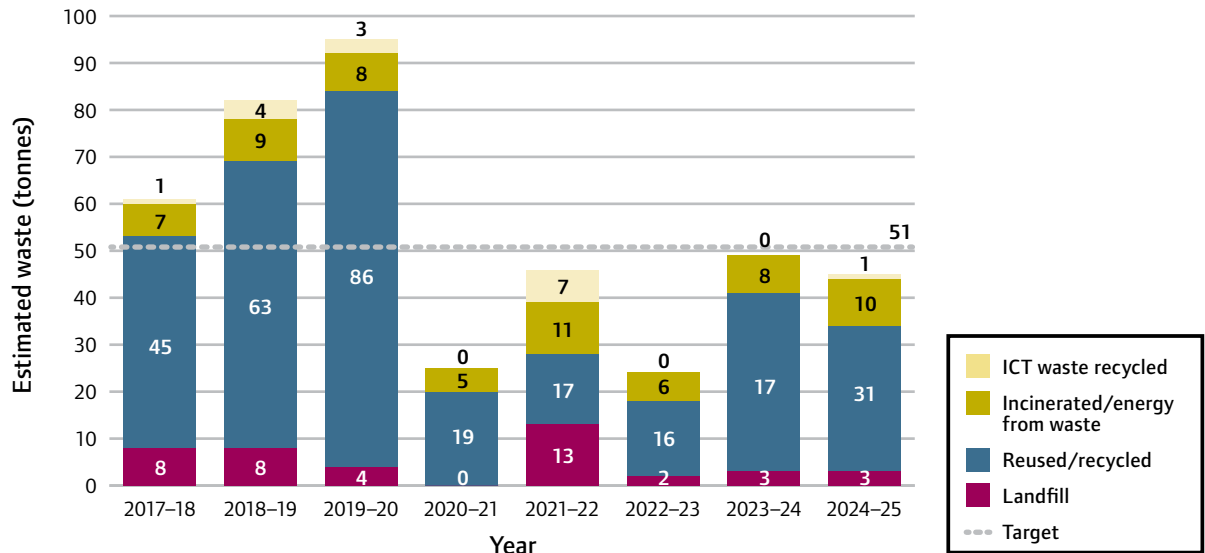
- 45% is from buildings (gas and electricity)
- 28% is from travel.

We have reduced emissions from domestic business flights by 62%.

Over the next three years, Ofsted will be reducing its office footprint, using more energy-efficient Government Property Agency hubs. We are expected to reduce office-related CO₂ emissions.

Travel-related CO₂ emissions continue to reduce, with a lower number of journeys resulting in a drop by 6% since 2023–24 despite increased inspection volumes in 2024–25. This is helped in part by use of remote working tools.

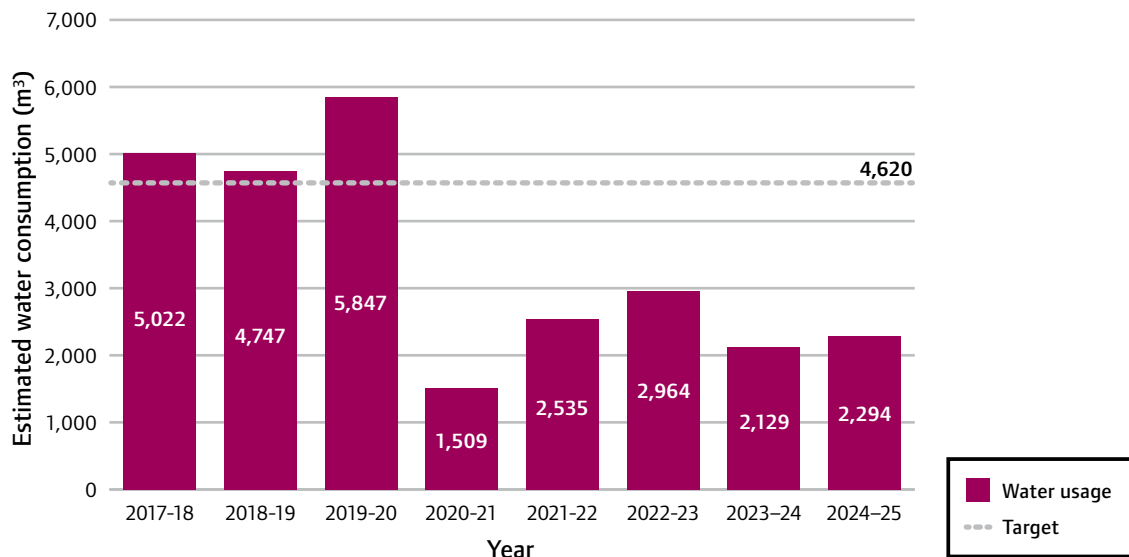
Minimising waste and promoting resource efficiency



Note: Some figures are estimates based on data provided to Ofsted as a minor occupier of larger, shared properties.

Waste is one of the clearest indications of the environmental impact of building occupancy. Estimated total waste in 2024-25 is 26% below the 2017-18 baseline compared to the target of 15%. The proportion of waste going to landfill is 7%, and the proportion that is recycled is 71%.

Reducing our water use



Note: Some figures are estimates based on data provided to Ofsted as a minor occupier of larger, shared properties.

We have reduced our water consumption by 54% compared with the 2017–18 baseline. Paper usage has reduced by 35% since 2017–18. We limit the use of single-use plastics in our offices.

Procuring sustainable products and services

Wherever possible, we continue to use Crown Commercial Service frameworks when purchasing goods and services. These take account of sustainability considerations. Our contracts for travel and car hire allow us to report on CO₂ emissions and our IT equipment contract includes sustainability requirements.

Nature recovery

Ofsted does not have a nature recovery plan. We lease office space from other government departments and private landlords in a small number of buildings and do not have any natural capital or landholdings.

Adapting to climate change

Ofsted has a climate change adaptation strategy which aligns with GGC.

Reducing environmental impacts from ICT and digital

In ICT and digital services, we have:

- increased the use of cloud technology, meaning there will be no requirements to buy and replace server hardware
- recycled old servers wherever it has been feasible to do so.

Financial and non-financial data relating to this section is available in Appendix D.

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Responding to complaints and concerns

Only a small proportion of our inspections and other activities result in complaints. In April 2024, we introduced new arrangements for finalising reports and considering formal challenges to inspection outcomes. We consider all complaints in line with our policy, and we take action when we find an error.⁴⁰

Number of complaints received 2024–25

	Schools	FE and skills	Early years	Social care	Total
Total inspections/activities	8,030	830	24,300	13,200	46,300
Total complaints received in relation to inspections/activities	310	18	530	180	1,030
Proportion of total	4%	2%	2%	1%	2%

Notes:

1. 'Complaints received' includes all complaints linked to inspections/activities where the inspection/activity was carried out in 2024–25 and where the complaint was also received in 2024–25. This includes complaints that were not fully investigated because they were withdrawn, were submitted late or came from third parties.
2. 'Total inspections/activities' includes all inspection activities, visits, and any other regulatory activities. This includes telephone regulatory events, such as an interview with a provider to follow up on concerns or notifications received.
3. 'Total inspections/activities' also includes additional regulatory activity that is not included in our corporate plan. We have included it here because this activity can be complained about.
4. Inspections/activities and complaints received over 100 have been rounded. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

This year, we received a total of 780 complaints from providers following an inspection in the period. Most complaints from providers challenge the grades that they received.

We categorise the complaints that we receive in order to act on them in the most appropriate way. The categories are built into our database and cannot be changed without significant system development (see page 24, 'Digital developments').

Nature of complaints received 2024–25

	Schools	FE and skills	Early years	Social care	Total
Judgement	50	3	110	41	210
Judgement/conduct/administration	190	14	290	110	600
Conduct/administration	32		63	16	110
Other	33	1	65	17	120

Note:

1. Numbers over 100 have been rounded. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

40. 'Complain about Ofsted', Ofsted, April 2024 (updated April 2025).

It is not possible to entirely separate the figures for complaints concerning inspectors' conduct and those concerning inspection judgements, given the interrelated nature of the complaints submitted.

The majority of complaints are categorised as containing elements of 'judgement' and challenging the inspection findings (that is, the judgements and/or text of the report). In many cases, as well as challenging the inspection findings, the complaint raises concerns about the conduct of the inspection team and/or the inspection process. Only in a small proportion of cases is the 'judgement' not explicitly challenged.

Number of complaints responded to 2024–25

	Schools	FE and skills	Early years	Social care	Other	Total
Complaints closed	410	24	640	190	3	1,280
Number of complaints closed with aspect upheld	110 (26%)	10 (42%)	140 (21%)	91 (48%)	0 (0%)	340 (27%)
Overall change of judgement as a result of a complaint	2	0	4	7	0	13
Incomplete inspection as a result of a complaint	9	5	14	9	0	37

Notes:

1. 'Complaints closed' includes all cases closed in 2024–25, regardless of when the complaint was received.
2. Overall judgements were not awarded in school inspections from September 2024.
3. Numbers over 100 have been rounded. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Of the 1,280 complaints closed this year, 27% had an aspect upheld. We take prompt action to put things right if there has been an error. After complaint investigations closed this year, we changed the overall judgement for 13 inspections and deemed 37 inspections to be incomplete.

We responded to 87% of formal complaints within our published deadline of 30 working days.

Following successful pilots, in January 2025 we started using complaints panels that include external sector representatives to review our handling of closed complaint cases. So far, we have held five panels and had positive feedback from attendees.

The Independent Complaints Adjudication Service for Ofsted (ICASO) reviews how we have handled cases that have been escalated by complainants after the end of our internal process. Its annual report for 2024 gave an overview of the 40 cases it considered that year.⁴¹

41. 'Annual report 2024', Independent Complaints Adjudication Service for Ofsted, 2024.

The ICASO report included the following statements:

‘Our primary conclusion is that we did not identify any significant matters of concern, and our overall view is that Ofsted’s complaints handling demonstrates a thorough consideration of concerns, and their responses set out clear analyses of the evidence and Ofsted’s approach to the underlying issues.’

‘We are pleased to report that every one of our adjudication reports was responded to personally by His Majesty’s Chief Inspector, Sir Martyn Oliver. Every response included a specific comment and, where Ofsted accepted our recommendation, a commitment to action, or, if Ofsted did not agree, a full explanation of their analysis. This level of attention to complaints and what can be learned from them at the highest level within Ofsted is, in our view, very welcome.’

If a complainant remains dissatisfied after ICASO has considered their case, the final point of escalation is the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman. The Ombudsman did not report on any complaints about Ofsted this year.

Learning from complaints

As set out in our published complaints process, we welcome comments and suggestions. We are determined to be a learning organisation, where all feedback received is used to improve the way we work and maintain our reputation within the sectors we inspect. Over the past few years, we have made several changes to our approach, to improve the opportunities for providers to ask questions or raise concerns, formally and informally. We have strengthened our formal complaint investigations so that providers that want to raise concerns formally have the opportunity to explain their issues to an experienced and expert investigator who has no connection with the inspection team or region where the inspection took place. These investigators act as ambassadors for the provider, ensuring that their complaint is fully understood and investigated without bias. Investigators are all inspectors, but they spend a significant amount of their time developing their expertise as complaint investigators.

Providers have told us that they worry about raising concerns during an inspection, fearful that this might affect their relationship with the inspector. We recognise the importance of acting quickly when things go wrong, and learning from all feedback, regardless of when it is shared with us. Although we continue to encourage providers to talk to inspectors about concerns during an inspection, we have also introduced a helpline to enable providers to speak to a senior inspector if they have a concern or question that they do not feel able to resolve with inspectors on the ground. This approach enables senior inspectors to work closely with providers and help to resolve their concerns quickly. This can sometimes prevent providers from feeling they need to make a formal complaint.

In some cases, senior colleagues have decided to pause an inspection or send additional inspectors to ensure an inspection is completed properly and the welfare of providers and inspectors is taken into account. The helpline is also available to providers after the inspection, so that they are able to speak to a senior inspector at any point before their report is published. A summary of each call is recorded and checked to ensure a consistent response. We analyse records regularly so that we can reflect on and learn from patterns of concerns and questions. This then informs our training and policy developments.

After we have completed a formal investigation into a complaint, we write to the provider to let them know the outcome. In the past, some complainants were dissatisfied with the explanation for why a complaint investigator had made a decision. They also felt that our complaint outcome letters lacked detail. As a result, we have trained all complaint investigators to better explain their deliberations and the evidence they considered when making their decision. This has led to more detailed and transparent outcome letters, helping complainants to better understand how we work. When we uphold a complaint, these letters explain the reason and set out the action we will take to put things right. This action can include changing a grade or gathering additional evidence by other inspectors who are independent of the original inspection team. Investigators also provide feedback internally to help inform improvements.

We share the findings and learning from individual complaint investigations with the lead inspector and their manager to help individual inspectors to improve. We also share the learning from complaints each month across all Ofsted regions and central policy teams to support improvement across the organisation and to inform policy development. This learning is shared with inspectors to improve practice. Examples include ensuring that all discussions between inspectors and the duty desk are recorded in the evidence base to make sure that decision-making is transparent. Members of our central policy teams also attend our complaints panels with external sector representatives to hear at first hand any feedback about the inspection process that was challenged. During these panel discussions, independent representatives from the sectors are invited to scrutinise our investigations of complaints, and provide us with feedback on the quality and accuracy of our investigations.⁴²

Feedback on complaint investigation findings is shared with the inspector by their line manager. This is so they can reflect on the findings and consider areas for improvement and training.

We also use complaints to understand which points in inspections are particularly busy and pressured, to help us design better ways of working. For example, we know that providers who complain often refer to inspectors' conduct during meetings, saying that the lead inspector seemed rushed and didn't maintain eye contact. Inspectors tell us that this is because they are managing complex conversations while also typing notes to include in their evidence. With this in mind, we are exploring the use of technology to transcribe and provide summaries of conversations and meetings. This would allow the inspector to concentrate on maintaining positive relationships, helping those being inspected to feel listened to and understood. We hope to introduce this technology across inspections alongside our new inspection frameworks.

Data included in last year's report on inspections where, as a result of our quality assurance processes, we have changed the overall judgement or deemed an inspection to be incomplete, as well as information on complaints against schools, are not included this year. These data will be reported in separate publications later this year.

42. 'Complain about Ofsted', Ofsted, April 2024 (updated April 2025).

Equality objectives progress report

The [Equality Act 2010](#) places an equality duty on all public bodies and requires them to publish equality objectives every four years. Ofsted has four equality objectives that run from 2023 to 2027.⁴³

We are pleased to report our progress for 2024–25 below.

Objective 1

Through our inspections and insights, we will raise standards in education, helping to advance equality of opportunity for those with protected characteristics, as well as those who are socioeconomically disadvantaged.

Over the last year, we have:

- carried out FE and skills inspections and thematic reviews that have focused on raising standards to ensure that all learners and apprentices receive high-quality education and training
- carried out thematic monitoring visits to ITE providers that focused, across all phases, on how trainees are being prepared to teach learners with SEND; these all included the theme of recruiting and retaining trainees, especially barriers to recruiting and retaining diverse cohorts of trainee teachers who are representative of the wider population
- found that many ECF and NPQ providers have equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) at the heart of their work; we have seen examples of providers actively recruiting and supporting participants from minority groups.

Objective 2

Through our inspections and regulatory activity, Ofsted will be a force for improvement for children in care and care leavers. This will particularly benefit some groups with protected characteristics who are disproportionately represented in the care population.

Over the last year, we have:

- completed a review of social care reports and evidence bases, and identified learning from these that has informed our evidence-gathering and report-writing training for inspectors
- monitored the impact of our inspector training through our consistency panels and provided feedback to the workforce
- made sure that EDI is covered in all our training, learning and development materials
- finished our roll-out of EDI-focused practice learning sessions for our social care HMI and regulatory inspectors, and have taken forward ideas for future learning and development
- published 50 ILACS reports (from short and standard inspections), which include a judgement about the experiences of care leavers – many local authorities have now designated care leaver status as a local protected characteristic; 18 judgements were outstanding, 23 good, five requires improvement and four inadequate.

43. 'Ofsted's equality objectives 2023 to 2027', Ofsted, January 2023 (updated July 2024).

Objective 3

We will use our independent voice to share our insights, which will inform practitioners, policymakers and decision-makers. This will improve the education and social care systems, often impacting most on those with protected characteristics.

Over the last year, we have published two commentaries looking at access to childcare:

- a commentary looking at the changes in access to childcare in England since 2020⁴⁴
- a commentary, working with the Office for National Statistics, to map out childcare accessibility in local areas by income, qualification levels of women in households with dependent children under four, and child poverty.⁴⁵

The findings on access to childcare have improved understanding across government, and data has been shared with several departments. The publications also led to significant media attention. This raised public awareness of the importance of accessible childcare and highlighted challenges faced by families.

We also published research on the early years sector that shed light on the provision for babies and toddlers (who are some of the most vulnerable groups of children in early years), as well as on workforce challenges:

- research that explored how early years practitioners have understood the early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework and applied it to the education and care of babies and toddlers
- a blog on maintaining quality early years provision in the face of workforce challenges
- a report considering the 4 specific areas of learning in EYFS and what it means to make progress in the areas of learning in light of findings from research, and the implications of this for practitioners.⁴⁶

We published two commentaries looking at regulation of social care provision:

- a commentary on the regulation of social care settings⁴⁷
- a commentary on children's social care settings that are not registered with Ofsted, the number of vulnerable children placed in them, and the subsequent application rates of settings following regulatory action.⁴⁸

Publishing data on regulatory activity in children's homes has shown how prevalent unregistered children's homes are. It has also highlighted the issues and challenges associated with addressing these unregulated settings.

We published a commentary about ownership of children's homes, which included information about the companies that own the largest number of children's homes or provide the largest number of fostering places.⁴⁹

This publication has made the sector more transparent, highlighting the complex ownership chains that affect the lives of children in care. This data has been pivotal in informing the government's policy reforms regarding children's social care, to improve the lives of the most vulnerable children.

44. 'Commentary: Changes in access to childcare in England', Ofsted, October 2024.

45. 'Childcare accessibility by neighbourhood', Office for National Statistics and Ofsted, June 2024.

46. 'Best start in life part 3: the 4 specific areas of learning', Ofsted, November 2022 (updated October 2024).

47. 'Regulatory activity in all types of children's homes between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024', Ofsted, April 2025.

48. 'Unregistered children's homes', Ofsted, November 2024.

49. 'Largest national providers of private and voluntary social care (March 2024)', Ofsted, October 2024.

We also published research on social care that highlighted particular challenges for children and young people affected by serious youth violence or homelessness, and fostering:

- a report on the findings of the multi-agency response to serious youth violence
- research into 16- and 17-year-olds who present to local authorities as homeless and the decision-making around whether they become looked after or not
- an evaluation of whether the social care common inspection framework is working as intended for our inspections of independent fostering agencies.

