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 ▾ [Performance and inspection of childcare providers](#)

Guidance

Principles for deciding when more than one inspector is needed for early years inspection and regulatory activity

Guidance for inspectors on how to make this decision and the process to follow.

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- [Concerns about inspectors' safety and/or well-being](#)
- [Number of places and layout of the setting](#)
- [Decision-making process](#)



The early years operating guide includes this prompt to inspectors, listed in the '[preparing for inspection](#)' section:

“[review] whether an additional inspector is needed and this has been agreed by the region – if so, record the rationale and who agreed this decision; this might include concerns about suitability and/or your safety, and/or the number of places”

When deciding whether more than one inspector is needed for a regulatory visit or inspection, the inspector and early years senior officer (SO) consider a range of factors, including:

- whether the information suggests there is a risk of harm to children
- the nature and severity of non-compliance
- the location of the premises and the potential personal risks to staff and children
- the size and layout of the premises, the number of places for children at the setting and number of staff who work there
- whether there is a history of concerns about the provider
- whether the history with the provider suggests our inspector and/or evidence are likely to be challenged
- any other information known about the registered person or provision

This document provides additional guidance for inspectors to support this decision-making. It outlines the process for agreeing these decisions and where this should be recorded.

Concerns about inspectors' safety and/or well-being

Where there are concerns about inspectors' safety or well-being connected to the suitability and/or integrity of providers or the premises, regions must support inspectors to carry out inspections and regulatory activity with one other inspector.

Number of places and layout of the setting

Regions can consider whether a setting has 100 or more registered places or a large number of rooms as an initial guide to decide whether a second inspector may be needed. This is not an automatic trigger for there being more than one inspector but should prompt the inspector to make an enquiry with the duty desk or SO to discuss what would be appropriate oversight and support during inspection and regulatory activity.

This means considering how many children are estimated to be present at the setting on the day of the visit/inspection, the layout of the setting's premises and any other contextual information about the setting.

When inspectors notify providers of an inspection or a regulatory visit, they should determine how many children will be present at the time of the inspection/visit, and how the provision is organised. This will then enable them to make a final decision about whether they need a second inspector and allow for flexibility if, at the time of the


inspection, there are fewer children present than the number of places.


If inspectors are carrying out an inspection or regulatory visit without notice, they should use all the information above and what they know about the setting to decide whether more than one inspector is needed.

Decision-making process

The inspector agrees the decision with an early years SO in their region. The inspector then records the rationale for more than one inspector, and the number of inspectors, in the relevant sections of Ofsted’s systems that support inspection and regulatory activity.

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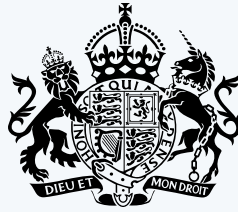
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