

Ofsted inspections to be done remotely



We have reviewed our plans for the inspections of schools, early years and further education, which were due to begin next week. In light of a change in emphasis from the government and clear advice to 'act as if you have the virus' over the next few weeks, we have decided that all planned inspection activity will be carried out remotely until March 8 at the earliest.

We have sought regular advice from Public Health England and we remain satisfied that our planned on-site activity would be safe and appropriate under current restrictions. However, the new government messages and the practical challenges of deploying inspectors across England have prompted this change.

[Remote inspections of schools and further education providers](#) will begin from 25 January, with a particular focus on how well children and learners are being educated remotely. We will inspect schools rated 'inadequate' or 'requires improvement' as planned, but we will also follow up on complaints raised by parents across all grades of school in order to resolve issues. As these inspections will not involve an on-site visit, they will be unable to cover the full scope of a monitoring inspection. We will publish details of the inspection process shortly.

We will continue to undertake on-site inspections if we have immediate concerns – for example about safeguarding, the leadership of a school or a failure to provide education to children.

It is not possible to provide the necessary level of assurance of early years providers without an on-site inspection of the premises, so [early years assurance visits](#) will be paused until March 8 at the earliest.

We will continue with our vital regulatory work in early years and children's social care. This work will sometimes require on-site visits, which will be risk-assessed based on the nature of the premises and the urgency of the work.

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1. 2 February 2021

Updated dates to clarify that we will carry out planned inspection work until 8 March at the earliest.

2. 12 January 2021

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