In FE and skills, our published research looked at students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. We completed an independent review of the quality of careers advice and guidance that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are receiving in FE providers.

Objective 4

Ofsted will be a welcoming and inclusive workplace with equality of opportunity for our workforce, attracting talent from wherever it comes. We will ensure that our policies take account of our duties under the Equality Act and are based on robust data analysis. We will take action to address inequalities where we find them.

Over the last year, we have:

- demonstrated Ofsted's commitment to workplace inclusivity by continuing to embed Ofsted's new values and behaviours and launching Ofsted's People Pledge; this provides both clear expectations and a framework to ensure we remain ambitious about improvement
- targeted the focus of Ofsted's EDI Workforce Approach through a data-led analysis of workforce demographics and 2024 People Survey results
- maintained transparency by sharing the distribution of reward schemes, the gender pay gap report and workforce demographic and recruitment data
- introduced a new workplace policy to support colleagues who experience menopause
- respected the needs of colleagues with protected characteristics by updating policies to reflect legislative changes, ensuring compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty
- continued to provide opportunities for colleagues with disabilities, as demonstrated by our renewed [Disability Confident Leader status](#).

Our supporting data pack outlines how the representation within our workforce has changed and sets out recruitment outcomes for those groups in 2024.⁵⁰

50. 'Ofsted equality objectives progress review: supporting data as of 31 March 2024', Ofsted.

Performance against our strategy

Our current strategy, published in 2022, sets out our values, strategic priorities, equality objectives and environmental goals until 2027.⁵¹ Since 2024, we have been delivering ambitious reforms.

We published our response to the Big Listen in September, which provided a single overarching improvement and development plan, owned by HMCI and the board. We have consulted with parents, carers, professionals and learners on what they think about our proposals to improve education inspections and our new report cards.

Given how much we heard through the Big Listen and the commitments we have made publicly to change, this is a good time to refresh our strategy. We want it to reflect our new ambitions as well as the priorities of the current government. We are currently working on our new strategy and will publish it in autumn 2025.

To reflect recent changes, we have also changed how we report to the executive committee and the board on our progress as an organisation. Instead of reporting on the 2022–27 strategy and the metrics set out there, we publicly report on our progress against the actions set out in response to the Big Listen and to Dame Christine Gilbert’s review in our [Big Listen action monitoring reports](#). This is why we have paused data collection on a number of metrics and will not be using them to measure our progress.

We have been regularly publishing our Big Listen action monitoring reports this year, in order to:

- reset our relationship with those we regulate and inspect, and work collaboratively with them to put children and learners first
- foster a culture of integrity in which we always treat people with professionalism, courtesy, empathy and respect
- be a learning organisation that operates transparently, listens to challenge and takes action to change.

At the time of publishing this report, we have completed 68 out of 132 actions.



Sir Martyn Oliver
His Majesty’s Chief Inspector

9 July 2025

51. ‘Ofsted strategy 2022–27’, Ofsted, April 2022.

Corporate governance report

The corporate governance report contains three sections:

- the directors' report
- the statement of Accounting Officer's responsibilities
- the governance statement.

It describes Ofsted's structure and governance framework and includes information about board members' and directors' significant interests. It describes the Accounting Officer's responsibilities and how they have been assured. It also describes risk management arrangements.

The report covers the year to 31 March 2025. It includes information about some significant matters up until the date of publication.

Directors' report

Ofsted is a non-ministerial government department sponsored by, but independent of, the DfE.

Ofsted is led by HMCI, Sir Martyn Oliver, whose term of office runs to 31 December 2028. HMCI is responsible for inspecting and regulating services for children and learners and is accountable to Parliament. His duties are set out in Ofsted's corporate governance framework.⁵²

Executive leadership team

The executive leadership team consists of:

- Sir Martyn Oliver, HMCI
- Matthew Coffey, Deputy HMCI
- Andrew Cook, Regional Director, West Midlands (until June 2024), Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Delivery (until February 2025); National Director, Delivery (from February 2025)
- Neil Greenwood, Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Operations (until February 2025); National Director, Digital and Operations (from February 2025)
- Louise Grainger, Director, Finance Planning and Commercial (until September 2024); Chief Financial Officer (from September 2024)
- Lee Owston, National Director, Education
- Yvette Stanley, National Director, Regulation and Social Care
- Rory Gribbell, Director, Strategy and Engagement
- Alex Jones, Director, Insights and Research
- Matthew Purves, Regional Director, South East (until September 2024); Director, Ofsted Academy (until February 2025; National Director, Ofsted Academy (from February 2025)
- Jonathan Smart, Regional Director, North West
- Mike Sheridan, Regional Director, East Midlands and East of England
- Katrina Gueli, Regional Director, North East, Yorkshire and Humber

52. 'Ofsted's corporate governance framework', Ofsted, February 2014 (updated March 2023).

- James McNeillie, Regional Director, South West, and (from June 2024) West Midlands
- Caroline Dulon, Regional Director, London, and (from September 2024) South East
- Lucia Wilde, Director, People.

In September 2024, the following roles were added to the executive committee:

- Deputy Director, Communications (held for this period by Mark Leech)
- Deputy Director, Legal Services (held for this period by Kate Warburton).

Members of the leadership team had the following interests in the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025:

Name	Organisation	Role	Organisation type
Sir Martyn Oliver	Education Honours Committee, Cabinet Office	Independent member	Government department
Matthew Coffey	Institute of Regulation	Director/Trustee	Charitable trust
Louise Grainger	King's School	Governor	School
	Ofqual	Audit and risk assurance committee member	Non-ministerial government department
	His Majesty's Treasury Finance Leadership Group	Small and Medium Departments Finance Directors Forum subcommittee member and chair	Government organisation
	Valuation Office Agency's Risk and Assurance Committee	Independent member	Executive agency
Alex Jones	Nonsuch Primary School	Governor	School
Mike Sheridan	MK Dons Sports and Education Trust	Trustee	Charity
Yvette Stanley	Nuffield Foundation	Panel member	Charitable trust
	National Leadership College Board	Board member	Government department
	Kinship	Trustee	Charity
	Youth Endowment Fund	Adviser, Social Care	Charity
Lucia Wilde	The EY Foundation	Independent trustee	Charity

Board

The board had the following membership during the year:

Name	Notes	Term ends
Dame Christine Ryan (resigned from post effective 31 March 2025)	Chair	March 2025
Sir Martyn Oliver	HMCI	December 2028
Felicity Gillespie	Sits on Ofsted's safeguarding group as an observer	July 2026
Dr Christopher Harvey		July 2025
David Meyer OBE		January 2026
Joanne Moran		July 2026
Sir Hamid Patel CBE (Interim chair, effective 1 April 2025)	Senior board member	December 2025
Martin Spencer	Chair of Audit and Risk Assurance Committee	July 2027
Carole Stott OBE	Sits on the SCS Pay and Remuneration Committee and the Ofsted Academy committee as an observer	July 2025
Baroness Laura Wyld		July 2027
Jon Yates		July 2026
Frank Young		July 2025

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee had the following membership during the year:

Name	Notes
Martin Spencer	Chair
Joanne Moran	Board member
Baroness Laura Wyld	Board member
Jon Yates	Board member
Ian Looker	Co-opted member

Register of interests

Ofsted maintains a register of interests to identify any potential conflicts of interest. Board members and members of its committees must declare any potential conflicts of interest on appointment and on an annual basis, or as soon as they arise in the year.

Where a board member has a potential conflict of interest, they take no part in any discussions and are not involved in any decisions that relate to it.

For the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, board members and co-opted non-executive members of ARAC reported the following interests.

Name	Organisation	Role	Organisation type
Christine Ryan	OKRE (Opening Knowledge across Research and Entertainment)	Trustee	Charity
Hamid Patel	Star Academies	Chief executive	Multi-academy trust
	Confederation of School Trusts (CST)	Trustee	National body for multi-academy trusts
	CST Professional Development Ltd	Director	Company
	Shine Charity	Trustee	Charity
	Education Partnerships Trust	Member	Not-for-profit multi-academy trust
	Education Honours Committee	Member	Cabinet Office
	School-Led Development Trust	Trustee	Company
	University of Birmingham	Honorary Professor	University
	Cultural Education Plan Expert Advisory Panel	Vice Chair	DfE and Department for Culture, Media and Sport Advisory Panel
	Relationships, sex and health education independent review panel	Panel member	Independent panel
Felicity Gillespie	Kindred Squared	Director	Charity
	DfE	Governance adviser	Government department
	West London Zone	Trustee	Charity
	Ark Schools	Programme advisory group	Education charity and academy operator

Name	Organisation	Role	Organisation type
Chris Hanvey	Pathways Care	Member of the Fostering Panel (until December 2024)	Company
	The Children's Consultancy Ltd	Adviser	Company
	Therapeutic Care Journal	Member of the Editorial Board	Company
	Martin James Foundation	Trustee	Charity
	Devon and Cornwall Police	Independent panel member, police misconduct hearings. Occasionally involved in disciplinary hearings against police officers	Police
David Meyer	PaJeS (Partnership for Jewish Schools)	CEO	Charity
	LEAP Educational Consultancy	Director	Consultancy
	Pikuach – Inspectorate for Jewish schools	Board member	Inspectorate
	DDSM Ltd	Director	Company
	Kehilla NW – communal information website	Trustee	Company
Joanne Moran	Dolphin Housing	Board member	Housing association
	Vivid	Non-Executive Director	Housing association
Martin Spencer	Education and Skills Funding Agency	Chair	Executive agency
	Companies House	Board member	Executive agency
	London Fire Brigade	Audit Committee member	Fire and rescue service
	UK Civil Service Commission	Civil Service Commissioner	Cabinet Office
	Criminal Cases Review Commission	Board member	Government department
	Achieving for Children	Director	Community interest company
	Submarine Delivery Agency	Board member	Government
Carole Stott	St John's Foundation, Bath	Trustee	Charity
	Bath Spa University	Governor	University

Name	Organisation	Role	Organisation type
Baroness Laura Wyld	House of Lords	Member	Parliament
	House of Lords Preterm Birth Select Committee	Member	Parliament
	All Party Parliamentary Group, Maternity	Officer	Parliament
	Public Services Committee	Committee member	Parliament
	All Party Parliamentary Group, Global Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights	Member	Parliament
	AGL communication consultancy	Senior adviser	Company
	Newcastle upon Tyne University	Member of the court	University
Jon Yates	Youth Endowment Fund	Executive Director	Charitable trust
	Children's Commissioner	Advisory board member	Non-departmental public body
	UK Youth	Trustee	Charity
Frank Young	Parentkind	Director of Research and Policy	Charity

Statement of Accounting Officer's responsibilities

Under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 the Treasury has directed Ofsted to prepare, for each financial year, resource accounts detailing the resources acquired, held or disposed of during the year and the use of resources by the department during the year. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of Ofsted and of its income and expenditure, Statement of Financial Position and cash flows for the financial year. In preparing the accounts, the Accounting Officer is required to comply with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual and in particular to:

- observe the accounts direction issued by HM Treasury, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis
- state where applicable accounting standards, as set out in the reporting manual, have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the accounts
- prepare the accounts on a going-concern basis
- confirm that the Annual Report and Accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable and to take personal responsibility for the Annual Report and Accounts and the judgements required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.

HMCI is Ofsted's Accounting Officer, appointed by HM Treasury. The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, including responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding Ofsted's assets, are set out in 'Managing public money', published by the HM Treasury.⁵³

As the Accounting Officer, I have taken all the steps that I ought to have taken to make myself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that Ofsted's auditors are aware of that information. So far as I am aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware.



Sir Martyn Oliver
His Majesty's Chief Inspector

9 July 2025

53. 'Managing public money', HM Treasury, May 2012 (updated June 2025).

Governance statement

As Accounting Officer, HMCI is responsible for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of our policies, aims and objectives. This system must safeguard the public's funds and our assets, for which HMCI is responsible in accordance with the responsibilities assigned in 'Managing public money'.

Ofsted complies with the relevant sections of the code of practice for corporate governance in central government departments and adheres to the principles for risk management set out in the HM Treasury's 'Orange Book'.⁵⁴

This governance statement describes the corporate governance and risk management arrangements for the period beginning 1 April 2024 and ending 31 March 2025.

Governance structure

There were a number of changes to the governance structure in the reporting period.

In September 2024, a new Chief Financial Officer role was created and appointed through external competition. Also in September 2024, the Regional Director, South East, was appointed Director, Ofsted Academy on a temporary basis. This was then made permanent in February 2025.

From February 2025, the roles of Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Delivery and Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Operations were changed to National Director, Delivery and National Director, Digital and Operations on a permanent basis.

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54. 'Orange Book', HM Treasury, May 2013 (updated June 2025).

Ofsted board

The responsibilities of the board are set out in the corporate governance framework.⁵⁵ In line with the recommendations of Dame Christine Gilbert's review, the framework has been redrafted and agreed in principle by the board, subject to further engagement and agreement by the incoming substantive chair.

Dame Christine Ryan announced her resignation in December 2024 and served as chair of the board until 31 March 2025. A senior board member supports the chair and deputises when necessary. This position was held by Sir Hamid Patel throughout this period. He was appointed interim chair, effective on 1 April 2025.

The Deputy HMCI, National Directors for Education and Regulation and Social Care, Directors of Strategy and Engagement, and Insights and Research, and the Chief Financial Officer also attended board meetings.⁵⁶ Other staff attended when appropriate for specific items.

The board met four times formally in the reporting period. It scrutinised the following:

- corporate performance and updates from each business area
- strategic risks and mitigations
- finance updates, and recommended that HMCI approve Ofsted's annual budget prepared by the executive
- plans for the Big Listen consultation, and Ofsted's response
- responses to the Big Listen consultation from the sector and the public, as well as the internal Big Listen, from Ofsted staff
- the work of Ofsted's safeguarding group
- HMCI's Annual Report
- deep dives, including strategic communications and digital strategy
- development of a new Ofsted strategy
- reforms to Ofsted's inspection framework across all remits.

The board also:

- approved for publication Ofsted's Big Listen action monitoring report (as recommended in Dame Christine Gilbert's independent learning review)
- recommended that HMCI approve the Annual Report and Accounts 2023–24
- drafted and approved in principle a draft corporate governance framework (see further detail on page 54).

55. 'Ofsted's corporate governance framework', Ofsted, February 2014 (March 2023).

56. From the September 2024 meeting, the Director of Finance attended in the role of Chief Financial Officer.

Effectiveness of corporate governance

Throughout 2024 the board continued to monitor how effective Ofsted's governance arrangements are as part of regular business. The board also discussed the recommendations from Dame Christine Gilbert's independent learning review, published in July 2024. In response, the board and HMCI began work on a new corporate governance framework in autumn 2024. The board drafted a new framework in partnership with the executive leadership team. This was approved in principle (subject to review and approval by the incoming board chair) in February 2025.

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

The board can delegate functions to committees. ARAC is the only committee at this time.

ARAC gives advice and assurance to the board and HMCI. It offers guidance on the adequacy and effectiveness of internal controls, risk management processes and governance arrangements. It also provides assurance on internal and external audit arrangements covering both financial and non-financial systems. Its terms of reference are set out in the corporate governance framework.

In the reporting period, the committee had four board members and one independent financially qualified member. Martin Spencer chaired the committee for the reporting period.

As Accounting Officer, HMCI attends committee meetings along with the Deputy HMCI and the Chief Financial Officer. The internal auditors and the National Audit Office also attend. Other members of staff attend when appropriate.

Between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025, the committee:

- monitored how Ofsted is putting audit recommendations into practice
- reviewed internal audit reports
- strengthened risk management by providing feedback and challenge on work to improve the risk register and risk management processes, with a particular focus on risk tolerance
- scrutinised risk management arrangements and the strategic risk register
- reviewed the financial position and forecast
- reviewed the Annual Report and Accounts 2023–24 before submitting it for audit and Accounting Officer certification
- reviewed and approved the proposed timeline for producing the 2024–25 Annual Report and Accounts
- reviewed the National Audit Office's audit planning and completion reports
- received an annual briefing on information and cyber-security in Ofsted
- scrutinised Ofsted's whistle-blowing policy and procedure.

Board and committee member attendance: 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

Meetings attended (out of possible)

Board member	Actual/possible (Board)	Actual/possible (ARAC)
Christine Ryan	5/5	
Sir Martyn Oliver	5/5	5/5
Sir Hamid Patel CBE	5/5	
Martin Spencer	4/5	5/5
Carole Stott CBE	5/5	
Baroness Laura Wyld	5/5	5/5
Felicity Gillespie	5/5	
Joanne Moran	5/5	4/5
Jon Yates	5/5	3/5
Frank Young	5/5	
Chris Harvey	4/5	
David Meyer CBE	4/5	
Ian Looker		4/5

Executive committee

Ofsted's senior management team, the executive committee, is chaired by HMCI. The executive committee is made up of HMCI, Deputy HMCI and Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer, National Directors for Education, Social Care, Delivery, the Ofsted Academy, and Digital and Operations, Directors of Strategy and Engagement, Insights and Research, and People, and the Regional Directors. As of September 2024, the Deputy Director, Communications and Deputy Director, Legal Services were also made members.

