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Official Statistics

Main findings: non-association independent schools inspections and outcomes in England: August 2025

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Applies to England

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Framework changes

This release marks the final official statistics based on Ofsted's previous education inspection framework (EIF).

Following the recent [consultation](#) on improving the way Ofsted inspects education, all future official statistics will reflect the renewed framework.

Reports and data produced under the previous framework remain available on the Ofsted statistics website for [non-association independent schools](#) for reference.

This is the main findings report for the [non-association independent schools inspections and outcomes in England as at 31 August 2025](#) release. The following are also available:

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

Summary

This release contains:

- the most recent inspections data and outcomes for all non-association independent schools as at 31 August 2025
- provisional data for inspections carried out between 1 September 2024 and 31 August 2025 and published by 30 September 2025
- revised data for inspections carried out between 1 September 2019 and 31

August 2024; this includes inspections from previous academic years that might have missed the deadline for official statistics in that year

Between 1 September 2024 and 31 August 2025, we carried out 506 standard inspections of independent schools, 398 additional inspections and 122 evaluations of school action plans. [\[footnote 1\]](#)

By 31 August 2025, we had judged 83% of independent schools good or outstanding at their most recent standard inspection, compared with 82% on 31 August 2024 and 75% in August 2019 (before the start of the EIF in September 2019).

At their most recent standard inspection, 88% of independent schools met the independent school standards (ISS), compared with 87% on 31 August 2024 and 82% in August 2019.

Number of providers

There are 2,491 independent schools in England. [\[footnote 2\]](#) We inspect independent schools that are not part of an association, of which there are 1,145. The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) inspects schools that are members of an association. For simplicity, in this publication we will refer to non-association independent schools as 'independent schools'.

We can group the independent schools we inspect into 3 broad categories:

- Independent special schools, which make up almost two thirds (65%) of the independent schools we inspect, are often small schools that provide a combination of educational and therapeutic support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). [\[footnote 3\]](#) Independent schools that cater specifically for pupils with SEND are usually registered with the Department for Education (DfE) as 'independent special schools'; [\[footnote 4\]](#) however, there is

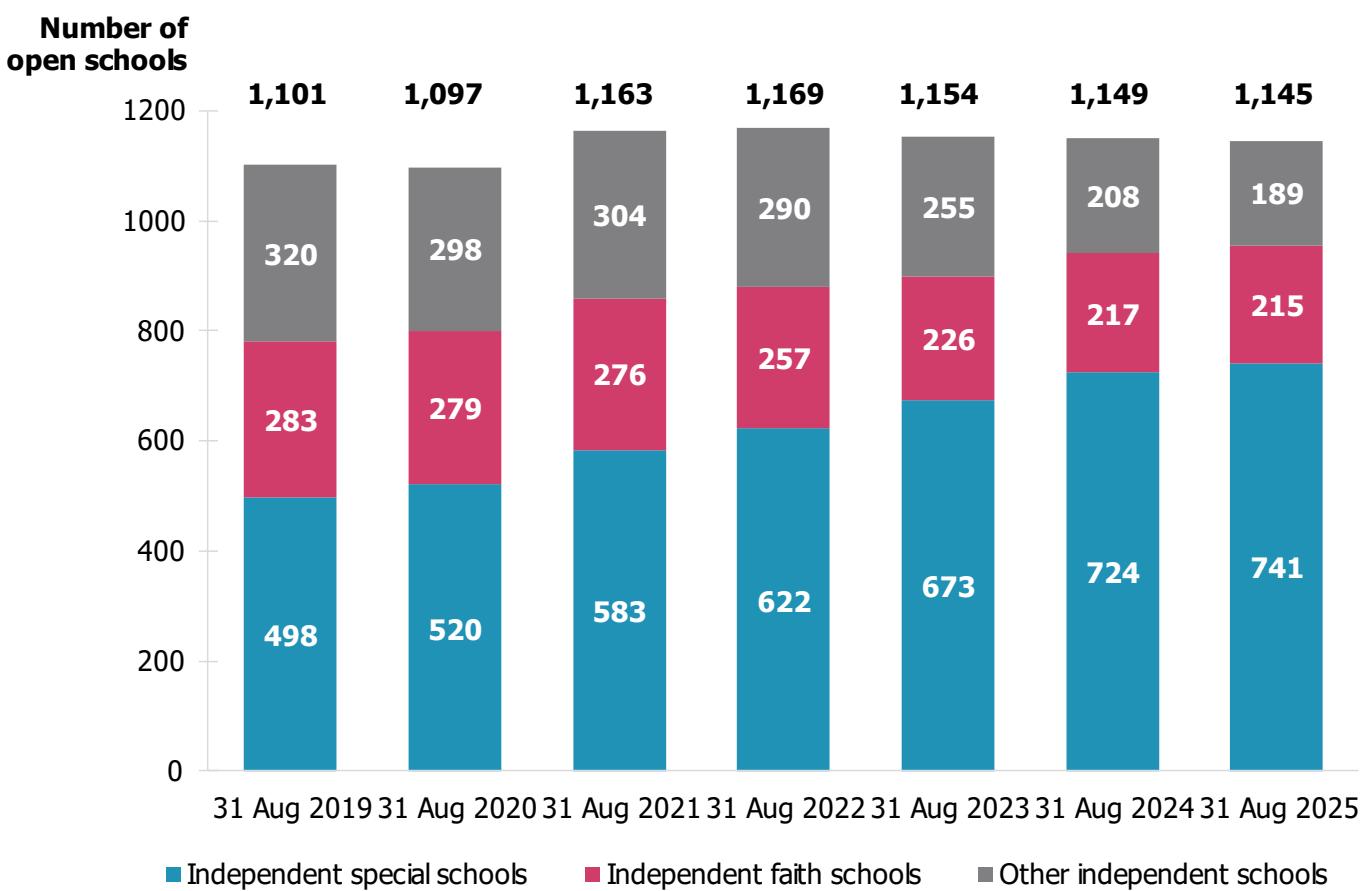
no legal definition of this term.