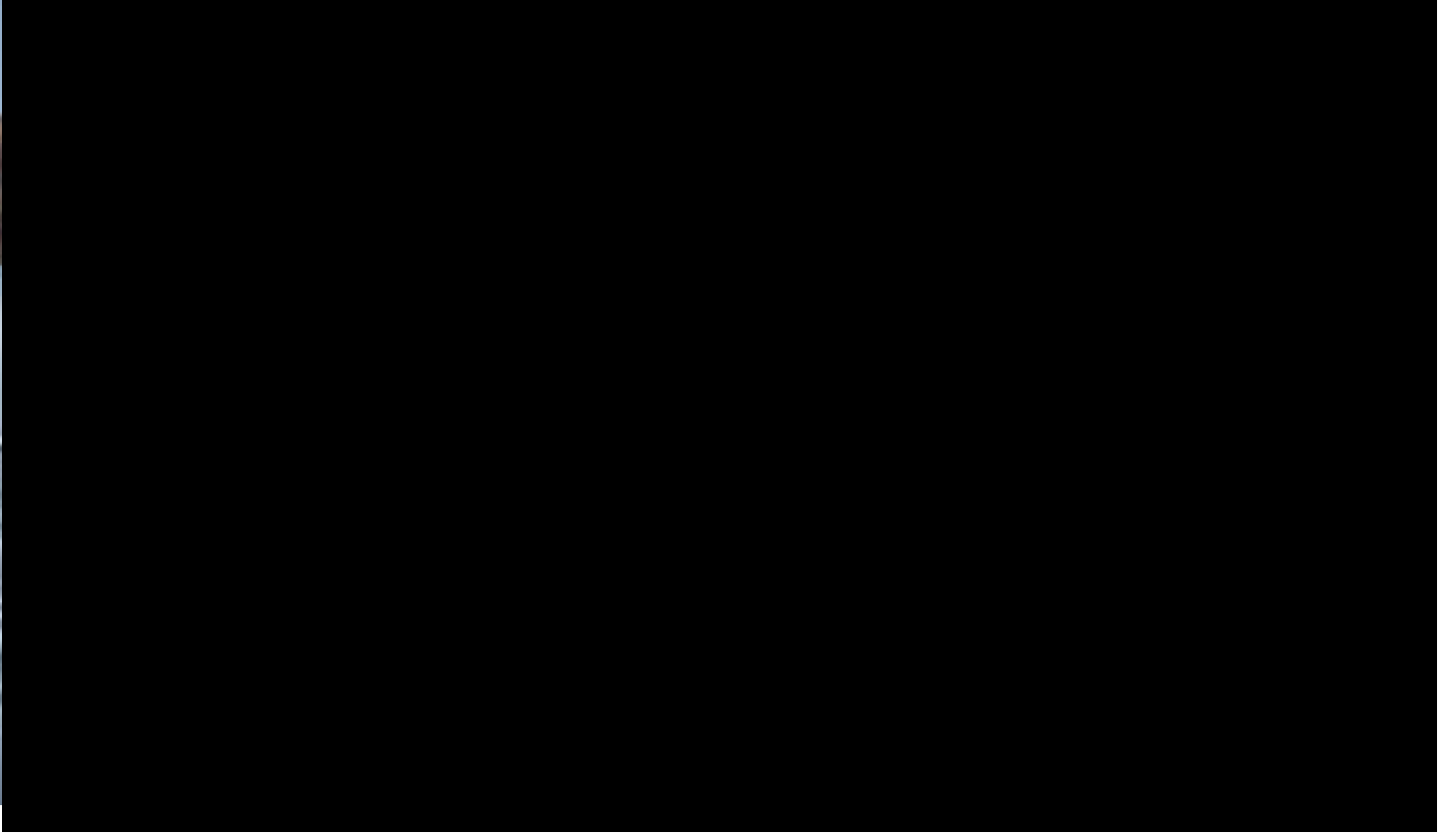
The executive committee provides advice and support to HMCI on issues that have a significant operational or strategic impact on the organisation, including the implementation and delivery of Ofsted's strategic priorities, as agreed with the Ofsted board. Attendees have oversight of operational change and business-as-usual activity and scrutinise monthly finance, performance and risk reports.

For the period January to August 2024, the executive committee met twice a month. The first meeting was for strategic discussions and the second was a forum for operational decision-making. As of September 2024, the executive committee meets monthly, with no differentiation between strategic and operational matters. This was in response to a revised governance structure (see below).

The operational groups described below escalate risks, concerns and items for decision to the executive committee and HMCI where necessary. Two new groups were introduced this year (the Deputy HMCI's monthly management meeting, and fortnightly oversight meeting). This updated internal executive governance structure was introduced in response to the need for change across key business areas, including policy commitments made by the new government. These operational groups are as follows:

- The Deputy HMCI's monthly management meeting is a forum for discussing strategy, policy and practice matters that have delivery implications for Ofsted and/or any of its enabling functions. Those attending also provide advice and support to HMCI or the Deputy HMCI on matters that require the agreement of more than one director, or that have a national impact. The meeting is chaired by the Deputy HMCI and attended by all national and regional directors, and the Deputy Directors for Legal Services, Communications, and Selection, Risk Assessment and Forecasting. It was introduced in June 2024.
- Star Chambers are attended by senior leaders in each region, representing all remits, and are held once every quarter. The meeting holds regional directors and directors responsible for operations to account for activity in their remit through scrutinising data. Since July 2024 this meeting has been chaired by the Deputy Chief Operating Officer, Delivery.
- The Deputy HMCI's fortnightly oversight meeting was introduced in June 2024. Its purpose is to scrutinise and challenge all aspects of Ofsted's priorities for 2025, and make sure a coherent operating model is implemented and embedded across the organisation. The meeting is chaired by the Deputy HMCI and attended by all national directors, the Regional Director, East Midlands and East of England, and the Deputy Chief Operating Officers for Delivery and Operations.

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Risk management

For the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, Ofsted reviewed its existing risk management process against the Orange Book guidance, the corporate governance framework, and the approaches to risk management taken by similar organisations. On the back of this work, we have updated the risk management policy document and the strategic risk register.

Strategic risks

Ofsted carries out a wide range of activities to achieve its statutory responsibilities, strategic priorities, and objectives. All of these activities, no matter how well planned, will carry some level of risk to their success. In order to ensure that correct systems and processes are in place to manage strategic, executive, and operational risks across all functions of Ofsted, we have revisited our approach to risk management this year. This has included a revised format of how we report strategic risks to the Executive and the Board, a re-energised commissioning process which has enabled the organisation to have more effective oversight of the cross-cutting nature of these risks, and a refreshed risk management policy to align our process even further with the Orange Book guidance.

Five times a year, the Executive will jointly review and monitor strategic risks, identify further mitigating actions, and agree updates to the risk register. The Ofsted Board and ARAC will also receive an update as a standing item. The Chair of ARAC will report to each Board meeting and offer advice to HMCI and the Board in relation to the appropriateness of mechanisms for the assessment, management of, and measures taken to address strategic risks. Risk owners ensure at all times that the risk is being reported at the right level, that escalation/de-escalation routes are established and followed through, that a clear audit trail of any changes is established and maintained, and that any feedback from the executive committee, ARAC or the Board is implemented fully.

A high-level summary of Ofsted's strategic risks is provided below.

Reputational

We have committed to an ambitious package of reform measures. A significant challenge for the next year will be our relationship with our key stakeholders. We will need to maintain the confidence of the sectors we inspect and regulate in our ability to improve standards and deliver on our programme of work alongside other competing priorities. Our strategic risk register considers how we can maintain this confidence, while also retaining the trust of parents, carers and the wider public, as we begin to deliver and implement these reforms. The risk register also considers our ability, resources and expertise to respond to high-profile cases in our inspection and regulatory work promptly and effectively.

Operational

Our strategic risk register includes a risk of Ofsted not delivering our statutory and government-agreed inspection targets. Another important strategic risk is that our work fails to sufficiently safeguard children or identify the action required by others to strengthen their safeguarding arrangements. We continue to take measures to ensure there are mitigating actions in place, including thorough and consistent policies and processes, strong selection controls, and a focus on recruitment.

Workforce

Effectively implementing the ambitious reform package we have committed to requires a committed and effective workforce. There are two relevant strategic risks which consider how we retain a high-quality workforce and develop our internal culture to foster a productive working environment for our people to thrive in. We will continue to invest in training and development for all our staff to make sure they have the knowledge and skills to be highly effective in their roles.

External factors

There are large workstreams and competing pressure points which are tied to the reform agenda and are dependent on the successful completion of interdependent work. The strategic risk register considers a number of workstreams which are reliant on additional funding, in particular necessary investment in our data and digital systems. Ofsted mitigates these risks through comprehensive scenarios and business planning across the whole organisation, and by building constructive and transparent relationships with the DfE and other relevant stakeholders.

Data incidents

This year there have been a total of 220 information-related security events reported, each of which was contained.

Thirty-nine of these were categorised as breach of GDPR, with three resulting in notifications being submitted to the Information Commissioner's Office.

The most common type of GDPR breaches reported remains emails and attachments being sent to the incorrect recipient, and information being stored against the wrong record within Ofsted systems. We continue to focus on educating colleagues on the importance of handling information in line with expected standards.

Internal audit

The Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA) served as Ofsted's internal auditor throughout the year. As the government's main provider of internal audit services, GIAA offers a cross-government perspective.

This year, the Head of Internal Audit gave a 'moderate' opinion, stating that overall Ofsted's framework of governance, risk management and control was largely adequate and effective. This was the same opinion as the previous year, but set in the context of Ofsted's progress in delivering against the actions arising from the Big Listen and the independent learning review, reported via the Big Listen Action Monitoring Report, as well as other developments during 2024-25, including the introduction of changes to strategic risk management and governance. Overall, GIAA issued five 'substantial', two 'moderate' and two 'limited' reports, and considered that there is an improving direction of travel in relation to Ofsted's framework of governance, risk management and control.

Functional standards

Ofsted adheres to Cabinet Office functional standards: a suite of management standards and associated documentation to guide people working in and with the UK government. We have a high level of compliance with the required and recommended elements of each relevant standard. We have assigned leads for each functional standard and have an assurance process in place to make sure we attempt to comply with each standard in a way that meets business need and priorities.

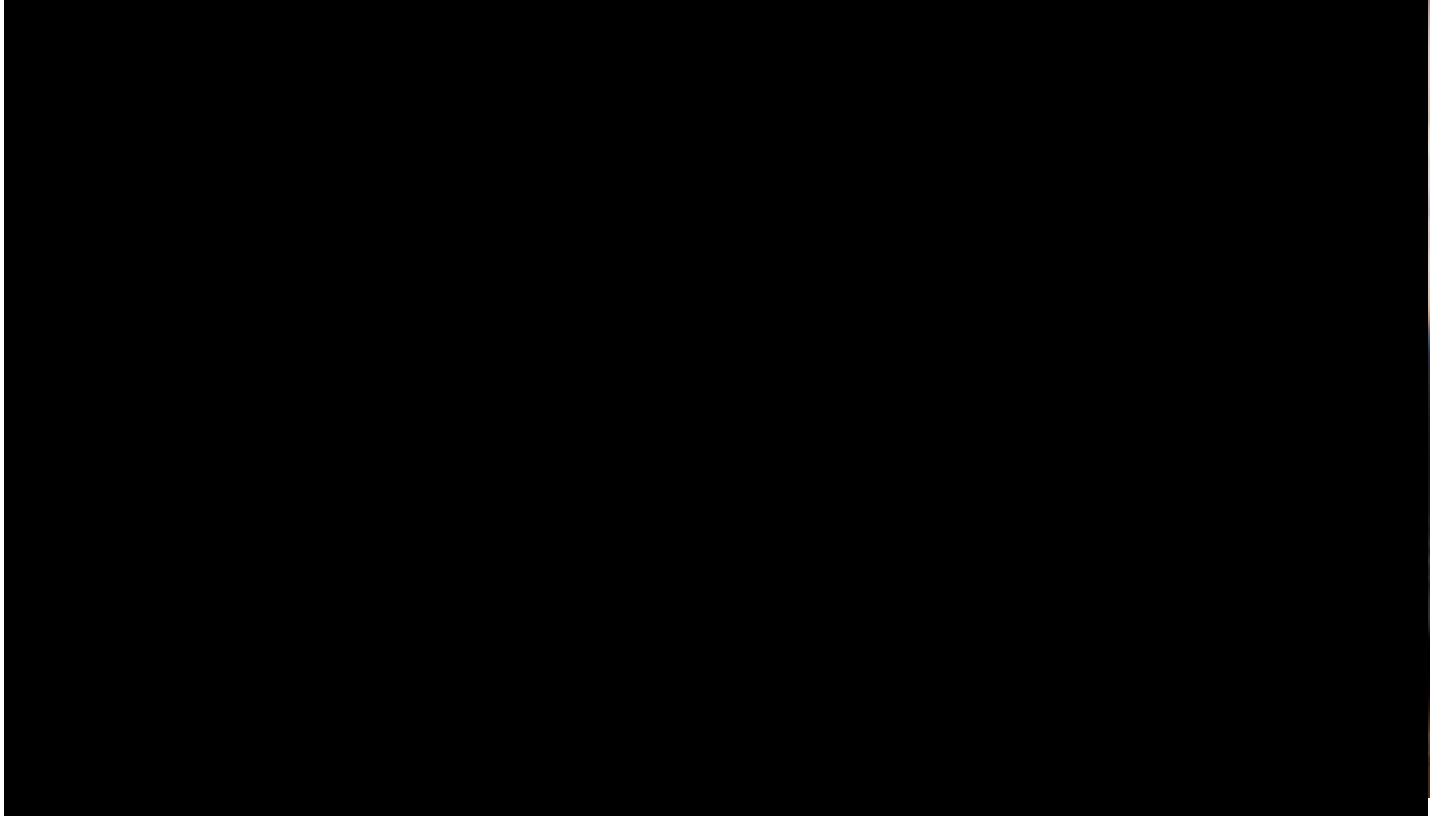
Internal controls

HMCI, as Accounting Officer, is required to review the effectiveness of the system of internal control annually. This review is informed by the work of internal and external auditors, ARAC and the senior managers responsible for the internal control framework. This governance statement is completed to provide assurance to HMCI about the effectiveness of the governance and internal control framework, as set out above.

HMCI reviews the systems in place to minimise risks and to support the achievement of our policy, aims and objectives. This includes a review of standard mid – and end-year checks carried out by senior civil servants of the controls to manage risks in their area. The assurance review is a structured means of identifying and assessing the main sources of assurance in the organisation. Each director and deputy director must give written assurance to HMCI that their controls are effective. Any deviations from our internal control checklist are reported.

There were no significant deviations identified in the period to 31 March 2025.

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Remuneration and staff report

Remuneration report part A: unaudited

Appointing non-executive board members

The Secretary of State for Education appoints board members in line with government guidelines. Full details of board members' dates and terms of appointment are in the governance statement.

Appointment of the Permanent Head of the Department and directors

Sir Martyn Oliver has been HMCI since January 2024. His term of appointment runs to 31 December 2028.

The members of the executive committee and their dates of appointment are listed in the governance statement. The senior civil servants (SCS) covered by this report hold permanent appointments.

Civil Service appointments are made in accordance with Civil Service recruitment principles, which require appointments to be made on merit through fair and open competition.

Remuneration policy

SCS are paid in accordance with the SCS pay framework. This is set by the government and is subject to the recommendations of the Senior Salaries Review Body.

Ofsted operates an SCS performance and remuneration committee consisting of HMCI, senior civil servants and a non-executive board member. This committee decides annual SCS pay and bonus awards, as well as any changes to Ofsted's SCS pay strategy. Carole Stott OBE is the non-executive member. The role of the independent member is to quality assure the process. She makes sure that individual pay decisions are based on consistent criteria and evidence of individual performance.

Ofsted's approach to assessing SCS performance follows the relevant Cabinet Office guidance.

Our assessment is based on:

- whether objectives have been met
- demonstration of leadership behaviours and working in line with Ofsted and Civil Service values
- professional skills
- management of resources
- degree of difficulty in meeting the objectives considering actual events.

We follow standard Civil Service performance processes for SCS and our SCS pay and remuneration committee moderates performance outcomes to ensure processes are applied fairly and consistently.

Remuneration report part B: audited

Non-executive remuneration

The remuneration of board members for the year ending 31 March 2025 was as follows:

Name	Remuneration (£'000)	
	2024–25	2023–24
Dame Christine Ryan (Chair)	45–50	45–50
Felicity Gillespie	5–10	5–10
Christopher Hanvey	5–10	5–10
David Meyer OBE	5–10	5–10
Joanne Moran	5–10	5–10
Sir Hamid Patel CBE	5–10	5–10
Martin Spencer	5–10	5–10
Carole Stott OBE	5–10	5–10
Jon Yates	5–10	5–10
Frank Young	5–10	5–10
Baroness Laura Wyld	5–10	5–10

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Remuneration of executive committee members

The remuneration of the most senior staff for the year ending 31 March 2025 was as follows:

	Salary (£'000)		Bonus payments (£'000)		Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)		Pension benefits (to nearest £1,000)		Total (£'000)	
	2024–25	2023–24	2024–25	2023–24	2024–25	2023–24	2024–25	2023–24*	2024–25	2023–24
Martyn Oliver	170–175	40–45 (160–165 FYE)**	–	–	–	–	66,000	16,000	235–240	55–60
Matthew Coffey	165–170	155–160	0–5	0–5	–	–	100,000	48,000	270–275	205–210
Louise Grainger	115–120	105–110	0–5	0–5	–	–	47,000	42,000	170–175	150–155
Andrew Cook	145–150	140–145	0–5	5–10	–	–	98,000	80,000	245–250	230–235
Neil Greenwood	125–130	120–125	0–5	5–10	–	–	92,000	74,000	225–230	205–210
Lee Owston	120–125	25–30 (110–115 FYE)	0–5	–	–	–	47,000	11,000	170–175	35–40
Yvette Stanley	140–145	140–145	0–5	0–5	–	–	56,000	54,000	205–210	190–195
Alex Jones	130–135	120–125	0–5	–	–	–	76,000	64,000	205–210	185–190
Lucia Wilde	95–100	70–75 (85–90 FYE)	0–5	–	–	–	114,000	63,000	210–215	130–135
Matthew Purves	135–140	130–135	0–5	5–10	–	–	97,000	67,000	235–240	205–210
Mike Sheridan	150–155	145–150	0–5	–	–	–	56,000	54,000	210–215	200–205
Rory Gribbell	115–120	10–15 (100–105 FYE)	–	–	–	–	46,000	23,000	160–165	45–50
Caroline Dulon	135–140	130–135	–	–	–	–	53,000	51,000	185–190	180–185
Katrina Gueli	140–145	135–140	–	–	–	–	54,000	51,000	195–200	185–190

	Salary (£'000)		Bonus payments (£'000)		Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)		Pension benefits (to nearest £1,000)		Total (£'000)	
	2024–25	2023–24	2024–25	2023–24	2024–25	2023–24	2024–25	2023–24*	2024–25	2023–24
Jonathan Smart	115–120	25–30 (100–105 FYE)	–	–	–	–	45,000	9,000	160–165	30–35
James McNeillie	135–140	130–135	0–5	–	3,700	4,000	53,000	51,000	195–200	185–190
Mark Leech (executive committee member from September 2024)	55–60 (FYE 100–105)	65–70 (FYE 105–110)	–	0–5	–	–	43,000	24,000	100–105	90–95
Kate Warburton (executive committee member from September 2024)	55–60 (FYE 100–105)	–	–	–	–	–	32,000	–	90–95	–

*Accrued pension benefits included in this table for any individual affected by the public service pensions remedy have been calculated based on their inclusion in the legacy scheme for the period between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022, following the McCloud judgment. The public service pensions remedy applies to individuals who were members, or eligible to be members, of a public service pension scheme on 31 March 2012 and were members of a public service pension scheme between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022. The basis for the calculation reflects the legal position that affected members have been rolled back into the relevant legacy scheme for the remedy period and that this will apply unless the member actively exercises their entitlement on retirement to decide instead to receive benefits calculated under the terms of the alpha scheme for the period from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2022.

** FYE = full-year equivalent.

‘Salary’ includes gross salary, recruitment and retention allowances, and other allowances to the extent that they are subject to UK taxation.