- Independent faith schools, which make up just under a fifth (19%) of independent schools, are schools with a declared religious character or ethos. [\[footnote 5\]](#)
- Other independent schools, which are the remaining independent schools (17%), have no declared religious character or ethos and are not registered with the DfE as special schools.

The number of independent special schools has continued to rise. Overall, the total number of independent schools we inspect is very similar to last year (it decreased by 4 schools), but special schools now make up 65% of non-association independent schools compared with 63% last year and 45% in 2019.

The number of independent faith schools and other independent schools we inspect has continued to decrease over the same period.

Figure 1: Number of non-association independent schools by school type over time



1. Special faith schools are included in the special schools group.

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

Since August 2024, 112 independent schools are no longer inspected by us. Of these, 71% are special schools, 7% faith schools and 21% other independent schools. Of the 112 schools, 26% closed and 74% joined an association and are now inspected by ISI. In the previous year, between August 2023 and August 2024, 92 schools left the group of schools inspected by us – of which 49% closed and 51% moved to ISI.

The number of schools we no longer inspect has been almost entirely offset by the number of new schools opening. Since last year, 107 schools have opened and 1 has rejoined the schools we inspect from ISI. The majority (88%) of these schools are independent special schools.

Inspections between 1 September 2024 and 31 August 2025

Inspection volumes

This year, we carried out 506 standard inspections of independent schools. These inspections resulted in a series of graded judgements. Of these, 64% were inspections of independent special schools, 19% were of independent faith schools, and 17% were of other independent schools. These proportions broadly reflect the current composition of the schools we inspect, where 65% are special schools.

Of the 506 standard inspections this year:

- 308 (61%) were of schools previously judged good or outstanding
- 116 (23%) were of schools previously judged requires improvement or inadequate
- 82 (16%) were of schools receiving their first standard inspection

During the same period, we also carried out 398 additional inspections and 122 evaluations of school action plans at the request of the DfE. [\[footnote 1\]](#) The 398 additional inspections included the following:

- 144 pre-registration inspections

- 133 material change inspections
- 103 progress monitoring inspections
- 18 emergency inspections