In line with the SCS pay framework, bonus payments are based on performance and are made as part of the appraisal process.⁵⁷

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the employer and treated by HMRC as a taxable emolument.

57. Note that HMCI is not a senior civil servant and therefore is not subject to bonus payments.

Fair pay disclosure (as at 31 March 2025)

For Ofsted employees, the average percentage changes from the previous financial year were:

		2024–25	2023–24	% Change
		(£'000)		
Highest-paid director	Salary and allowances	170–175	160–165	5.0
	Performance pay and bonuses	–	–	–
Employees (average by full-time equivalent)	Salary and allowances	60.2	57.3	5.1
	Performance pay and bonuses	0.1	0.07	42.9

Remuneration	2024–25		2023–24	
	Value (£'000)	Ratio	Value (£'000)	Ratio
Banded mid-point for highest-paid director	172.5	–	162.5	–
Upper quartile of total	83.1	2.1	80.7	2.0
Mid-point of total (median)	57.5	3.0	56.4	2.9
Lower quartile of total	36.4	4.7	36.2	4.6

Salary component	2024–25	2023–24
	Value (£'000)	Value (£'000)
Banded mid-point for highest-paid director	172.5	162.5
Upper quartile of total	83.1	79.6
Mid-point of total (median)	57.5	54.9
Lower quartile of total	36.4	34.6

The banded remuneration of the highest-paid director in Ofsted in the financial year 2024–25 was £170,000 to £175,000 (2023–24: £160,000 to £165,000). This was 3.0 times (2023–24: 2.9) the median remuneration of the workforce, which was £57,500 (2023–24: £56,400). The slight increase in pay multiples was as a result of the pay remit in 2024–25. The award percentage was the same for all staff. This equates to a greater monetary increase for higher-paid staff.

In 2024–25, no employees were paid more than the highest-paid director (2023–24: also none). Remuneration ranged from £25,011 to £173,250 (2023–24: £23,158 to £165,000).

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay and benefits in kind. It does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the cash-equivalent transfer value (CETV) of pensions.

Pension benefits

The pension entitlements of the most senior members of staff for the year ending 31 March 2025 were as follows:

	Accrued pension at pension age as at 31/03/2025	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at pension age	CETV at 31/03/2025	CETV at 31/03/2024*	Real increase in CETV
Name	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Martyn Oliver	5–10	2.5–5	74	14	45
Matthew Coffey	60–65 plus a lump sum of 145–150	5–7.5 plus a lump sum of 2.5–5	1,419	1,271	85
Louise Grainger	35–40	2.5–5	620	537	31
Andrew Cook	50–55	5–7.5	1,127	1,027	90
Neil Greenwood	50–55	5–7.5	973	860	72
Lee Owston	25–30	2.5–5	364	304	26
Yvette Stanley	20–25	2.5–5	396	314	44
Alex Jones	45–50	2.5–5	801	716	49
Lucia Wilde	40–45 plus a lump sum of 70–75	5–7.5 plus a lump sum of 7.5–10	797	663	96
Matthew Purves	35–40	5–7.5	622	525	66
Mike Sheridan	45–50	2.5–5	732	630	36
Rory Gribbell	5–10	2.5–5	83	51	20
Caroline Dulon	25–30	2.5–5	375	306	35
Katrina Gueli	45–50	2.5–5	779	669	41
Jonathan Smart	20–25	2.5–5	283	227	29
James McNeillie	35–40	2.5–5	577	490	35
Mark Leech (executive committee member from September 2024)	20–25	0–2.5	327	284	28
Kate Warburton (executive committee member from September 2024)	25–30 plus a lump sum of 50–55	0–2.5 plus a lump sum of 0–2.5	553	519	25

* The pension benefits of any members affected by the public service pensions remedy which were reported in 2022–23 based on alpha membership for the period between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022 have been reported since 2023–24 based on PCSPS membership for the same period.

Civil service pensions

Pension benefits are provided through the Civil Service pension arrangements. Before 1 April 2015, the only scheme was the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS), which is divided into a few different sections – classic, premium and classic plus provide benefits on a final salary basis, while nuvos provides benefits on a career average basis. From 1 April 2015, a new pension scheme for civil servants was introduced – the Civil Servants and Others Pension Scheme, or alpha, which provides benefits on a career average basis. All newly appointed civil servants, and the majority of those already in service, joined the new scheme.

The PCSPS and alpha are unfunded statutory schemes. Employees and employers make contributions (employee contributions range between 4.6% and 8.05%, depending on salary). The balance of the cost of benefits in payment is met by monies voted by Parliament each year. Pensions in payment are increased annually in line with the Pensions Increase legislation. Instead of the defined benefit arrangements, employees may opt for a defined contribution pension with an employer contribution, the partnership pension account.

In alpha, pension builds up at a rate of 2.32% of pensionable earnings each year, and the total amount accrued is adjusted annually in line with a rate set by HM Treasury. Members may opt to give up (commute) pension for a lump sum up to the limits set by the Finance Act 2004. All members who switched to alpha from the PCSPS had their PCSPS benefits ‘banked’, with those with earlier benefits in one of the final salary sections of the PCSPS having those benefits based on their final salary when they leave alpha.

The accrued pensions shown in this report are the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach normal pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are already at or over normal pension age. Normal pension age is 60 for members of classic, premium and classic plus, 65 for members of nuvos, and the higher of 65 or state pension age for members of alpha. The pension figures in this report show pension earned in PCSPS or alpha – as appropriate. Where a member has benefits in both the PCSPS and alpha, the figures show the combined value of their benefits in the two schemes, but note that the constituent parts of that pension may be payable from different ages.

When the government introduced new public service pension schemes in 2015, there were transitional arrangements which treated existing scheme members differently based on their age. Older members of the PCSPS remained in that scheme, rather than moving to alpha. In 2018, the Court of Appeal found that the transitional arrangements in the public service pension schemes unlawfully discriminated against younger members (the ‘McCloud judgment’).

As a result, steps are being taken to remedy those 2015 reforms, making the pension scheme provisions fair to all members. The Public Service Pensions Remedy is made up of two parts. The first part closed the PCSPS on 31 March 2022, with all active members becoming members of alpha from 1 April 2022. The second part removes the age discrimination for the remedy period, between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022, by moving the membership of eligible members during this period back into the PCSPS on 1 October 2023.

The accrued pension benefits, cash equivalent transfer value and single total figure of remuneration reported for any individual affected by the public service pensions remedy (footnote) have been calculated based on their inclusion in the PCSPS for the period between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022, following the McCloud judgment. The public service pensions remedy applies to individuals that were members, or eligible to be members, of a public service pension scheme on 31 March 2012 and were members of a public service pension scheme between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022.

The basis for the calculation reflects the legal position that members who were affected have been rolled back into the PCSPS for the remedy period and that this will apply unless the member actively exercises their entitlement on retirement to decide instead to receive benefits calculated under the terms of the alpha scheme for the period from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2022

The partnership pension account is an occupational defined contribution pension arrangement which is part of the Legal & General Master trust. The employer makes a basic contribution of between 8% and 14.75% (depending on the age of the member). The employee does not have to contribute but, where they do make contributions, the employer will match these up to a limit of 3% of pensionable salary (in addition to the employer's basic contribution). Employers also contribute a further 0.5% of pensionable salary to cover the cost of centrally provided risk benefit cover (death in service and ill-health retirement).

Further details about the Civil Service pension arrangements can be found at the website www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk.⁵⁸

Compensation for loss of office for executive committee members

No 'compensation for loss of office' payments were made to executive committee members in 2024–25 (2023–24: none).

Cash equivalent transfer values

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies.

The figures include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the member has transferred to the Civil Service pension arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their buying additional pension benefits at their own cost.

CETVs are worked out in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 and do not take account of any actual or potential reduction to benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

Real increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV that is funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation and contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement). It uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period

58. 'How the public service pensions remedy affects your pension', HM Revenue and Customs, October 2023; updated May 2025.

Staff report part A: audited

Number of senior civil servants by pay band

Total remuneration	As at 31 March 2025	As at 31 March 2024
Permanent secretary equivalent	1	1
SCS Band 3	1	1
SCS Band 2	13	11
SCS Band 1	18	18
Total	33	31

Staff numbers (average full-time equivalent numbers)

Type of staff	2024–25			2023–24
	Permanently employed staff	Others	Total	Total
Executive Committee	16	0	16	15
Other SCS	15	0	15	17
Inspection	988	3	991	992
APT*	966	70	1,036	1,077
Total	1,985	73	2,058	2,101
Of which: staff engaged on capital projects	16	2	18	41

* Administrative, professional and technical.

Staff costs

	2024–25			2023–24
	Permanently employed staff	Others	Total	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Wages and salaries	113,502	4,469	117,971	117,031
Social security costs	13,127	127	13,254	13,090
Apprentice levy	556	–	556	552
Pension costs	31,880	281	32,161	31,495
Exit costs	197	–	197	141
Sub total	159,262	4,877	164,139	162,309
Less recoveries in respect of outward secondments	(169)	–	(169)	(252)
Less capitalised costs	(1,061)	(410)	(1,471)	(3,353)
Total net costs	158,032	4,467	162,499	158,704



Reporting of Civil Service and other compensation schemes – exit packages

Redundancy and other departure costs have been paid in accordance with the provisions of the Civil Service pension scheme, a statutory scheme made under the Superannuation Act 1972. Exit costs are accounted for in full in the year of departure. If the department agrees early retirements other than for ill health, the additional costs are met by the department and not the Civil Service pension scheme. Ill-health retirement costs are met by the pension scheme and are not included in the table.

There were no compulsory redundancies in 2024–25.

Number of exit packages by cost band

Exit package cost band £'000	Number of compulsory redundancies	Number of other departures agreed	2024–25 total number of exit packages by cost band	2023–24 total number of exit packages by cost band
0–10	–	–	–	–
10–25	–	1	1	–
25–50	–	2	2	1
50–100	–	2	2	–
100–150	–	–	–	1
150–200	–	–	–	–
200+	–	–	–	–
Total number of exits	0	5	5	2
Total resource cost £'000	0	197	197	144

Monitoring of consultancy and temporary staff (not subject to audit)

Ofsted has used the Public Sector Resourcing framework, operated by the Crown Commercial Service, to procure new agency staff and interim contractors.

	2024–25	2023–24
	£'000	£'000
Consultancy	174	58
Temporary and agency staff	3,405	3,996

Off-payroll engagements (not subject to audit)

Ofsted is required to publish information on highly paid and/or senior off-payroll appointments. Off-payroll appointments are those that are not on the department's payroll.

Highly paid off-payroll worker engagements as at 31 March 2025, earning £245 per day or greater

Number of existing engagements as of 31 March 2025	14
Of which, number that existed:	
Less than 1 year	11
For between 1 and 2 years	–
For between 2 and 3 years	1
For between 3 and 4 years	1
For 4 or more years	1

All highly paid off-payroll workers engaged at any point during the year ended 31 March 2025, earning £245 per day or greater

Number of temporary off-payroll workers engaged during the year ended 31 March 2025	21
Of which:	
Not subject to off-payroll legislation	18
Subject to off-payroll legislation and determined as in scope of IR35	3
Subject to off-payroll legislation and determined as out of scope of IR35	–
Number of engagements reassessed for compliance or assurance purposes during the year	–

There were no off-payroll engagements of board members and/or senior officials with significant financial responsibility in 2024–25. There were 29 on-payroll engagements of board members and/or senior officials with significant financial responsibility in 2024–25.

Staff report part B: unaudited

Staff composition

On 31 March 2025, Ofsted directly employed 2,030 staff across England.

Headcount by sex:

	Female	Male	Total
Executive committee	6	12	18
Other SCS	11	6	17
Inspection	750	240	990
APT	630	377	1,007
Total	1,397	635	2,030

These figures are from the staff in post report.

Employee matters

Sickness

Sickness absence has increased this year, which means that the average number of working days lost has risen to 7.3 days. This is above our organisational target of 6.8 days. Thirty-two per cent of absences are due to stress, anxiety and other psychological conditions. Although this is lower than the Civil Service average, we will continue our efforts to reduce it.

Turnover

Staff turnover as at 31 March 2025 was 10.6% (12.8% as at 31 March 2024). There continues to be variation between remits and grades. Recruitment and retention of talent continue to be priorities.

Supportive employment practices

We have introduced new and revised guidance for all colleagues experiencing menopause, and guidance on handling third-party abuse. During the year we introduced a new system to enable staff to report abuse while they are working remotely so that they can receive support and assistance quickly if needed. We continue to offer a 'lone working app' to staff who work on inspection and in remote locations alone. This enables them to request urgent assistance if needed, including from emergency services. We have also strengthened our policies in response to changes in the law, for example the duty to prevent sexual harassment at work.

During the year, the Ofsted continued to support our workforce and keep them safe. Ofsted ran a variety of well-being initiatives and increased our pool of mental health first aiders. We have also brought assessments for workplace adjustments in-house.

Although bullying, discrimination and harassment are reassuringly uncommon in Ofsted, we have a bullying, discrimination and harassment working group that consults colleagues on how we can continue to improve. The findings from this group inform communications, guidance and training.

Whistle-blowing (internal)

There has been one whistle-blowing case during the year, which was investigated by senior colleagues and resolved appropriately with all parties.

Anti-bribery and corruption

Ofsted employees are expected to act with honesty and integrity, and to ensure that their behaviour meets the standards set out in the Nolan principles.

All offers of gifts, rewards and hospitality must be reported to the individual's manager and recorded in our register. Our guiding principles are clear that, should there be any doubt about the propriety of accepting any gift, reward or hospitality, it should be refused.

Conflicts of interest

Any conflict, whether real or perceived, that is not managed appropriately can jeopardise Ofsted's public standing and trust in our judgements. Our policies are clear that those who work for Ofsted must not put themselves in a position where previous employment, personal relationships or private interests conflict, or could be perceived to conflict, with our values. All potential conflicts must be declared and assessed to determine whether they can be properly managed without affecting the integrity and reputation of Ofsted and the individual. Any Ofsted employee who intends to take up an outside appointment or employment after leaving the Civil Service must comply with the government's '[Business appointment rules for crown servants](#)' and any measures put in place to manage interests.

Trade union facility time

Ofsted recognises and works with three unions: FDA, Public and Commercial Services Union, and UNISON.

Facility time is reported in line with the requirements set out in the Trade Union (Facility Time Publications Requirements) Regulations 2017. This represents paid time off provided to trade union representatives for trade union duties and activities.

Relevant union officials

Number of employees who were relevant union officials during 2024–25	Full-time equivalent employee number
20	17.5

Percentage of time spent on facility time

Percentage of time	Number of employees
0%	3
1–50%	17
51–99%	0
100%	0

Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time

Total cost of facility time	£129.5k
Total pay bill	£158.6m
Percentage of total pay bill spent on facility time	0.08%

Paid trade union activities

Time spent on paid trade union activities as a percentage of total paid facility time hours	42.7%
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Several trade union representatives joined or left Ofsted during the year; these partial years explain the difference between the full-time equivalent number of officials and headcount. There was little to no change in the percentage of the pay bill spent on facility time this year compared with the previous year.

Parliamentary accountability and audit report: subject to audit

Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply

In addition to the primary statements prepared under the international financial reporting standards (IFRS), the government financial reporting manual (FReM) requires Ofsted to prepare a Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply (SOPS) and supporting notes.

The SOPS and related notes are subject to audit, as detailed in the Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the House of Commons.

The SOPS is a key accountability statement that shows, in detail, how an entity has spent against its Supply Estimate (Estimate). Supply is the monetary provision (for resource and capital purposes) and cash (drawn primarily from the consolidated fund) that Parliament gives statutory authority for entities to use. The Estimate details supply and is voted on by Parliament at the start of the financial year.

Should an entity exceed the limits set by its Estimate, called control limits, its accounts will receive a qualified opinion.

The format of the SOPS mirrors the [Estimates published on GOV.UK](#) to enable comparability between what Parliament approves and the final outturn.

The SOPS contains a summary table, detailing:

- performance against the control limits that Parliament has voted on
- cash spent (budgets are compiled on an accruals basis and so outturn will not exactly tie to cash spent)
- administration.

The supporting notes detail:

- outturn by Estimate line, providing a more detailed breakdown (SOPS 1)
- a reconciliation of outturn to net operating expenditure in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure (SoCNE), to tie the SOPS to the financial statements (SOPS 2)
- a reconciliation of outturn to net cash requirement (SOPS 3)
- an analysis of income payable to the consolidated fund (SOPS 4).

The SOPS and Estimates are compiled against the budgeting framework, which is similar to, but different from, the IFRS. An understanding of the budgeting framework and an explanation of key terms is provided in the financial review section of the performance report. Further information on the Public Spending Framework and the reasons why budgeting rules are different from IFRS are also in chapter 1 of the '[Consolidated budgeting guidance](#)'.

The SOPS provides a detailed view of financial performance, in a form that is voted on and recognised by Parliament. The financial review, in the Performance Report, provides a summarised discussion of outturn against estimate and functions as an introduction to the SOPS disclosures.

Figures described as Estimates are voted on by Parliament and are subject to Parliamentary control. Any breach of these limits is treated as unauthorised expenditure and requires retrospective approval, known as an excess vote.

In addition, although not a separate voted limit, any breach of the administration budget would also require an excess vote.

Summary tables – mirrors part 1 of the Estimates

Summary table 2024–25

		Outturn			Estimate			Outturn vs Estimate, saving/ (excess)	Prior year outturn total
		Voted	Non- voted	Total	Voted	Non- voted	Total	2024– 25	2023– 24
Type of spend	SoPS note	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Departmental expenditure limit (DEL)									
– Resource	SOPS 1.1	153,770	–	153,770	158,511	–	158,511	4,741	150,900
– Capital	SOPS 1.2	5,092	–	5,092	24,115	–	24,115	19,023	3,870
Total DEL		158,862	–	158,862	182,626	–	182,626	23,764	154,770
AME									
– Resource	SOPS 1.1	1,401	–	1,401	1,947	–	1,947	546	(125)
– Capital	SOPS 1.2	18	–	18	883	–	883	865	282
Total AME		1,419	–	1,419	2,830	–	2,830	1,411	157
Total budget		160,281	–	160,281	185,456	–	185,456	25,175	154,927
Total resource	SOPS 1.1	155,171	–	155,171	160,458	–	160,458	5,287	150,775
Total capital	SOPS 1.2	5,110	–	5,110	24,998	–	24,998	19,888	4,152
Total		160,281	–	160,281	185,456	–	185,456	25,175	154,927

Voted figures cover the voted control limits voted by Parliament. Refer to the [‘Supply Estimates guidance manual’](#) for detail on the control limits voted by Parliament.

The £24.8m saving is mainly due to changes in expected timing and value of leases for administrative buildings. When Ofsted enters into a new lease, we are required to capitalise the full life cost of the lease as an asset. High-level assumptions, made when these budgets were set, have changed due to events beyond our control. It is now expected that these leases will begin in 2025–26.

Net cash requirement 2024–25

		2024–25			2023–24
		Outturn total	Estimate total	Outturn vs Estimate, saving/ (excess)	Prior year outturn total
	SoPS note	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Net cash requirement	SOPS 3	151,065	155,356	4,291	150,547

Administration costs 2024–25

		2024–25			2023–24
		Outturn total	Estimate total	Outturn vs Estimate, saving/ (excess)	Prior year outturn total
	SoPS note	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Administration costs	SOPS 1.1	17,593	22,117	4,524	17,314

Although not a separate voted limit, any breach of the administration budget will also result in an excess vote.

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Notes to the Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply, 2024–25

SOPS 1 – Outturn detail by Estimate line

SOPS 1.1 Analysis of resource outturn by Estimate line

	2024–25									2023–24
	Administration			Programme			Outturn	Net total Estimate	Outturn vs Estimate, saving/ (excess)	Prior year outturn total
	Gross	Income	Net	Gross	Income	Net	Total			
Type of spend (Resource)	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Spending in departmental expenditure limits (DEL)										
Voted expenditure	17,593	–	17,593	188,337	(52,160)	136,177	153,770	158,511	4,741	150,900
Spending in AME										
Voted expenditure	–	–	–	1,401	–	1,401	1,401	1,947	546	(125)
Total	17,593	–	17,593	189,738	(52,160)	137,578	155,171	160,458	5,287	150,775

SOPS 1.2 Analysis of net capital outturn by Estimate line

	2024–25					2023–24
	Outturn			Net total Estimate	Outturn vs Estimate, saving/ (excess)	Prior year outturn total
	Gross	Income	Net			
Type of spend (Capital)	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Spending in departmental expenditure limits (DEL)						
Voted	5,092	–	5,092	24,115	19,023	3,870
Spending in AME						
Voted	18	–	18	883	865	282
Total	5,110	–	5,110	24,998	19,888	4,152

SOPS 2 – Reconciliation of net resource outturn to net operating expenditure

Item	Reference	Outturn total	Prior year outturn total 2023–24
Total resource outturn	SOPS 1.1	155,171	150,775
Add:			
Research costs classified as capital DEL in the SOPS under ESA 10, but treated as operating costs in the SoCNE		1,390	862
Less:			
Income payable to the consolidated fund	SOPS 4	–	(161)
Net operating expenditure in SoCNE	SoCNE	156,561	151,476

As noted in the introduction to the SOPS above, outturn and the Estimates are compiled against the budgeting framework, which is similar to, but different from, the IFRS. Therefore, this reconciliation bridges the resource outturn to net operating expenditure, linking the SOPS to the financial statements.

SOPS 3 – Reconciliation of net resource outturn to net cash requirement

	Reference	2024–25		
		Outturn	Estimate	Outturn vs Estimate, saving/ (excess)
		£'000	£'000	£'000
Resource outturn	SOPS 1.1	155,171	160,458	5,287
Capital outturn	SOPS 1.2	5,110	24,998	19,888
Total outturn		160,281	185,456	25,175
Adjustments to remove non-cash items:				
Depreciation and amortisation		(7,685)	(10,594)	(2,909)
New provisions and adjustments to previous provisions		(1,488)	(2,883)	(1,395)
Auditor's remuneration		(129)	(63)	66
Other non-cash items		–	–	–
Interest charges on right of use assets		(109)	–	109
Right of use asset additions		(259)	–	259
Right of use asset revaluations		(691)	–	691
Right of use asset capitalised provisions		(18)	–	18
Income payable to the consolidated fund	SOPS 4	–	–	–
Less: movements in payables relating to items not passing through the SoCNE		(2,426)	–	2,426
Adjustments to reflect movements in working balances:				
Increase/(decrease) in receivables		(677)	–	677
(Increase)/decrease in payables		(737)	(16,613)	(15,876)
Repayments of principal on leases		4,755	–	(4,755)
Payments of amounts due to the consolidated fund		161	–	(161)
Use of provisions		87	53	(34)
Net cash requirement		151,065	155,356	4,291

As noted in the introduction to the SOPS above, outturn and the Estimates are compiled against the budgeting framework, not on a cash basis. Therefore, this reconciliation bridges the resource and capital outturn to the net cash requirement.

SOPS 4 – Amounts of income to the consolidated fund

SOPS 4.1 Analysis of income payable to the consolidated fund

In addition to income retained by Ofsted, the following income is payable to the consolidated fund.

		Outturn total 2024–25	Prior year outturn total, 2023–24
	Reference	£'000	£'000
Income outside of the ambit of the Estimate	4	–	161
Total amount payable to the consolidated fund		–	161

HM Treasury rules prevent departments from retaining income from fees and charges that exceed the full cost of the service provided. This is known as a consolidated fund extra receipt (CFER). The excess income collected must be paid over to HM Treasury. No CFER occurred this year.

SOPS 4.2 – Consolidated fund income

	Outturn total 2024–25	Prior year outturn total 2023–24
	£'000	£'000
Income outside of the ambit of the Estimate	–	161
Amount payable to the consolidated fund	–	161
Balance held at the start of the year	161	21
Payments into the consolidated fund	(161)	(21)
Balance held on trust at the end of the year	–	161

Parliamentary accountability disclosures

Losses and special payments

Losses statement

	2024–25		2023–24	
	No. of cases	£'000	No. of cases	£'000
Losses	50	54	66	88
Total	50	54	66	88

Special payments

	2024–25		2023–24	
	No. of cases	£'000	No. of cases	£'000
Special payments	2	3	2	25
Total	2	3	2	25

Fees and charges

Fees and charges are set by DfE. Any changes to the fee structure are subject to ministerial discretion and broader policy considerations, including the potential impact on provider viability and sector capacity.

	2024–25		
	Income	Full cost	Surplus/ (deficit)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Social care	25,232	46,749	(21,517)
Early years	5,797	43,515	(37,718)
Independent schools	1,970	8,912	(6,942)
Total	32,999	99,176	(66,177)

	2023–24		
	Income*	Full cost	Surplus/ (deficit)
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Social care	19,193	38,730	(19,537)
Early years	5,812	41,899	(36,087)
Independent schools	2,032	7,756	(5,724)
Total	27,037	88,384	(61,347)

* Social care income includes £0.02 million payable to the consolidated fund (see SOPS 4).



Sir Martyn Oliver
His Majesty's Chief Inspector

9 July 2025

The Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the House of Commons

Opinion on financial statements

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services, and Skills ('Ofsted') for the year ended 31 March 2025 under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000.

The financial statements comprise Ofsted's:

- Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2025;
- Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, Statement of Cash Flows and Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for the year then ended; and
- the related notes including the significant accounting policies.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in the preparation of the financial statements is applicable law and UK adopted international accounting standards.

In my opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of Ofsted's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and its net expenditure for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 and HM Treasury directions issued thereunder.

Opinion on regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects:

- the Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply properly presents the outturn against voted Parliamentary control totals for the year ended 31 March 2025 and shows that those totals have not been exceeded; and
- the income and expenditure recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Basis for opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs UK), applicable law and Practice Note 10 Audit of Financial Statements and Regularity of Public Sector Bodies in the United Kingdom (2024). My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of my certificate.

Those standards require me and my staff to comply with the Financial Reporting Council's Revised Ethical Standard 2019. I am independent of Ofsted in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK. My staff and I have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that Ofsted's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on Ofsted's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least 12 months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Accounting Officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this certificate.

The going concern basis of accounting for Ofsted is adopted in consideration of the requirements set out in HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual, which requires entities to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements where it is anticipated that the services which they provide will continue into the future.

Other information

The other information comprises information included in the Annual Report and Appendices, but does not include the financial statements and my auditor's certificate and report thereon. The Accounting Officer is responsible for the other information.

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my certificate, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

My responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion the part of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000.

In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit have been properly prepared in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000;
- the information given in the Performance and Accountability Reports for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and is in accordance with the applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which I report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of Ofsted and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Performance and Accountability Reports.

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by Ofsted or returns adequate for my audit have not been received from branches not visited by my staff; or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the financial statements and the parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of remuneration specified by HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual have not been made or parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited is not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with HM Treasury's guidance.

Responsibilities of the Accounting Officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities, the Accounting Officer is responsible for:

- maintaining proper accounting records;
- providing the C&AG with access to all information of which management is aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
- providing the C&AG with additional information and explanations needed for his audit;
- providing the C&AG with unrestricted access to persons within Ofsted from whom the auditor determines it necessary to obtain audit evidence;
- ensuring such internal controls are in place as deemed necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements to be free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error;
- preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view, in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000;
- preparing the annual report, which includes the Remuneration and Staff Report, in accordance with HM Treasury directions issued under the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000; and
- assessing Ofsted's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Accounting Officer anticipates that the services provided by Ofsted will not continue to be provided in the future.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My responsibility is to audit, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000.

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a certificate that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud

I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud. The extent to which my procedures are capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud is detailed below.

Identifying and assessing potential risks related to non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, I:

- considered the nature of the sector, control environment and operational performance including the design of Ofsted's accounting policies and key performance indicators.
- inquired of management, Ofsted's head of internal audit and those charged with governance, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation relating to Ofsted's policies and procedures on:
 - identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations;
 - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud; and
 - other internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations including Ofsted's controls relating to Ofsted's compliance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 and Managing Public Money;
- inquired of management, Ofsted's head of internal audit and those charged with governance whether:
 - they were aware of any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations;
 - they had knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud,
- discussed with the engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, I considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within Ofsted for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following areas: revenue recognition, posting of unusual journals, complex transactions and bias in management estimates. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), I am required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

I obtained an understanding of Ofsted's framework of authority and other legal and regulatory frameworks in which Ofsted operates. I focused on those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of Ofsted. The key laws and regulations I considered in this context included Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000, Managing Public Money and Supply and Appropriation (Main Estimates) Act 2024.

Audit response to identified risk

To respond to the identified risks resulting from the above procedures:

- I reviewed the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described above as having direct effect on the financial statements;
- I enquired of management, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and in-house legal counsel concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- I reviewed minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and the Board; and internal audit reports;
- I addressed the risk of fraud through management override of controls by testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements on estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business; and
- In addressing the risk of fraud in revenue recognition, I assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates for revenue recognition were indicative of potential bias; sample tested the appropriateness of revenue journal entries; performed sample testing of revenue transactions; and used analytical procedures to identify any unusual transactions or movements.

I communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential risks of fraud to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of my certificate.

Other auditor's responsibilities

I am required to obtain appropriate evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the Statement of Outturn against Parliamentary Supply properly presents the outturn against voted Parliamentary control totals and that those totals have not been exceeded. The voted Parliamentary control totals are Departmental Expenditure Limits (Resource and Capital), Annually Managed Expenditure (Resource and Capital), Non-Budget (Resource) and Net Cash Requirement.

I am required to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control I identify during my audit.

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

Gareth Davies
Comptroller and Auditor General

Date: 10 July 2025

National Audit Office
157–197 Buckingham Palace Road
Victoria
London
SW1W 9SP

Financial statements

Statement of comprehensive net expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2025

This account summarises the expenditure and income generated and consumed on an accruals basis.

		2024-25	2023-24
	Note	£'000	£'000
Revenue from contracts with customers	4	(52,066)	(48,455)
Grant income	4	(94)	(103)
CFER	4	–	(161)
Total operating income		(52,160)	(48,719)
Staff costs	3	162,499	158,704
Purchase of goods and services	3	36,639	35,960
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	3	7,685	5,250
Other non-cash costs	3	1,898	281
Total operating expenditure		208,721	200,195
Net expenditure for the year		156,561	151,476

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Statement of financial position

as at 31 March 2025

This statement presents the financial position of Ofsted. It comprises three main components: assets owned or controlled; liabilities owed to other bodies; and equity, the remaining value of the entity.

		31 March 2025	31 March 2024
	Note	£'000	£'000
Non-current assets:			
Property, plant and equipment	5	292	701
Intangible assets	6	14,643	16,115
Right of use assets	13.1	3,002	5,086
Trade and other receivables	9	323	473
Total non-current assets		18,260	22,375
Current assets:			
Trade and other receivables	9	10,519	11,046
Cash and cash equivalents	7	1,066	3,331
Total current assets		11,585	14,377
Total assets		29,845	36,752
Current liabilities:			
Trade and other payables	10	(17,541)	(18,212)
Contract liabilities	10	(14,822)	(13,414)
Provisions	11	(1,741)	(103)
Lease liabilities	13.3	(1,321)	(4,000)
Total current liabilities		(35,425)	(35,729)
Total assets less net current liabilities		(5,580)	1,023
Non-current liabilities:			
Provisions	11	(908)	(1,127)
Lease liabilities	13.3	(1,403)	(2,420)
Total non-current liabilities		(2,311)	(3,547)
Total assets less total liabilities		(7,891)	(2,524)
Taxpayers' equity and other reserves:			
Total reserves		(7,891)	(2,524)
Total equity		(7,891)	(2,524)



Sir Martyn Oliver
His Majesty's Chief Inspector

9 July 2025

Statement of cash flows

for the year ended 31 March 2025

The statement of cash flows shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the department during the reporting period. It shows how Ofsted generates and uses cash and cash equivalents by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities.

The amount of net cash flows arising from operating activities is a key indicator of service costs and the extent to which these operations are funded by income from the recipients of Ofsted's services. Investing activities represent the extent to which cash inflows and outflows have been made for resources that are intended to contribute to future public service delivery.

		2024–25	2023–24
	Note	£'000	£'000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net operating expenditure		(156,561)	(151,476)
Adjustment for non-cash transactions		9,411	5,362
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables		677	(964)
Increase/(decrease) in trade payables		737	5,096
(Increase)/decrease in departmental balances with the consolidated fund		2,426	(1,736)
Use of provisions	11	(87)	(53)
Net cash outflow from operating activities		(143,397)	(143,771)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of non-financial assets	5 and 6	(2,752)	(4,730)
Net cash outflow from investing activities		(2,752)	(4,730)
Cash flows from financing activities			
From the consolidated fund (supply) – current year		148,800	152,143
Repayments of principal on leases	13.5	(4,755)	(2,025)
Net financing		144,045	150,118
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the period before adjustments for receipts and payments to the consolidated fund		(2,104)	1,617
Payments of amounts due to the consolidated fund		(161)	(21)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the period after adjustments for receipts and payments to the consolidated fund		(2,265)	1,596
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	7	3,331	1,735
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	7	1,066	3,331

Statement of changes in taxpayers' equity for the year ended 31 March 2025

This statement shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by Ofsted, analysed into 'general fund reserves' (reserves that reflect a contribution from the consolidated fund).

The general fund represents the total assets less liabilities of a department, to the extent that the total is not represented by other reserves and financing items.

	Note	General fund £'000
Balance at 31 March 2023		(1,539)
Net Parliamentary funding		150,547
Comprehensive net expenditure for the year	SoCNE	(151,476)
Auditor's remuneration	3	105
Consolidated fund extra receipts payable to the consolidated fund	4	(161)
Balance at 31 March 2024		(2,524)
Net Parliamentary funding		151,065
Comprehensive net expenditure for the year	SoCNE	(156,561)
Auditor's remuneration	3	129
Consolidated fund extra receipts payable to the consolidated fund	4	–
Balance at 31 March 2025		(7,891)

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Notes to the Ofsted resource accounts

1. Statement of accounting policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the 2024–25 FReM, issued by HM Treasury. The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply the IFRS as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context. Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, Ofsted has selected what we judge to be most appropriate to our circumstances and to give a true and fair view. The policies we have adopted are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the accounts.

In addition to the primary statements prepared under IFRS, the FReM also requires Ofsted to prepare one additional primary statement (the SOPS). The SOPS and supporting notes show outturn against Estimate in terms of the net resource requirement and the net cash requirement.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared on a going-concern basis under the historical cost convention. The historical cost convention is a widely used accounting policy that involves recording the original cost of an asset on the statement of financial position, rather than a cost adjusted for changes in market values or inflation.

1.2 Valuation of non-current assets

Plant and equipment assets are held at depreciated historical cost as a proxy for current value. Intangible assets are held at cost less accumulated amortisation (the proportion of the asset value charged to the SoCNE) and any impairment losses (when the value of an asset falls below its carrying value). Ofsted uses this method because we have a very small asset base, and any revaluation adjustments would be immaterial.

Plant, equipment and intangible assets are capitalised if they are intended for use on a continuous basis for more than one year. The threshold for capitalising non-current assets is £10,000 (including irrecoverable VAT). Individual items are not grouped unless they are components of a single asset.

1.3 Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation and amortisation are provided on all non-current assets on a straight-line basis to write off costs evenly over the asset's anticipated life. Depreciation and amortisation are charged from the month following acquisition or use.

Asset lives are in the following ranges:

- information technology – typically three to 15 years; assumptions on remaining asset lives are reviewed with asset owners annually and may be adjusted in line with the latest expectations of how long they will be in operational use
- furniture and fittings – three to 15 years (usually in line with the remaining length of the respective property lease).

1.4 Research and development costs

Expenditure on research is treated as an operating cost in the SoCNE. Expenditure on development of a product or service is also treated as an operating cost unless it meets the capitalisation criteria specified in International Accounting Standard (IAS) 38, 'Intangible assets'.

The National Accounts (the SOPS) treat certain research costs as CDEL, in line with the European System of Accounts (ESA 10) framework. This means that there is a misalignment between the total operating costs in the SoCNE and the total resource DEL costs in the SOPS. The difference between the two statements is reconciled in SOPS 2. Further details are available in HM Treasury's '[Consolidated budgeting guidance](#)'.

1.5 Income

Our income is mainly generated by charging for the following:

- registration and annual fees from social care and early years providers
- inspections of independent schools
- additional inspection activity for other government departments where the funding is not provided directly to Ofsted through the Estimate.

Ofsted recognises income in accordance with IFRS 15. The standard sets out that the point of recognition is based on when performance obligations of a contract are satisfied and control of the benefits are fully received by the customer. The table below sets out the approach to income recognition for the main customer contract types:

Contract type	Point-of-revenue recognition	Judgements applied
Registration and annual fees from social care and early years providers	Revenue to be recognised over a period of time	For annual fees, Ofsted assessed that our obligations are fulfilled by maintaining the customer's registration over the period the fee covers and the control of the benefits is simultaneously received by the customer (the right to continue operating as a registered provider). Therefore, the revenue received for annual fees should be recognised proportionately over the 12-month period the fee covers. IFRS 15 requires Ofsted to treat as one single contract any linked contracts that have similar features, such as the timing and commercial purpose. Therefore, revenue received for registration is also recognised proportionately over a 12-month period.
Fees for inspections of independent schools	Point-in-time recognition	The performance obligation is to carry out an inspection or related activity, and the revenue is recognised in full at the point at which this has been completed.
Income from the DfE and other government departments	Point-in-time recognition	The performance obligation is to carry out an inspection or related activity, and the revenue is recognised in full at the point at which this has been completed.