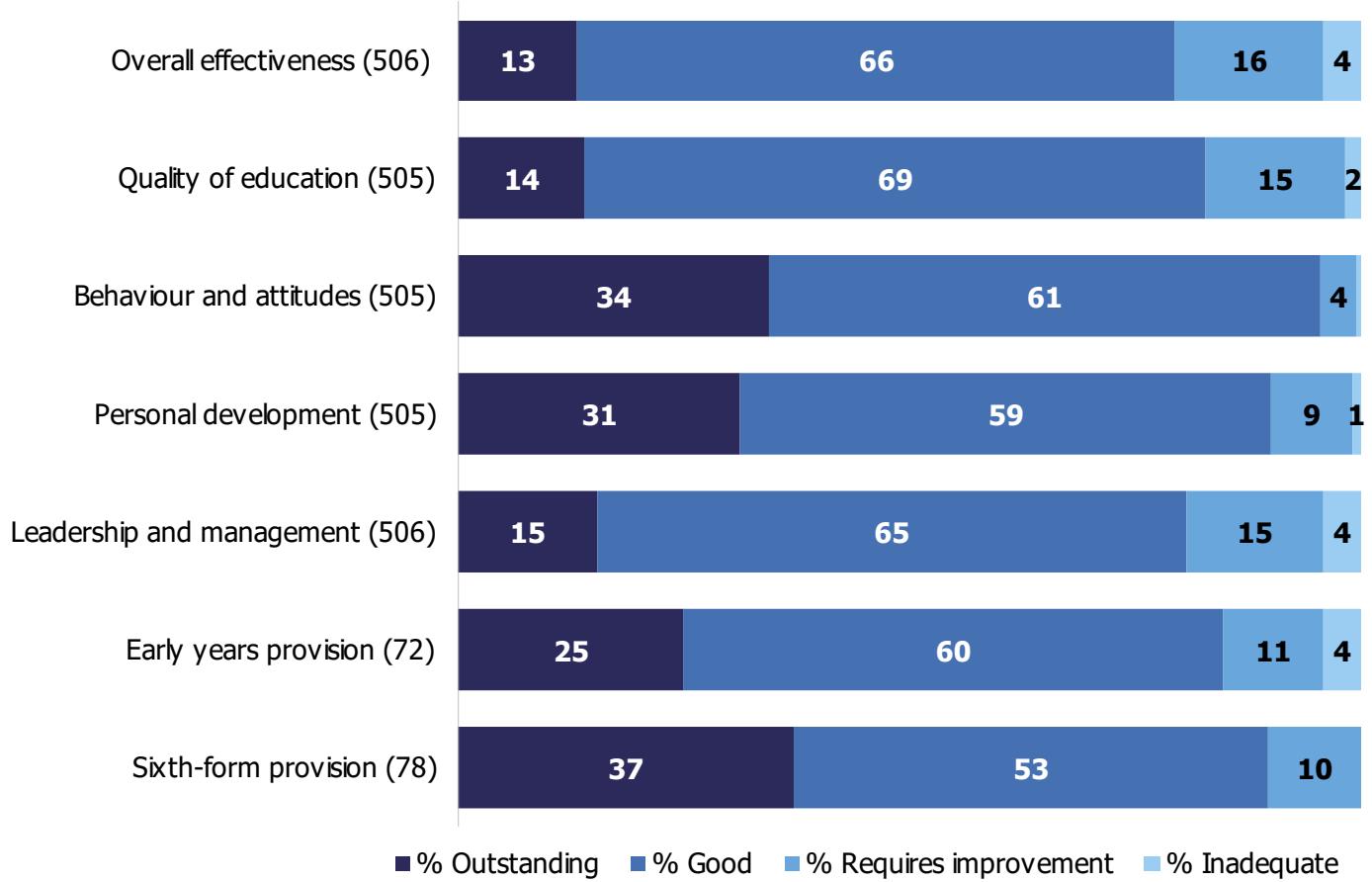
Standard inspection outcomes

Of the schools that received a standard inspection this year, we judged 79% to be good or outstanding in their overall effectiveness. This is higher than in previous years. We judged 75% to be good or outstanding in 2023/24, and 67% in 2022/23. However, it should be noted that inspection outcomes for individual academic years are not representative of all schools and should be treated with caution. The mixture of schools selected for inspection can vary from year to year, which affects the outcomes that we see.

The relationship between overall effectiveness and the key judgements has remained consistent with the patterns we have seen in previous years. Judgements for the quality of education and the effectiveness of leadership and management continue to be the most strongly aligned with overall effectiveness. In contrast, grades for behaviour and attitudes, as well as personal development, tend to be more positive than for the other key judgements.

[Figure 2](#) shows a breakdown of the inspection outcomes from the standard inspections we carried out this year.

Figure 2: Overall effectiveness, key judgements and provision judgements of non-association independent schools, 2024/25



■ % Outstanding ■ % Good ■ % Requires improvement ■ % Inadequate

1. Total number of inspections with an outcome is shown in brackets.
2. One school that had a standard inspection this year only received an outcome for overall effectiveness and leadership and management and received a grade of insufficient evidence for the other key judgements.
3. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100. Where a percentage has been rounded to 0, we have not included the label on the chart.