Registration and annual fees from social care and early years providers are recognised over a period of 12 months. Depending on when that fee is due, a proportion may not be recognised until a future reporting period. In that circumstance a contract liability is accounted for in the statement of financial position. This liability represents the value of Ofsted's obligation to provide services to social care and early years providers at the end of the reporting period. Ofsted will recognise the income as the control of the benefits from those services is received by the customer.

1.6 Pensions

Past and present employees are covered by the provisions of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) and the Civil Servants and Others Pension Scheme (CSOPS). These are described in the Remuneration and Staff Report. Ofsted pays contributions to the pension scheme each month based on the earnings of employees who are members of the scheme. Liability for payment of future benefits once an employee retires is a charge on the pension scheme and not Ofsted. Further details can be found in the resource accounts of the Cabinet Office: Civil Superannuation and at www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk.

1.7 Leases

Scope and exclusions

In accordance with IFRS 16 Leases, contracts, or parts of contracts, that convey the right to control the use of an asset for a period of time, in exchange for consideration, are accounted for as leases. The standard requires right of use assets and associated lease liabilities to be recognised in the statement of financial position.

Contracts for services are evaluated to determine whether they convey the right to control the use of an identified asset, incorporating both the right to obtain substantially all the economic benefits from the asset and to direct its use. If so, the relevant part of the contract is treated as a lease.

When making the above assessments, Ofsted excludes two types of lease: those relating to low-value items, where the underlying asset would have cost less than £10,000 when new; and those with a term of less than 12 months, including the non-cancellable period, any extension options we are reasonably certain to exercise and any termination options we are reasonably certain not to exercise.

Initial recognition

At the start of a lease, a right of use asset and a lease liability are recognised. The lease liability is measured at the value of the remaining lease payments discounted either by the interest rate implicit in the lease or, where this is not readily determinable, the incremental rate of borrowing. The incremental borrowing rate is advised annually by HM Treasury, and we have used it in calculating all lease liabilities. The weighted average incremental borrowing rate applied to lease liabilities recognised in the statement of financial position at the date of initial application is 2.47%.

Where the lease includes extension or termination options, the lease payments will be for the non-cancellable period, together with any extension options that we are reasonably certain to exercise and any termination options that we are reasonably certain not to exercise.

The measurement of lease payments excludes any VAT payable, and irrecoverable VAT is expensed at the point when it falls due, in line with IFRS interpretation committee (IFRIC) 21 Levies. The right of use asset is measured at the value of the lease liability, adjusted for: any lease payments made before the start date; any lease incentives received; any incremental costs of obtaining the lease; and any costs of removing the asset and restoring the site at the end of the lease.

Enhancements to leased assets, such as alterations to a leased building, are not classified within right of use assets but are classified as property, plant and equipment, in accordance with the FReM.

1.8 Value-added tax

As most of our activities are part of our statutory obligations, they are outside the scope of VAT and, in general, we do not charge VAT on our fees and charges.

Input tax on most purchases is not recoverable unless the VAT has been incurred in the course of contracting out those services listed in the HM Treasury's 'Contracted out services' directions.⁵⁹ Irrecoverable VAT is charged to the relevant expenditure category in the SoCNE or included in the capitalised purchase cost of fixed assets on the statement of financial position. Income and expenditure are otherwise shown net of recoverable VAT.

1.9 Provisions

A provision is a charge to the accounts for a liability we believe it is likely we will settle in a future financial year, and the amount and timing of it are uncertain.

Provisions are recognised in accordance with IAS 37, 'Provisions, contingent liabilities and contingent assets'. The amount recognised as a provision is the best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the present obligation at the statement of financial position date. Provisions are discounted at the rates set annually by HM Treasury. See note 11 for details of provisions recognised.

1.10 Contingent liabilities and contingent assets

Contingent assets and liabilities are less certain than provisions (see 1.9) and are likely to be contingent on a future event such as the outcome of a legal case. Contingent liabilities and contingent assets are not recognised as liabilities or assets in the statement of financial position. Instead, information about them is disclosed in the notes to the accounts when it is probable that they will occur in a future financial year.

In addition to contingent liabilities disclosed in accordance with IAS 37, Ofsted discloses, for Parliamentary reporting and accountability purposes, certain statutory and non-statutory contingent liabilities. This is done where the likelihood of a transfer of economic benefit is remote, but has been reported to Parliament in accordance with the requirements of 'Managing public money' and 'Government accounting'.

59. 'VAT government and public bodies', HM Revenue and Customs, August 2012 (updated January 2025).

1.11 Financial instruments

Ofsted holds the following financial assets and liabilities:

- assets
- cash
- trade receivables – current
- trade receivables – non-current
- liabilities
- trade and other payables – current
- other payables > one year – non-current.

Financial assets and liabilities are accounted for under IFRS 9 – Financial instruments, and IFRS 7 – Financial instruments: disclosures.

Financial assets

Ofsted does not currently have any financial assets that need to be classified as available for sale or that have been measured at fair value, nor do we have cash equivalents or derivative financial instruments. Cash balances are measured as the amounts received in Ofsted's bank account. Ofsted does not currently have cash equivalents.

Financial liabilities

Ofsted does not currently have financial liabilities measured at fair value, nor do we have derivative financial instruments.

1.12 Estimation techniques used and changes in accounting estimates

Ofsted applies estimation techniques for the following:

- IAS 19 annual leave accrual – the accrual is calculated by extrapolating results from a sample of 50% of employees to produce an estimated figure for the whole workforce.
- Calculating provisions – property dilapidations are estimated using an industry average cost per square metre estimate; injury benefit costs involve using mortality assumptions; and other provisions are based on external professional advice.
- Capitalised staff costs – some, or components of, Ofsted's intangible assets are developed by our own staff. Senior managers accountable for developing these assets estimate the proportion of staff time to allocate. In line with IAS 38 guidance on capitalising internally generated assets, this only relates to time spent on the development phase and not the research phase.
- Impairment of intangible assets – where an impairment has been identified in line with IAS 36 this may require senior managers accountable for those assets to provide estimates on the scale of the impairment. More information on impairment charges during 2024-25 is disclosed in the note 6.

1.13 Segmental reporting

In line with HM Treasury guidance, Ofsted has applied IFRS 8 – Operating segments in full. Ofsted's operating segments have been identified on the basis of internal reports used to allocate resources to the segment and assess our performance. Ofsted has six reportable segments:

- inspection and regulatory delivery
- inspection and regulatory policy
- strategy, insights and research
- corporate services
- revenue from contracts with customers
- other.

The report reviewed by the Accounting Officer (chief operating decision-maker) and the executive committee has more detail. The operating segments reported are an aggregation of that information. Segmental information for total assets and liabilities is not regularly reported to the chief operating decision-maker. In compliance with the FReM, it has not been produced in the accounts. This is in line with the reporting requirements of IFRS 8.

1.14 Going concern

Ofsted monitors the sufficiency of supply to meet the needs of the operating plan and maintains regular positive discussions with DfE and HM Treasury. Ofsted is expected to continue as a going concern and is not aware of any information or events, either during 2024–25 or following the year end, that may affect this status. Ofsted's resource budgets for 2025–26 to 2028–29 and capital budgets for 2025–26 to 2029–30 have been agreed with HM Treasury.

We have therefore prepared these financial statements on a going-concern basis.

1.15 Accounting standards in issue but not yet effective

Ofsted has considered the accounting standards in issue but not yet effective at the reporting date. Our assessment of these changes is as follows:

IFRS 17 Insurance contracts

IFRS 17 Insurance contracts replaces IFRS 4: Insurance contracts and is to be included in the FReM for mandatory implementation from 2025–26. It establishes the principles for the recognition, measurement, presentation and disclosure of insurance contracts within the scope of this standard. IFRS 17 requires insurance contracts, including reinsurance contracts, to be recognised on the statement of financial position as the total of the fulfilment cashflows and the contractual service margin (CSM).

The fulfilment cashflows consist of the present value of future cash flows calculated using best estimate assumptions with an explicit risk adjustment for non-financial risk. The risk adjustment is released to the SoCNE as risk expires. The CSM is the unearned profit on insurance contracts and is released to the SoCNE over the insurance contract period as insurance services are provided. Where an insurance contract is onerous, it will have no CSM and the onerous element of the insurance contract will be recognised immediately in the SoCNE.

We do not expect IFRS 17 to have any impact on our financial statements.

2. Statement of operating expenditure by operating segments

	2024–25						
	Inspection and regulatory delivery	Inspection and regulatory policy	Strategy, insights and research	Corporate services	Revenue from contracts with customers	Other	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure	136,250	16,115	14,364	35,737	–	6,255	208,721
Income	–	–	–	–	(52,066)	(94)	(52,160)
Net expenditure	136,250	16,115	14,364	35,737	(52,066)	6,161	156,561

	2023–24						
	Inspection and regulatory delivery	Inspection and regulatory policy	Strategy, insights and research	Corporate services	Revenue from contracts with customers	Other	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure	132,003	16,729	13,839	35,753	–	1,871	200,195
Income	–	–	–	–	(48,570)	(149)	(48,719)
Net expenditure	132,003	16,729	13,839	35,753	(48,570)	1,722	151,476

Factors used to identify the reportable segments

The Accounting Officer and executive committee review the resource allocated to each segment on a regular basis. The report reviewed by the Accounting Officer and the executive committee has more granular directorate-level information, but the information can be mapped to each operating segment in line with the reporting requirements of IFRS 8 'Operating segments'.

Description of segments

Inspection and regulatory delivery

This refers to the costs of inspection and regulatory delivery and management, and the cost of direct support functions such as inspection support and planning, regulatory support and complaints.

Inspection and regulatory policy

This refers to the cost of developing inspection and regulatory policy and frameworks.

Strategy, insights and research

The costs of this segment include corporate strategy; private office; research and evaluation; and communications.

Corporate services

The costs of this segment include digital and IT; finance; property; commercial; human resources (HR); and legal.

Revenue from contracts with customers

This refers to fees and charges arising from inspection and regulation activity.

Other

This includes depreciation and movements in provisions.

3. Expenditure

		2024-25	2023-24
	Note	£'000	£'000
Staff costs:			
Wages and salaries		116,697	114,179
Social security costs		13,141	12,841
Apprentice levy		556	552
Pension costs		31,908	30,991
Exit costs		197	141
Subtotal staff costs		162,499	158,704
Purchase of goods and services:			
Contracted inspection costs		14,736	15,072
Digital and IT costs		7,238	6,371
Other contracted professional services		1,320	929
Estates costs including facility management, utilities, maintenance and security		1,768	2,060
Travel and subsistence costs		7,894	7,943
External legal costs		365	474
Recruitment, training and other HR-related costs		1,320	1,942
Stationery, printing, postage and office equipment		378	438
Equipment purchases (non-capital)		1,300	392
Other expenditure		320	339
Subtotal purchase of goods and services		36,639	35,960
Depreciation, amortisation and impairments:			
Depreciation	5	409	424
Amortisation	6	2,399	1,595
Impairments	6	1,825	222
Depreciation on right of use assets	13.1	3,052	3,009
Subtotal depreciation, amortisation and impairments		7,685	5,250
Other non-cash costs:			
Interest charges on right of use assets	13.2	109	75
Increase/(decrease) in provisions	11	1,488	(72)
Auditor's remuneration and expenses		129	105
Training – Apprentice Levy		94	103
Other non-cash costs		–	4
Credit impairments and write-offs		78	66
Subtotal other non-cash costs		1,898	281
Total		208,721	200,195

4. Income

4.1 Revenue from contracts with customers and other operating income

	2024–25	2023–24
	£'000	£'000
Social care (registration and annual fees)	25,232	19,031
Early years (registration and annual fees)	5,797	5,812
Independent schools	1,906	1,989
DfE income	17,338	19,318
Other government department/other income	1,793	2,305
Subtotal revenue from contracts with customers	52,066	48,455
Grant income – apprentice levy (non-cash)	94	103
Other operating income	94	103
Total income within the ambit	52,160	48,558
CFER	–	161
Total payable to the consolidated fund	–	161
Total income	52,160	48,719

4.2 Details of contracts with customers

The following additional disclosure supplements section 1.5 (Income) to provide users of the accounts with more detailed information about the nature of Ofsted's contracts with customers.

Contract	Social care and early years fees
Contract details	Application fees to be registered with Ofsted and annual fees to retain that registration. Under IFRS 15, both fees are treated as a single contract.
Customer details	For social care, this mainly includes adoption agencies, fostering agencies, residential special schools, children's homes and supported accommodation providers. For early years, this mainly includes childminders, nannies and nurseries.
Performance obligations	To maintain the registration over the contract duration.
Contract duration	12 months.
Revenue recognition	Revenue is recognised proportionally in each accounting period over the life of the contract.
Contract values	Social care fees range from £500 to £8,267 depending on the type and size of the provider. You can find more information at: www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-registration-as-a-childrens-socialcare-provider-or-manager . Early years fees range from £35 to £220. You can find more information at: www.gov.uk/guidance/childminders-and-childcareproviders-register-with-ofsted/fees .
Other information	All fees are non-refundable.

Contract	Independent schools inspection fees
Contract details	All independent schools are inspected at the direction of the DfE, which is the registration authority for independent schools. Typically, an independent school receives a pre-registration inspection and then a standard inspection once every three years, plus further post-monitoring inspections depending on the outcome of the standard inspection. A fee is payable for each inspection.
Customer details	There are around 2,400 independent schools in England. Of these, Ofsted inspects around 1,150 non-association independent schools. The remaining independent schools are members of an association affiliated to the Independent Schools Council and are inspected by the Independent Schools Inspectorate.
Performance obligations	Completion of the inspection activity.
Contract duration	The contract duration lasts for the length of the inspection activity.
Revenue recognition	The full contract price is recognised at the point in time when the inspection has been completed.
Contract values	Standard inspection fees range from £1,200 to £8,250, depending on numbers of pupils. These are payable in three equal instalments over three years. A fixed fee of £2,500 is payable for pre-registration inspections. Post-monitoring inspection fees range from £300 to £3,000 depending on numbers of pupils and whether it is a first or subsequent post-monitoring inspection. These are payable in full on completion of the inspection.
Other information	You can find more information on independent school inspections at: www.gov.uk/guidance/being-inspected-as-a-non-association-independent-school .

Contract	Income from the DfE and other government departments
Contract details	Charges for specific pieces of inspection activity. The largest components are: ● inspection of newly funded apprenticeship training providers: £3.7m ● inspection of area SEND arrangements: £3.7m ● inspection of ITE: £3.4m ● inspection of Skills Bootcamp providers: £1.3m ● inspection of education and training in prisons: £1.1m.
Customer details	Government departments, including the DfE and Ministry of Justice.
Performance obligations	Completion of the inspection activity.
Contract duration	Contract durations are variable and are set by a memorandum of understanding between Ofsted and the relevant department.
Revenue recognition	The full contract price is recognised at the point when the inspection activity has been completed.
Contract values	See contract details section.

5. Property, plant and equipment

Property, plant and equipment comprises IT hardware and office equipment.

	2024–25		
	Information technology	Furniture and fittings	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost or valuation			
At 1 April 2024	2,633	2,312	4,945
Additions	–	–	–
Disposals	(2,302)	–	(2,302)
Impairments	–	–	–
At 31 March 2025	331	2,312	2,643
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2024	2,474	1,770	4,244
Charged in year	81	328	409
Disposals	(2,302)	–	(2,302)
Impairments	–	–	–
At 31 March 2025	253	2,098	2,351
Carrying amount at 31 March 2025	78	214	292
Carrying amount at 1 April 2024	159	542	701
Asset financing			
Owned	78	214	292
Carrying amount at 31 March 2025	78	214	292

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	2023-24		
	Information technology	Furniture and fittings	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost or valuation			
At 1 April 2023	2,733	2,312	5,045
Additions	–	–	–
Disposals	(100)	–	(100)
Impairments	–	–	–
At 31 March 2024	2,633	2,312	4,945
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2023	2,509	1,411	3,920
Charged in year	65	359	424
Disposals	(100)	–	(100)
Impairments	–	–	–
At 31 March 2024	2,474	1,770	4,244
Carrying amount at 31 March 2024	159	542	701
Carrying amount at 1 April 2023	224	901	1,125
Asset financing			
Owned	159	542	701
Carrying amount at 31 March 2024	159	542	701

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6. Intangible assets

Intangible assets comprise purchased software licences and bespoke IT systems developed by internal staff in partnership with external suppliers.

	2024–25		
	Software	Development expenditure	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost or valuation			
At 1 April 2024	24,524	8,614	33,138
Additions	2,505	247	2,752
Disposals	–	–	–
Impairments	–	(1,825)	(1,825)
Reclassifications and transfers	3,704	(3,704)	–
At 31 March 2025	30,733	3,332	34,065
Amortisation			
At 1 April 2024	17,023	–	17,023
Charged in year	2,399	–	2,399
Disposals	–	–	–
Impairments	–	–	–
At 31 March 2025	19,422	–	19,422
Carrying amount at 31 March 2025	11,311	3,332	14,643
Carrying amount at 1 April 2024	7,501	8,614	16,115
Asset financing			
Owned	11,311	3,332	14,643
Carrying amount at 31 March 2025	11,311	3,332	14,643

The £3.3 million carrying balance in development expenditure mainly relates to a multi-year project to modernise our digital and technology services and the way we manage the data we hold about those we inspect and regulate.

The £1.8m impairment charge relates to two assets. We paused development on one asset in 2023–24 because of budget pressures at the time and have not restarted it due to emerging priorities. We have recognised an impairment to its carrying value, as a proportion of the work already completed is likely to be redone when development begins again. Another asset was fully impaired because other, more viable, solutions became available.

	2023-24		
	Software	Development expenditure	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost or valuation			
At 1 April 2023	22,776	7,906	30,682
Additions	2,780	1,950	4,730
Disposals	(2,052)	–	(2,052)
Impairments	–	(222)	(222)
Reclassifications and transfers	1,020	(1,020)	–
At 31 March 2024	24,524	8,614	33,138
Amortisation			
At 1 April 2023	17,480	–	17,480
Charged in year	1,595	–	1,595
Disposals	(2,052)	–	(2,052)
Impairments	–	–	–
At 31 March 2024	17,023	–	17,023
Carrying amount at 31 March 2024	7,501	8,614	16,115
Carrying amount at 1 April 2023	5,296	7,906	13,202
Asset financing			
Owned	7,501	8,614	16,115
Carrying amount at 31 March 2024	7,501	8,614	16,115

7. Cash and cash equivalents

	2024-25	2023-24
	£'000	£'000
Balance at 1 April	3,331	1,735
Net changes in cash and cash-equivalent balances	(2,265)	1,596
Balance at 31 March	1,066	3,331

All balances at 31 March were held at the Government Banking Service.