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

Schools may receive a range of grades across overall effectiveness and the 4 key judgements. Of the schools inspected this year, 55% received the same grade for all 5 judgements.

The strongest alignment was observed between overall effectiveness and leadership and management (97%), and overall effectiveness and quality of education (94%). In contrast, the weakest alignment was between overall effectiveness and behaviour and attitudes, where only 63% of inspections resulted in the same grade.

Quality of education and leadership and management were given the same grade in 91% of inspections, making them the most closely linked key judgements. The least aligned were quality of education and behaviour and attitudes, with only 65% of the grades matching.

Figure 3: The proportion of standard inspections with the same grade for overall effectiveness and each key judgement, 2024/25

	Overall effectiveness	Quality of education	Behaviour and attitudes	Personal development	Leadership and management
Overall effectiveness		94%	63%	69%	97%
Quality of education	94%		65%	69%	91%
Behaviour and attitudes	63%	65%		77%	66%
Personal development	69%	69%	77%		72%
Leadership and management	97%	91%	66%	72%	

1. Each box shows the proportion of standard inspections where the outcome for the key judgement listed on the left matched that of the key judgement listed above.
2. This analysis is based on 505 standard inspections carried out in 2024/25, excluding the inspection where key judgement outcomes were not available due to insufficient evidence.

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

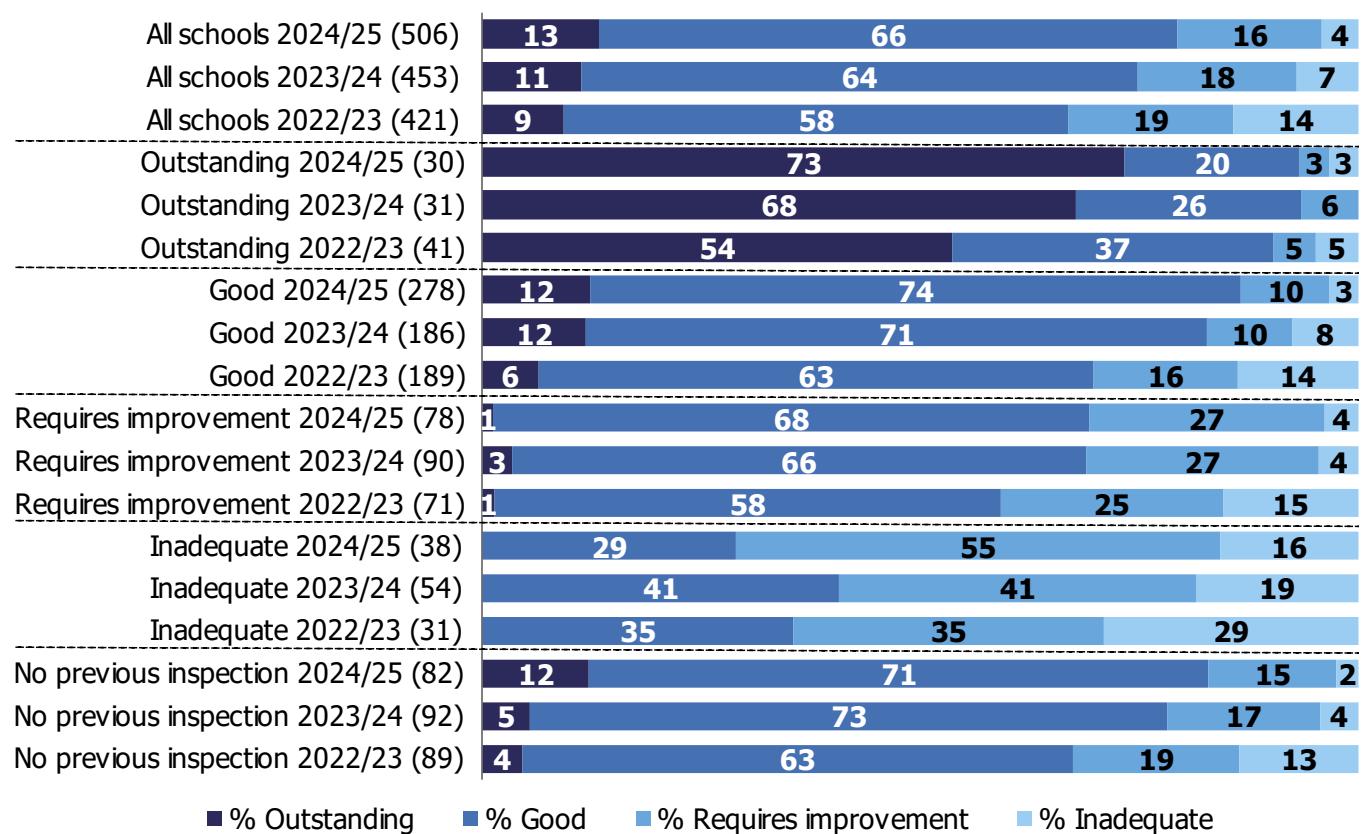
This academic year, 424 (84%) of the 506 inspections we carried out were of schools that had previously been inspected.

Similarly to last year, more schools improved to good or outstanding from requires improvement or inadequate (65) than declined to requires improvement or inadequate from good or outstanding (39 schools).

See [Figure 4](#) below for outcomes by previous overall effectiveness grade over time.

Figure 4: Inspection outcomes of non-association independent schools over time, by previous overall effectiveness grade

Previous overall effectiveness



1. Total number of inspections with an outcome is shown in brackets.

2. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.

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

This year, 60% of schools retained their overall effectiveness grade, 28% improved their grade and 11% declined.

Also, 73% of schools previously judged outstanding retained their outstanding judgement. This represents an increase compared to previous years. The figure was 68% in 2023/24 and 54% in 2022/23.

Outcomes for schools previously judged good are broadly in line with those for good schools inspected in 2023/24. This year, 12% improved to outstanding and 74% remained good. The proportion of schools previously judged requires improvement that improved is the same as last year, at 69%.

Of the 38 schools that were previously inadequate, only 6 have remained inadequate. Eleven schools improved to good and 21 schools are now requires improvement.

Independent schools are also inspected against the ISS. In the standard inspections carried out this year, 14% of schools did not meet all the ISS. As in previous years,

special schools were more likely to meet the ISS. Only 7% of special schools inspected this year did not meet the ISS, compared with 33% of independent faith schools and 19% of other independent schools.

Additional inspection outcomes

We monitor schools that fail to meet all the ISS at either their most recent standard inspection or at an emergency inspection, through evaluating action plans and carrying out progress monitoring inspections. Schools did not meet the ISS that were checked in 63 (61%) of the 103 progress monitoring inspections that we carried out this year. This is a much higher level of non-compliance than in previous years (54% in 2023/24 and 51% in 2022/23).

Of the 18 schools that received an emergency inspection this year, 9 met the ISS that were checked and 9 did not.

This year, we carried out 144 pre-registration inspections. This was more than in previous years, with 116 carried out in 2023/24 and 134 in 2022/23. In our inspections this year, 101 schools (70%) were judged as likely to meet all standards (this includes those also operating without registration and likely to meet the standards). This is slightly lower than in previous years: in 2023/24 and 2022/23, 73% of schools that received a pre-registration inspection met the ISS.