8. Financial instruments

Ofsted's cash requirements are met through the Estimates process. Therefore, financial instruments play a more limited role in creating and managing risk than would apply to a non-public-sector body of a similar size. The majority of financial instruments relate to contracts for non-financial items, and Ofsted is therefore exposed to little credit, liquidity or market risk.

9. Trade receivables, financial and other assets

	2024-25	2023-24
	£'000	£'000
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade receivables	5,923	7,947
Deposits and advances	250	254
Other receivables	102	145
Prepayments	1,699	950
Accrued income	2,412	1,630
VAT	133	120
Total falling due within one year	10,519	11,046
Amounts falling due after more than one year:		
Deposits and advances	204	238
Other receivables	41	–
Prepayments	78	235
Total falling due after more than one year	323	473
Total trade receivables, financial and other assets	10,842	11,519

10. Trade payables, financial and other liabilities

	2024-25	2023-24
	£'000	£'000
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade payables	367	358
Other payables	3,736	3,297
Other taxation and social security	3,492	3,222
Accruals	8,325	7,299
Contract liabilities	14,822	13,414
Deferred income	555	544
Amounts issued from the consolidated fund supply but not spent at year end	1,066	3,331
CFER payable to the consolidated fund	–	161
Total falling due within one year	32,363	31,626
Amounts falling due after more than one year:		
Payables, accruals and deferred income	–	–
Total falling due after more than one year	–	–
Total trade payables, financial and other liabilities	32,363	31,626

Information about Ofsted's contract liabilities can be found in section 1.5 of the notes to the Ofsted resource accounts.

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11. Provisions for liabilities and charges

	Property dilapidation	Injury benefits	Legal and other	Total	2023–24
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Balance at 1 April 2024	597	583	50	1,230	1,073
Provided in the year (resource)	30	–	1,348	1,378	107
Provided in the year (capital)	18	–	–	18	282
Provisions not required written back	(3)	–	–	(3)	(221)
Provisions used in the year	–	(52)	(35)	(87)	(53)
Changes in discount rate	(9)	122	–	113	42
Balance at 31 March 2025	633	653	1,363	2,649	1,230

Analysis of expected timing of discounted flows

	Property dilapidation	Injury benefits	Legal and other	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Not later than one year	313	65	1,363	1,741
Later than one year and not later than five years	300	231	–	531
Later than five years	20	357	–	377
Balance at 31 March 2025	633	653	1,363	2,649

11.1 Property dilapidation

Ofsted leases all the property we use. It is a standard contractual requirement that the lessee returns leased estate in good order at the end of the lease period and makes good any dilapidation. These costs will materialise at the end of each respective lease.

11.2 Injury benefits

This provision relates to staff who have been injured at work and are receiving benefits through the Civil Service Pensions Injury Benefit Scheme.

11.3 Legal and other

This provision relates to a small number of legal claims.

12. Contingent liabilities

A small number of legal cases are not yet settled. Their outcomes depend on the court or the relevant decision-making body's rulings. Therefore, no liability has been recognised in the financial statements. No material liabilities are expected to arise from these cases.

13. Leases

Our lease contracts relate to leases of buildings, which have remaining lease terms of between one and 11 years. We have applied the recognition exemption for short-term leases.

13.1 Quantitative disclosures around right of use assets

This disclosure includes the carrying amounts of right of use assets and the movements during the year.

	2024–25	2023–24
	Buildings	Buildings
	£'000	£'000
Right of use assets		
At 1 April 2024	5,086	9,535
Additions	259	540
Capitalised provisions	18	282
Remeasurement – existing leases	(170)	(2,262)
Modification	861	–
Depreciation expense	(3,052)	(3,009)
At 31 March 2025	3,002	5,086

13.2 Quantitative disclosures around lease liabilities

This disclosure includes the carrying amounts of lease liabilities and the movements during the year.

	2024–25	2023–24
	Buildings	Buildings
	£'000	£'000
Lease liabilities		
At 1 April 2024	6,420	10,088
Additions	259	540
Remeasurement - existing leases	(170)	(2,258)
Modification	861	–
Accretion of interest	109	75
Repayments of principle on leases	(4,755)	(2,025)
At 31 March 2025	2,724	6,420

13.3 Maturity analysis of lease liabilities recognised in the statement of financial position

	2024–25	2023–24
	£'000	£'000
Buildings		
Not later than one year	1,368	4,031
Later than one year and not later than five years	676	1,519
Later than five years	770	990
Lease obligations	2,814	6,540
Less interest element	(90)	(120)
Total present value of obligations	2,724	6,420
Current portion	1,321	4,000
Non-current portion	1,403	2,420

13.4 Quantitative disclosures around elements in the SoCNE

The following amounts have been recognised as an expense in the SoCNE during the year.

	2024–25	2023–24
	£'000	£'000
Buildings		
Depreciation expense	3,052	3,009
Interest expense on lease liabilities	109	75
Expense related to short-term leases	–	–
Total	3,161	3,084

13.5 Quantitative disclosures around cash outflow for leases

The following amounts have been recognised in the statement of cash flows during the year.

	2024–25	2023–24
	£'000	£'000
Repayments of principal on leases	4,755	2,025

14. Capital and other commitments

14.1 Capital commitments

The total for capital commitments at the year-end was nil (2023–24: nil).

14.2 Other financial commitments

Ofsted has entered into non-cancellable contracts (which are not a lease or private finance initiative contract) mainly for digital-related services.

The payments Ofsted is committed to, analysed by the period during which the payment is due, are as follows.

	2024–25	2023–24
	£'000	£'000
Not later than one year	25	33
Later than one year and not later than five years	–	–
Later than five years	–	–
Total	25	33

15. Related-party transactions

15.1 Transactions between Ofsted and other government departments

Ofsted has had material transactions with the following other government departments, central government bodies and other public sector organisations during the year:

- Cabinet Office
- DfE
- Government Property Agency
- HM Revenue and Customs
- HM Treasury.

Ofsted has had non-material transactions with various other government bodies/agencies during the year.

15.2 Transactions between Ofsted and board members and key managers

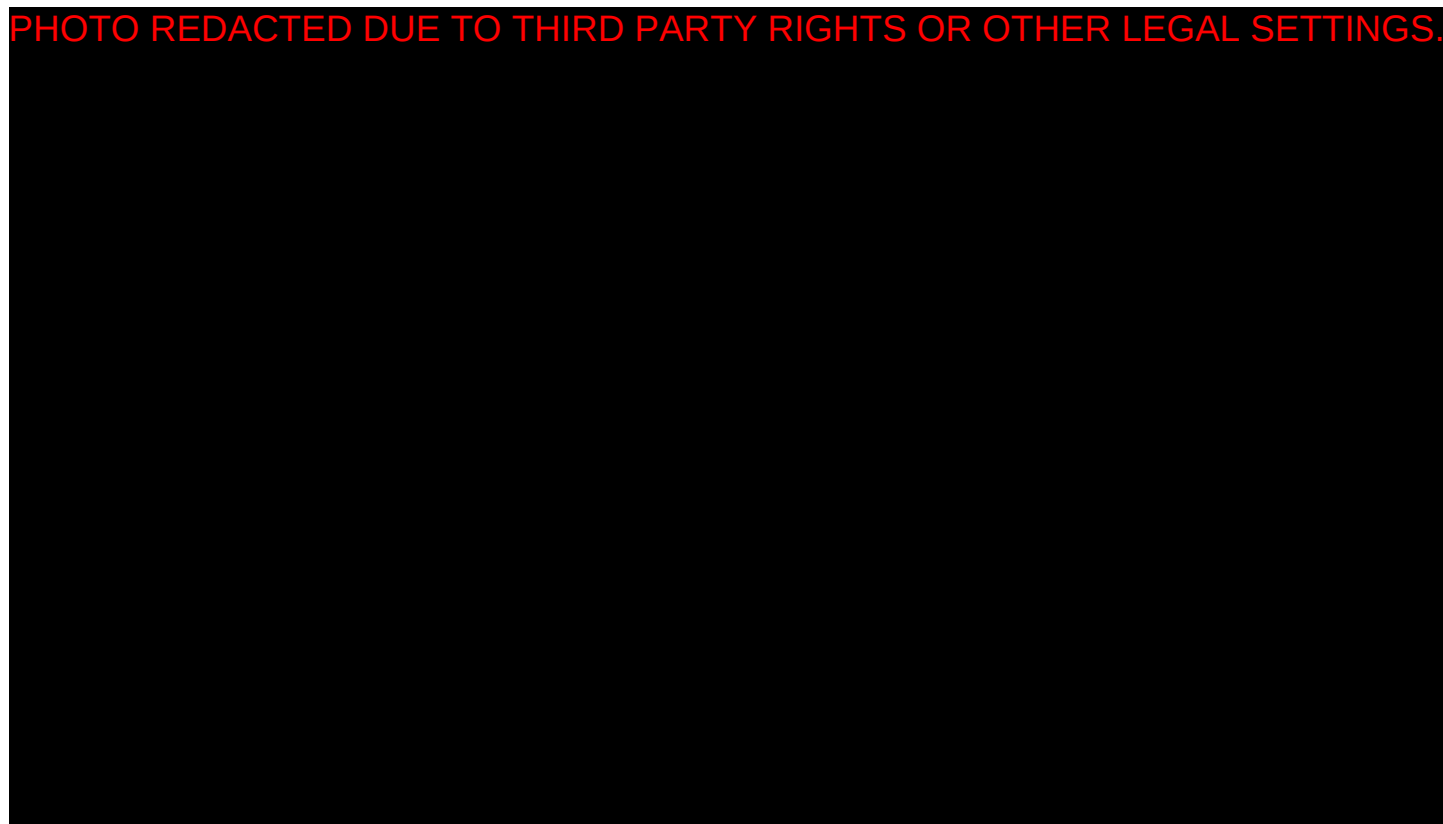
No board member, key manager or other related party has undertaken any material transactions with Ofsted during the year. Full details of the related parties are disclosed in the directors' report.

16. Events after the reporting period

In accordance with the requirements of IAS 10, events after the reporting period are considered up to the date on which the accounts are authorised for issue by the Accounting Officer. This is interpreted as the date of the Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General.

There have been no events after the reporting period that require an adjustment to the financial statements, nor any non-adjusting events to be reported.

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Appendix A: Core expenditure tables

Table 1: Total departmental spending, 2020–21 to 2025–26

	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn	Plans
Resource DEL						
Administration and inspection	116,343	126,822	149,844	150,900	153,770	170,498
Total resource DEL	116,343	126,822	149,844	150,900	153,770	170,498
<i>Of which:</i>						
Staff costs	124,407	127,450	142,892	157,842	161,109	185,219
Purchase of goods and services	12,065	24,632	38,420	35,706	36,386	38,008
Income from sales of goods and services	(26,485)	(31,082)	(37,524)	(48,558)	(52,160)	(63,512)
Rentals	2,472	2,555	345	254	253	–
Depreciation 1	3,815	3,191	5,617	5,250	7,685	10,594
Other resource	69	76	94	406	497	189
Resource AME						
Activities to support all functions	(111)	104	(161)	(125)	1,401	(60)
Total resource AME	(111)	104	(161)	(125)	1,401	(60)
<i>Of which:</i>						
Take up of provisions	4	151	(99)	(72)	1,488	–
Release of provision	(115)	(47)	(62)	(53)	(87)	(60)
Total resource budget	116,232	126,926	149,683	150,775	155,171	170,438
Capital DEL						
Administration and inspection	3,284	5,012	5,910	3,870	5,092	42,600
Total capital DEL	3,284	5,012	5,910	3,870	5,092	42,600
<i>Of which:</i>						
Purchase of assets	2,309	3,835	5,163	4,730	2,752	8,300

	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn	Plans
Right of use assets (IFRS 16)	–	–	329	(1,722)	950	34,300
Research costs (ESA 10)	975	1,177	418	862	1,390	–
Capital AME						
Activities to support all functions	–	–	–	282	18	–
Total capital AME	–	–	–	282	18	–
<i>Of which:</i>						
Take up of provisions	–	–	–	282	18	–
Total capital budget	3,284	5,012	5,910	4,152	5,110	42,600
Total departmental spending 2	115,701	128,747	149,976	149,677	152,596	202,444
<i>Of which:</i>						
Total DEL	115,812	128,643	150,137	149,520	151,177	202,504
Total AME	(111)	104	(161)	157	1,419	(60)

Notes:

1. Includes impairments.

2. Total departmental spending is the sum of the resource budget and the capital budget less depreciation. Similarly, total DEL is the sum of the resource budget DEL and capital budget DEL less depreciation in DEL, and total AME is the sum of resource budget AME and capital budget.

Ofsted's resource budgets for 2025–26 to 2028–29 and capital budgets for 2025–26 to 2029–30 have been agreed with HM Treasury. Budgets for 2026–27 to 2029–30 have not been included in the core tables. This is because amounts relating to income, depreciation and additional funding from other government departments will not be finalised until later in the year. These budgets make up a significant proportion of our overall budget and comparisons to prior years would be misleading without them. You can read more on the [Spending Review outcome](#).

Resource DEL is made up of income and expenditure from normal operating activities.

Resource AME relates to expenditure that meets the criteria of an accounting provision in the relevant accounting standard.

Capital DEL relates to investment in assets and includes research costs that meet specific criteria to be classified as Capital DEL.

Capital AME relates to expenditure that meets the criteria of an accounting provision in the relevant accounting standard.

The reduction in net expenditure in 2020–21 was mainly a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. We continued to carry out regulatory activity and essential demand-led inspections, but routine inspection was paused. This led to a significant reduction in variable costs, such as travel and use of contracted inspectors to inspect.

In 2021–22, net expenditure increased but was significantly less than the available DEL funding for the year. This was because we did not return to a full programme of routine school and FE and skills inspections until later in the year.

The increase between 2021–22 and 2022–23 is mainly due to additional temporary funding for new and increased levels of inspection from the DfE, agreed as part of the Spending Review. Ofsted also returned to a full programme of inspections across all remits for the full year in 2022–23.

Capital DEL funding for 2025–26 is significantly higher than the outturn in previous years due to the impact of IFRS 16 (see section 1.7 in the notes to the accounts). We expect to enter into a new long-term property lease in the year and are required to account for the asset value as capital DEL in the SOPs.

Resource DEL funding for 2025–26 is higher than in previous years, as additional funding has been agreed for the pay award and increased employer national insurance costs. There is also additional funding for work on report cards. More information about report cards is in the overview by HMCI.

Table 2: Administration budget, 2020–21 to 2025–26

	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26
	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn	Outturn	Plans
Resource DEL						
Administration and inspection	15,576	15,527	17,522	17,314	17,593	23,618
Total administration budget	15,576	15,527	17,522	17,314	17,593	23,618
<i>Of which:</i>						
Staff costs	12,049	12,123	14,433	14,206	13,879	18,872
Purchase of goods and services	2,835	2,801	2,453	2,516	3,070	4,617
Rentals	407	375	34	24	25	–
Depreciation	217	152	508	463	481	–
Other resource	68	76	94	105	138	129

Appendix B: Whistle-blowing disclosures report (social care) – from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

HMCI is a ‘prescribed person’ under The Public Interest Disclosure (Prescribed Persons) Order 2014, which provides the statutory framework for protecting workers from harm if they blow the whistle on their employer. Workers may tell the relevant prescribed person about suspected wrongdoing that they believe may have occurred, including crimes and regulatory breaches. Passing on information like this is known as making a ‘disclosure’.

HMCI is prescribed under the order in relation to the children’s social care services and in relation to the welfare of children provided with accommodation by schools and colleges. All relevant services are listed in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The number of workers’ disclosures received in the reporting period, which we reasonably believe are both qualifying disclosures and fall within HMCI’s prescribed matters⁶⁰

The children’s social care services that the disclosure related to	Number of disclosures received ⁶¹
Adoption support agencies	0
Cafcass	Fewer than 5
Children’s homes	277
Independent fostering agencies	9
Local authority children’s services ⁶² (this includes disclosures about trusts that deliver services on behalf of local authorities)	54
Residential family centres	6
Residential holiday schemes for disabled children	0
Supported accommodation providers	74
Welfare of children provided with accommodation by boarding schools and further education colleges	Fewer than 5
Welfare of children provided with accommodation by residential special schools	0
Voluntary adoption agencies	0

60. To be covered by the whistle-blowing law, the disclosure must be a ‘qualifying disclosure’. This is any disclosure of information which, in the reasonable belief of the worker making the disclosure, is made in the public interest and tends to show that one or more of the following has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur: a criminal offence; a breach of legal obligation; a miscarriage of justice; danger to the health or safety of any individual; damage to the environment; or the deliberate covering up of wrongdoing in these categories.

61. Sometimes we receive concerns from more than one whistle-blower about the same issue in a service. In these circumstances, we may record these in a single record so that we can respond to the concerns as a whole.

62. Local authority functions as outlined in the Schedule to the [Public Interest Disclosure \(Prescribed Persons\) Order 2014](#).

Figure 2: A summary of the action Ofsted has taken in respect of the above qualifying disclosures

Action taken in the reporting period	Number of disclosures received ⁶³
Referred the matter to the child protection team in the relevant local authority. We refer child protection concerns to the children's social care department of the local authority where the child lives. The local authority has overarching responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in their area.	34
Contacted the appropriate person at the children's social care service and asked them to investigate and respond to Ofsted with more information. We do this because we need further information to make a decision about possible further action required.	100
Carried out a monitoring visit (this action applies only to services that Ofsted regulates) if we considered the registered person is failing, or has failed, to comply with a regulatory requirement. This category includes when we were already monitoring a provider and the whistleblowing disclosure informed this work.	21
Used the information received to inform compliance and enforcement action. ⁶⁴	17
Reviewed the timing of the next inspection or visit and brought it forward if appropriate.	49
Held the information for follow-up at the next planned inspection or visit. We review information received along with a range of other intelligence gathered about a service to determine when we need to inspect and what lines of enquiry we need to follow up on.	218
Passed the information to another organisation as it was not for Ofsted to take action.	6
Our review of the information received is ongoing. ⁶⁵	31
Other action taken not included in other categories above.	32

63. It is possible that a disclosure received resulted in more than one type of action.

64. 'Social care: Ofsted's enforcement policy', Ofsted, October 2014 (updated April 2024).