Most recent inspection outcomes

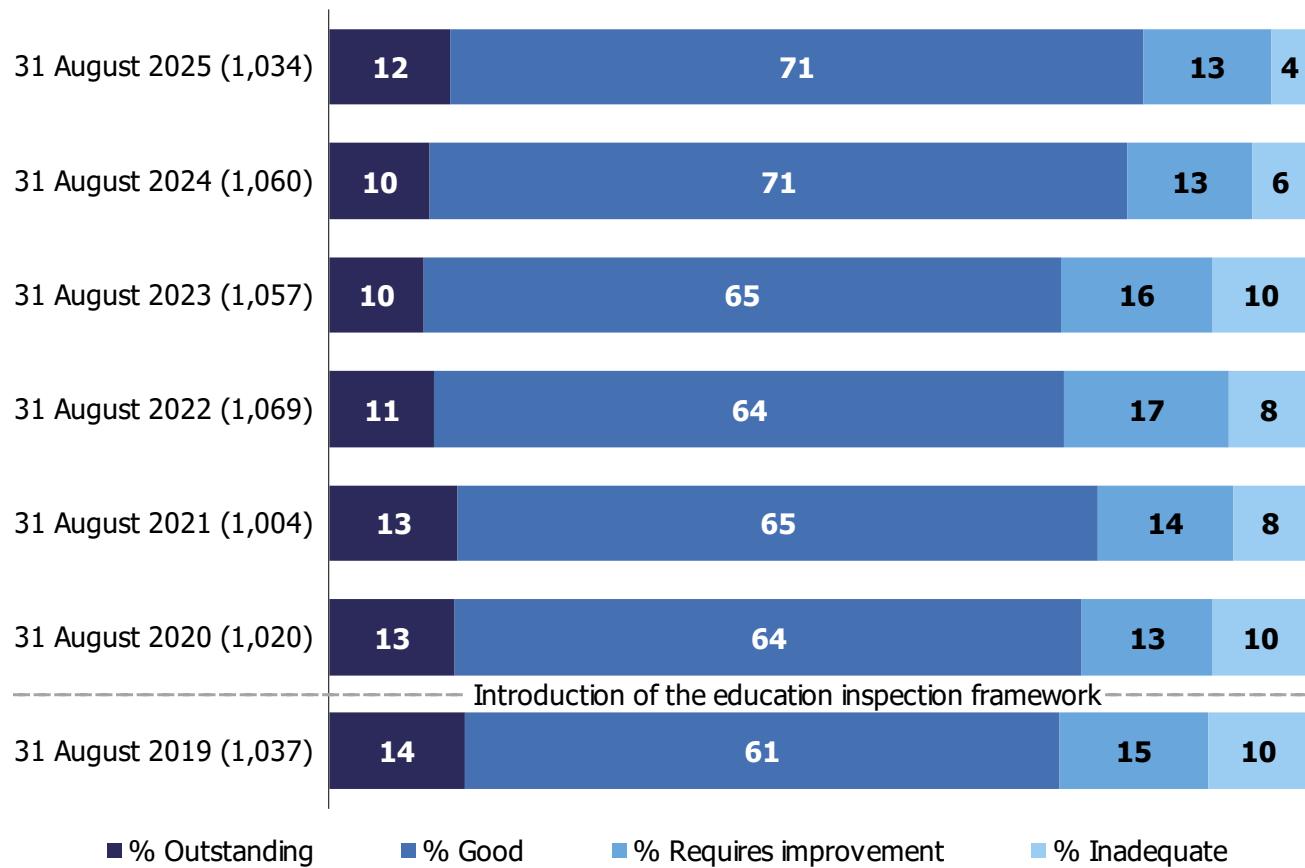
On 31 August 2025, 1,035 (90%) non-association independent schools had received a standard inspection. The vast majority of these schools were inspected under the EIF introduced in September 2019, with 2 inspected under the previous framework. The remaining 110 schools have yet to be inspected, as they have only recently opened and are waiting for their first standard inspection.

By 31 August 2025, we had judged 83% of schools as good or outstanding for overall effectiveness at their most recent standard inspection, compared with 82% on 31 August 2024 and 75% in August 2019 (before the start of the EIF). The most significant increase in the proportion of schools rated good or outstanding occurred between 31 August 2023 and 31 August 2024, rising from 75% to 82%. This improvement can be attributed to better inspection outcomes during 2023/24,

alongside changes in the sector such as school closures and transfers to ISI. [\[footnote 6\]](#) As discussed above, this year the trend has continued, in that more schools improved to good or outstanding from requires improvement or inadequate than declined to requires improvement or inadequate from good or outstanding.

Due to changes in the sector, many of the schools included in our analysis each year are not the same schools. Only 710 schools appear in both the 2019 and 2025 datasets, representing 62% of currently open non-association independent schools.

Figure 5: Most recent overall effectiveness of non-association independent schools over time



1. Total number of schools with an inspection outcome is shown in brackets.

2. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.

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

Independent special schools continue to be more likely to be judged good or outstanding (90%) than independent faith schools (67%) or other independent schools (79%).

Following the removal of the overall effectiveness judgement from our inspections of independent schools in November 2025, this analysis of the latest grades for all

open schools nationally will not be available in future releases.

Of the 1,145 open schools, all but 2 that have been inspected were inspected under the EIF. The proportion of schools judged good or outstanding for each EIF key judgement at their most recent inspection was:

- 86% for quality of education
- 96% for behaviour and attitudes
- 92% for personal development
- 84% for leadership and management

Meeting the independent school standards

All independent schools are required to meet the ISS. There are 8 parts to the ISS, which cover areas such as quality of education, student welfare, and leadership and management. [\[footnote 7\]](#)

At their most recent inspection, 12% of non-association independent schools did not meet all the standards. This is a slight improvement since 31 August 2024, when 13% did not meet all the standards. This slight improvement is seen across all school types, though independent faith schools continue to be more likely to not meet the standards (27%) than independent special schools (6%) and other independent schools (15%).

It is possible for independent schools to meet the ISS and be judged requires improvement for overall effectiveness under the EIF. Of the 135 (13%) independent schools we judged as requires improvement, under half (41%) met the ISS. The schools that were judged requires improvement and met the ISS had met the minimum standards laid down by the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), but were not providing a good quality of education as evaluated under the EIF.

If a school fails to meet any of the standards in parts 1 to 7, it will normally not meet the standards for the quality of leadership and management of schools (part 8). As a result, the part 8 standards are the most likely to be failed (12%), followed by the standards for the quality of education provided (part 1) at 11%.

Across the 8 parts of the ISS, independent special schools are generally more likely to meet the standards than independent faith schools and other independent

schools. This trend is seen in all parts except part 7 (the manner in which complaints are handled), which was met by all independent special schools and other independent schools and 98% of faith schools.

The greatest differences between school types were seen with part 1 and part 8. The part 1 standards for the quality of education provided were met by 95% of independent special schools inspected, compared to 87% of other independent schools and 74% of independent faith schools. The part 8 standards for leadership and management were met by 94% of independent special schools, compared to 85% of other independent schools and 73% of independent faith schools.

Revisions to previous release

Provisional data indicated that between 1 September 2023 and 31 August 2024, 446 standard inspections were carried out. This data included inspection reports that were published by 30 September 2024. Based on reports published by 30 September 2025, there were 8 further standard inspections during 2023/24, bringing the total number of graded inspections to 454.

Following the inclusion of these 8 inspections, the overall effectiveness profile for independent schools inspected in 2023/24 has been very slightly updated from last year's provisional data:

- outstanding remained at 11%
- good remained at 64%
- requires improvement remained at 18%
- inadequate increased slightly from 6% to 7%

You can find further details in the revised tables in the [charts and tables file](#) accompanying this release.

We have revised the data in this publication in line with [our revisions policy for official statistics](#).

Notes

The purpose of these official statistics is to provide data and insight on Ofsted's inspections of non-association independent schools. They provide information about how the judgements have changed over time, and how they may vary across different regions and school types.

Data in this report is from inspections carried out up to 31 August 2025, where the inspection reports were published by 30 September 2025. If an inspection report was not published by the cut-off date, then the school's previous inspection is reported as its most recent, where applicable. Any data, charts and tables referring to the 2024/25 academic year are based on inspections carried out from 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025, where the report was published by 30 September 2025.

Data in this official statistics release reflects the judgements made for inspections carried out under sections 99, 109(1) and 109(2) of the [Education and Skills Act 2008](#). The regulations in the act set out the standards that inspectors report on. This includes how far the school meets the requirements of the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#) (referred to as the independent school standards).

The [methodology and quality report](#) that accompanies this release sets out the main uses of this data, further contextual information and arrangements for quality assurance. It also provides information about a) the strengths and limitations of the statistics, and b) the accuracy and reliability of the underlying data.

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

Inspection data for the academic years before 2024/25 have been revised to include inspections that were published after the cut-off date for the publication in that year.

Glossary

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

Further information

Contact for comments or feedback

If you have any comments or feedback on this publication, please contact the [Schools Data and Analysis team](#).

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the following for their contribution to this statistical release: Alison Bateman, Chris Foley and Jay Kerai.

How to search

Click on Ctrl + F on a Windows laptop or Command + F on a Mac.

This will open a search box in the top right-hand corner of the page. Type the word you are looking for in the search bar and press enter. Your browser will highlight the word, usually in yellow, wherever it appears on the page. Press enter to move to the next place where it appears.

Annex: data tables for figures

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

Data for Figure 1: Number of non-association independent schools by school type over time

School type	31 August 2019	31 August 2020	31 August 2021	31 August 2022	31 August 2023	31 August 2024	3 August 2025
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All non- association independent schools	1,101	1,097	1,163	1,169	1,154	1,149	1,14
Independent special schools	498	520	583	622	673	724	74
Independent faith schools	283	279	276	257	226	217	21
Other independent schools	320	298	304	290	255	208	18

1. Special faith schools are included in the special schools group.

See [Figure 1](#).