65. The information was received at the end of the reporting year, so it is still under consideration.

Figure 3: A summary of the overall categories under which the whistle-blowing disclosures were classified

Category	Number of disclosures received ⁶⁶
Concerns that a specific child or children may be at risk of harm	67
Concerns that there are wider or systemic failures in safeguarding practice	89
Concerns that children are not receiving the right quality of care but that do not suggest a risk to their safety	143
Concerns that a social care service is not meeting regulatory requirements	87
Concerns about the quality of leadership and management ⁶⁷	28
Concerns relating to the workforce including recruitment, training, qualifications or experience ⁶⁸	4
Our review of the information received is ongoing ⁶⁹	5
We determined that the disclosure was not within our remit and passed it to another government department	2

We use the categories above to help us assess the urgency of the issues disclosed and take action within appropriate timescales.

Ofsted receives whistle-blowing disclosures in letters, emails, and through our helpline. Sometimes the information is provided anonymously.

66. It is possible that a disclosure received includes concerns from more than one category. In these cases, we have used the category that provides the best fit.

67. This category relates to disclosures received about local authority children's services.

68. As above.

69. The information was received at the end of the reporting year, so it is still under consideration.

Appendix C: Staff profiles

Ofsted's current grade structure broadly matches the wider Civil Service grades.

Administrative, professional and technical (APT) job family:

- Senior Civil Service
- Principal officer (Civil Service equivalent – Grade 6)
- Band A APT (Civil Service equivalent – Grade 7)
- B1 APT (Civil Service equivalent – Senior executive officer)
- B2 APT (Civil Service equivalent – Higher executive officer)
- B3 APT (Civil Service equivalent – Executive officer)
- C1 APT (Civil Service equivalent – Administrative officer).

Inspector job family:

- Senior Civil Service
- Senior HMI (Civil Service equivalent – Grade 6)
- HMI (Civil Service equivalent – Grade 7)
- Regulatory Inspection Manager (Civil Service equivalent – Grade 7)
- B1 Inspector (Civil Service equivalent – Senior executive officer)
- B2 Inspector (Civil Service equivalent – Higher executive officer).

Age profile of employees

	% in 2023	% in 2024	% in 2025
16 to 29	10	8	8
30 to 39	21	20	20
40 to 49	31	33	32
50 to 59	30	30	30
60 to 64	7	7	8
65+	1	2	2

Disability profile of employees

	% in 2023	% in 2024	% in 2025
Disabled	8	8	8
Not disabled	84	84	84
Unknown/undeclared	8	8	7

Ethnicity profile of employees

	% in 2023	% in 2024	% in 2025
White	83	80	81
Ethnic minority	11	12	13
Unknown/undeclared	6	6	5

Faith profile of employees

	% in 2023	% in 2024	% in 2025
Religious	50	50	50
No religious belief	40	41	42
Unknown/undeclared	9	9	8

Sex profile of employees

	% in 2023	% in 2024	% in 2025
Male	32	32	31
Female	68	68	69

Sexual orientation of employees

	% in 2023	% in 2024	% in 2025
Heterosexual	83	83	83
LGB/other	7	7	8
Unknown/undeclared	10	9	9

Notes:

1. Data is as at 31 March 2025.
2. Directly employed Ofsted staff only.
3. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.
4. Percentages calculated with fewer than five individuals are not shown in this table.
5. Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Other, Sikh, Jewish, Buddhist are included in religious belief group (listed in order of size within Ofsted).
6. LGB/other includes bisexual, gay, lesbian, and other sexual orientation.

Appendix D: Sustainability data

Financial and non-financial data relating to the sustainability section of the performance report

Greenhouse gas emissions

Greenhouse gas emissions		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Non-financial indicators (tonnes CO ₂ e)	Total gross scope 2 (energy indirect) emissions	520	376	367	271	286	271	282	283
	Total gross scope 3 (official business travel) emissions	1,741	1,632	1,381	232	1,009	1,323	1,353	1,256
Total emissions – scope 2 and 3		2,261	2,008	1,748	503	1,295	1,594	1,635	1,539
Related energy consumption (kWh)	Electricity: Non-renewable	1,121,694	1,028,073	984,264	760,889	801,876	863,333	825,980	829,228
	Gas	680,837	460,481	628,043	506,578	629,632	575,835	605,807	610,397
Total energy consumption		1,802,531	1,488,554	1,612,307	1,267,467	1,431,508	1,439,168	1,431,787	1,439,625
Financial indicators (£'000)	Expenditure on energy	163	148	160	136	154	168	202	336
	Expenditure on official business travel	6,170	5,728	4,826	489	3,438	5,925	6,297	6,131
	Expenditure on air travel	25	22	25	1	8	14	27	15
Total expenditure on energy and business travel (£'000)		6,358	5,898	5,011	626	3,600	6,107	6,526	6,482

Data on emissions and consumption in the above table has had to be estimated for any offices where information is unavailable from energy suppliers and landlords at the time of production. Expenditure on energy for all years is also estimated based on unit costs from energy suppliers. Some energy costs are included in the overall service charge paid to landlords, so energy usage is not always broken down to the level required for reporting.

Ofsted does not own or control any sources of direct energy emissions.

Business travel

Business travel		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Non-financial indicators (tonnes CO ₂ e)	Flights	28	29	35	1	5	10	29	10
	Rail	326	251	252	3	72	176	163	157
	Car	958	936	827	209	665	835	866	779
	Hotel	429	417	266	19	266	303	295	310
Total emissions		1,741	1,633	1,380	232	1,008	1,324	1,353	1,256

Flights

Flights		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Non-financial indicators (tonnes CO ₂ e)	Domestic	21	21	22	1	3	8	23	8
	International	7	8	13	–	2	2	6	2
Total emissions		28	29	35	1	5	10	29	10
Distance travelled (km)	Domestic	77,104	71,399	88,141	2,775	14,136	34,395	85,472	30,808
	International	42,934	48,372	73,859	–	9,740	9,553	26,670	8,620
Total emissions		120,038	119,771	162,000	2,775	23,876	43,948	112,142	39,428

Waste

Waste			2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Non-financial indicators (tonnes)	Non-hazardous waste	Landfill	8	8	4	–	13	2	3	3
		Total ICT waste recycled, reused and recovered (externally)	1	4	3	–	7	–	–	1
		Reused/recycled	45	63	86	19	17	16	17	31
	Incinerated/energy from waste		7	9	8	5	11	6	8	10
Total waste			61	84	101	24	48	24	28	45
Financial indicators (£'000)	Waste costs		3	3	5	3	3	3	3	3

Water consumption

Water consumption		2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Non-financial indicators (m³)	Water consumption (office estate)	5,022	4,747	5,847	1,509	2,535	2,964	2,129	2,294
Financial indicators (£'000)	Water supply and sewage costs	13	12	15	4	7	8	8	8

Other

Other target areas		2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25
Non-financial indicators	Emissions from domestic flights (tonnes CO ₂ e)	21	21	22	1	3	9	23	8
	Emissions from international travel (tonnes CO ₂ e)	7	8	13	–	2	1	6	2
	Paper use (reams)	4,105	5,251	4,868	2,648	3,126	3,866	3,199	2,662

Appendix E: Annual statement for the ‘Concordat to support research integrity within government’

Introduction

The Government Analysis Function (GAF) has committed to the ‘[Concordat to support research integrity](#)’ to maintain high standards of rigour and integrity in government research. The Concordat requires employers of researchers to provide an annual statement detailing actions taken to enhance understanding and application of research integrity.

At Ofsted, we aim to provide high-quality and ethical research, along with effective policies, training and support for staff to meet these standards. Research and evidence are integral to our work. Our policies, frameworks, judgements and insights are based on evidence. We review our frameworks and methodologies to ensure they are being implemented as intended and achieving the desired outcomes. We share information about education and children’s social care through our research and analysis. Our aim is to benefit the sectors we inspect and regulate, as well as wider professional and academic communities. In this annual statement, we summarise how we support a culture of research integrity, underpinned by good governance and support for our staff.

Research governance

Alex Jones, Director, Insights and Research, is our departmental director of analysis and accountable to the Head of the GAF for our analytical work. Jason Bradbury, Deputy Director, Data and Insight, is our chief statistician and head of profession for statistics. Verena Braehler, Deputy Director, Research and Evaluation, is our chief research officer and head of profession for social research.

The Committee for Research and Analysis (CORA) is responsible, as delegated by HMCI and our executive committee, for making sure research and analysis are carried out in line with our strategic priorities and are delivered to a high standard. The CORA has a clear oversight of complex and high-impact research work and tracks progress of lower-complexity work. The CORA dashboard contains a central record of our research and analysis.

We adhere to the six principles in the Government Social Research Profession’s [ethical assurance for social and behavioural research guidance](#). We put these into practice through our Research Ethics Committee, which includes external ethics experts as well as internal colleagues. We also have our own [ethical research policy](#), which ensures that all research and analysis carried out by, or on behalf of, Ofsted protects those doing the research as well as those taking part in it. We are committed to improving our knowledge and understanding of how to protect children and vulnerable adults. The welfare and safety of children and young people are at the core of our policy. This year we developed internal guidance and training specifically to support researchers in handling and reporting safeguarding concerns that arise during fieldwork. This supplements and complements Ofsted’s existing safeguarding policies and practices for all staff. We also developed guidance and training on drafting participant information sheets. Our data protection team checks compliance with data protection requirements for each research project and we always consider the appropriate legal basis for each research project.

When we need to commission analytical products and services, we procure and manage them in accordance with [GovS 008: Commercial](#) in a proportionate way. This year, we have delivered training on commissioning external research and managing commissioned research. We have also developed a process flow chart to inform external commissioning and are developing further templates and guidance. This will ensure that we take a consistent approach across the organisation. We regularly review our governance systems and protocols to make sure they are fit for purpose and provide appropriate scrutiny.

Professional standards for analysts

Analysts at Ofsted are members of the GAF, which is a cross-government network consisting of around 16,000 people involved in generating and disseminating analysis across government and beyond. The GAF aims to improve the analytical capability of the Civil Service. Ofsted adheres to the [GovS 010: Analysis standard](#). We are part of the Government Statistical Service (GSS), the Government Statistician Group and the Government Social Research (GSR) community. In recognition of the size of Ofsted's social research team, and the strategic importance of its work as an arm's length body, this year Ofsted has been admitted to the GSR Board as a permanent member. In 2024, our deserts and oases project received the highly prestigious Civil Service Award in the evaluation and analysis category and the Analysis in Government Award in the collaboration category.

Government social researchers are bound by the Civil Service code and its core values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality.⁷⁰ Researchers and analysts at Ofsted also follow GAF codes and principles, such as [the GSR Code](#). The GSR Code sets out additional professional standards that guide the work and behaviour of the GSR profession. These relate to the delivery of high-quality research that is rigorous, relevant and valued and a commitment to transparency and openness. These standards and behaviours are reflected in our research processes and through the training we offer to our analysts.

We support staff to do professional development in accordance with their profession's requirements. This year we have provided a comprehensive package of training on safeguarding during field research; conducting research with children and young people; qualitative data collection; evaluation design; quantitative analysis; and applying AI in research and evaluation. Researchers have access to mentoring within the Insights and Research directorate and cross-Civil-Service mentoring (including specific schemes for equality, diversity and inclusion groups). Researchers and analysts who are members of the GAF also have access to approved training courses through their membership. We strongly encourage our analytical staff to badge to a profession under the GAF. We support this by providing training; time to prepare for interviews and assessments; help for those applying to be badged; and appropriate mentors. As of March 2025, we had the following analytical staff badged under the GAF professions:

- Government Social Research – 26 members
- Government Statistician Group – 23 members
- Government Operational Research Service – 1 member.

70. 'The Civil Service code', Civil Service, November 2010 (updated March 2015).

This year, we will implement changes to our recruitment materials and processes to align them with GSR assessment and entry requirements. By embedding these standards into our recruitment practice, we aim to attract and recruit candidates who meet the necessary professional benchmarks to secure GSR membership on entry, contributing to the overall quality of our research workforce.

Open science and research protocols

Our research and analysis outputs take many forms, such as reports and publications and computer code and data, including linked data assets. Research analysis plans are pre-determined as a part of our internal research and analysis governance described above. We publish terms of reference that set out the aims, scope and research methods in advance of doing the primary analysis for all research we do for other government departments and other substantial research projects. For some projects, we have also been able to publish data collection instruments and summarised data tables so that researchers in other organisations could re-use or replicate our studies. We have deposited data from the Ofsted Big Listen in the UK Data Archive.

Publishing research

We follow the majority of the principles set out in '[Government Social Research: publication protocol](#)'. In 2024–25 we published several terms of reference, including commissioned research on vulnerability and inclusion, research on artificial intelligence in education, and commissioned behavioural research and cognitive testing to hear from children and learners, parents and carers, and staff during inspection.

Where we carry out research for an internal audience only and we do not publish it, for example research relating to operational practice, we disseminate the findings internally to ensure that the research achieves its intended purpose. There is an extensive in-house review and sign-off procedure for all the research outputs we publish. During 2024–25, we developed guidance to help researchers make best use of internal and external peer review to support all stages of the research process. This includes all activities, such as scoping projects, designing research tools, designing samples, and reviewing final reports before publication. All published outputs are copy edited, proofread and produced in line with our accessibility guidelines and house style.

For all projects, teams work with communications and policy colleagues and stakeholders to identify how best to disseminate the work to promote engagement and to reach the intended audience. In 2025–26 we will be developing a template to ensure all projects get the same level of consideration in their dissemination plans and include different forms of communication, such as reports, seminars and press launches.

External engagement relating to research integrity

To engage externally on research integrity, we use established routes through the cross-government analysis function, including the GSR profession and GSS.

We also use our international relationships with other inspectorates and the Standing International Conference of Inspectorates (SICI) to share information and good practice on research integrity. Ofsted staff have attended SICI international workshops and the annual general assembly this year. We also participated in knowledge exchange visits with the OECD and other inspectorates.

We engage widely with external stakeholders, such as research bodies and academics. We do this in a variety of ways, such as through external reference and advisory groups. For the majority of our research projects, we set up advisory panels, made up of external stakeholders such as academics, colleagues in other government departments, those working with children and learners (or their representatives) and other experts. They offer additional quality assurance and advice in relation to our research methods, practice and dissemination. Some of our staff are members of other professional bodies, including the Social Research Association, UK Evaluation Society and the British Educational Research Association. We also have two external reference groups to provide feedback on our research and evaluation programme and act as expert advisors on their sector or specialism.

Research misconduct

Currently, processes in relation to research misconduct come under our wider policies for professional standards, disciplinary action and counter fraud and corruption guidelines.

Our professional standards policy refers to the [Civil Service Code](#) and core values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality. It also refers to our conflict of interest and [whistle-blowing](#) policies. The conflict of interest policy sets out expectations and processes for managing conflicts. The whistle-blowing policy has clear guidance and processes for raising concerns with the HR Casework and Advice team, and is a framework for all staff to report any instances of misconduct.

Our disciplinary policy has clear processes for dealing with misconduct. Currently, we would expect cases of research misconduct to be considered under its processes. This year we have revised our team management record to include the option to record research misconduct. In 2025–26 we will embed a team process on reporting research misconduct to enable consistent monitoring and reporting.

Other forms of misconduct identified in the Concordat are addressed through existing policies, for example the quality incident reporting system (which addresses data processing and reporting) or the ethical review process. This year we have developed the role of our quality assurance working group, which is responsible for identifying issues relating to quality in its remit teams and wider team. The group will develop guidance and strengthen quality assurance processes. This includes developing a clear definition of research misconduct in Ofsted.

Appendix F: List of inspection and regulatory frameworks and handbooks

A framework is the legal basis for what we do. A handbook is the operational guidance that allows us to carry that out; this can also include regulatory handbooks. This annex shows all the frameworks and handbooks we have.

1. Accreditation visits to online providers handbook
2. Area SEND inspections framework and handbook
3. Cafcass inspection framework
4. Childminder agencies: inspection guidance
5. Early years and childcare enforcement policy
6. Early years and childcare registration handbook
7. ECF and NPQ inspection framework and handbook
8. Education inspection framework, which has the following associated handbooks:
 - early years inspection handbook
 - further education and skills inspection handbook
 - handbook for additional inspections of independent schools
 - non-association independent schools inspection handbook
 - school inspection handbook
 - school monitoring handbook
9. Framework for the regulation of providers on the Childcare Register
10. Handbook for inspecting initial training for the Armed Forces, with reference to welfare and duty of care
11. Handbook for the inspection of education, skills and work activities in prisons and young offender institutions
12. ILACS framework and guidance
13. ITE inspection framework and handbook
14. Joint inspection framework: secure training centres

15. [JTAI frameworks and guidance](#), including guidance for different themes. The theme for this reporting year is:
 - JTAI of the multi-agency response to children who are victims of domestic abuse
16. [Secure 16 to 19 academies guidance](#)
17. [Social care common inspection framework](#), which has the following associated handbooks:
 - [Adoption support agencies](#)
 - [Boarding schools and residential special schools](#)
 - [Children's homes \(also applies to secure 16 to 19 academies\)](#)
 - [Independent fostering agencies](#)
 - [Residential family centres](#)
 - [Residential holiday schemes for disabled children](#)
 - [Residential provision of further education colleges](#)
 - [Secure children's homes](#)
 - [Supported accommodation](#)
 - [Voluntary adoption agencies](#)
18. [Social care enforcement policy](#)
19. [Unregistered school inspection handbook](#)

Appendix G: List of hubs

The five hubs are:

- **Complaints about Ofsted** – This will centralise complaints. All complaints will be investigated independently of their region. Inspectors assessing complaints will always be from a different region to the one from which the complaint originated. We believe this will lead to a more consistent approach. This hub will also bring together experts centrally to consider information about a setting and explain to providers how we will use that information.
- **Inspection welfare, support and guidance** – This will be a single national point of contact offering support and guidance to inspectors and to those being inspected. It will make sure advice and guidance are consistent across the country. It will also help us identify emerging issues so we can improve our guidance, frameworks and training.
- **Quality assurance and professional standards** – This will set high national standards for quality assurance work. A team of expert inspectors will work centrally to sign off inspection reports. They will make sure the evaluations we make in our reports meet nationally set standards. If standards are not met, senior inspectors will oversee a review of the evidence and reporting. They will then take action, for example arranging for inspectors to get additional evidence.
- **Enhanced consistency and moderation** – This will give additional scrutiny to the reports on providers causing us the greatest concern, independently of the original inspection team. The hub will carefully review the inspection reports and comments from providers. It will also carry out full evidence base reviews.
- **Regulation and delivery prioritisation** – This will oversee the delivery of our inspection and regulatory work in early years and children’s social care. It will monitor the time it takes for regions to complete work such as registrations of new providers. This will ensure our resource is allocated to manage peaks in demand in different parts of the country, so we can work in the most effective way and in the best interests of children.