Data for Figure 2: Overall effectiveness, key judgements and provision judgements of non-association independent schools, 2024/25

Judgement	Number of inspections	% Outstanding	% Good	% Requires improvement	% Inadequa
Overall effectiveness	506	13	66	16	1
Quality of education	505	14	69	15	2
Behaviour and attitudes	505	34	61	4	1
Personal development	505	31	59	9	1
Leadership and management	506	15	65	15	1

Early years provision	72	25	60	11
Sixth-form provision	78	37	53	10

1. One school that had a standard inspection this year only received an outcome for overall effectiveness and leadership and management and received a grade of insufficient evidence for the other key judgements.

2. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.

See [Figure 2](#).

Data for Figure 3: The proportion of standard inspections with the same grade for overall effectiveness and each key judgement, 2024/25

Key judgement 1	Key judgement 2	Proportion where grades match
Overall effectiveness	Quality of education	94%
Overall effectiveness	Behaviour and attitudes	63%
Overall effectiveness	Personal development	69%
Overall effectiveness	Leadership and management	97%
Quality of education	Behaviour and attitudes	65%
Quality of education	Personal development	69%
Quality of education	Leadership and management	91%
Behaviour and attitudes	Personal development	77%
Behaviour and attitudes	Leadership and management	66%

Personal development	Leadership and management	72%
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1. The analysis is based on 505 standard inspections carried out in 2024/25, excluding the inspection where key judgement outcomes were not available due to insufficient evidence.

See [Figure 3](#).

Data for Figure 4: Inspection outcomes of non-association independent schools over time, by previous overall effectiveness

Previous overall effectiveness and academic year	Number of inspections	% Outstanding	% Good	% Requires improvement	% Inadequate
All schools 2024/25	506	13	66	16	1
All schools 2023/24	453	11	64	18	
All schools 2022/23	421	9	58	19	1
Outstanding 2024/25	30	73	20	3	
Outstanding 2023/24	31	68	26	6	
Outstanding 2022/23	41	54	37	5	
Good 2024/25	278	12	74	10	
Good 2023/24	186	12	71	10	

Good 2022/23	189	6	63	16	1
Requires improvement 2024/25	78	1	68	27	
Requires improvement 2023/24	90	3	66	27	
Requires improvement 2022/23	71	1	58	25	1
Inadequate 2024/25	38	0	29	55	1
Inadequate 2023/24	54	0	41	41	1
Inadequate 2022/23	31	0	35	35	2
No previous inspection 2024/25	82	12	71	15	
No previous inspection 2023/24	92	5	73	17	
No previous inspection 2022/23	89	4	63	19	1

1. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.

See [Figure 4](#).

Data for Figure 5: Most recent overall effectiveness of non-association independent schools over time

Most recent inspection at date	Number of inspections	% Outstanding	% Good	% Requires improvement	% Inadequate
31 August 2025	1,034	12	71	13	4
31 August 2024	1,060	10	71	13	6
31 August 2023	1,057	10	65	16	10
31 August 2022	1,069	11	64	17	8
31 August 2021	1,004	13	65	14	8
31 August 2020	1,020	13	64	13	10
31 August 2019	1,037	14	61	15	10

1. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.

See [Figure 5](#).

1. [Additional inspections](#) are inspections that occur outside the normal inspection cycle and cover emergency, progress monitoring, pre-registration and material change inspections. [← ←²](#)
2. Independent schools can be identified on the [Get Information about Schools \(GIAS\)](#) database. [←](#)
3. Twenty special schools also identify themselves as faith schools. For the purposes of our analysis, we have grouped these schools with special schools and not with faith schools. [←](#)
4. Independent schools are identified on the [Get Information about Schools \(GIAS\)](#) database as either an 'other independent special school' or 'other independent

school'. It is possible for a school that has registered as an 'other independent school' to only have pupils with SEND attending and to be a special school but not identified on GIAS as such. [←](#)

5. The faith of a school is defined by whether the school has declared a religious character or ethos on the [Get Information about Schools \(GIAS\)](#) database. If the school does not declare a religious character or ethos, it is categorised in our statistics as 'non-faith', although it is possible that some of these schools also operate as faith schools. [←](#)
6. [Non-association independent schools inspections and outcomes in England: August 2024](#), Ofsted, November 2024. [←](#)
7. The standards cover quality of education provided; spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils; welfare, health and safety of pupils; suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors; premises of and accommodation at schools; provision of information; manner in which complaints are handled; quality of leadership in and management of schools. [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#) (referred to as the independent school standards). [←](#)

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