

School inspection results show positive picture despite pressures of pandemic

Ofsted has today published [data on school inspections](#) carried out since the start of term, which shows that the overall grade profile for schools has improved in comparison with the period prior to the pandemic.

The data shows that, during the 3 months up to the end of November, 83% of schools were judged good or outstanding. This compares with 77% of schools rated good or outstanding between September 2019 – when the new education inspection framework (EIF) was introduced – and March 2020, when inspections were suspended.

The data also shows that schools previously judged requires improvement (RI) or inadequate have done particularly well this term. 72% of previously RI schools have attained a good or outstanding grade since September – compared with 56% during the 2019/20 period, while 56% of those previously rated inadequate have improved to good or outstanding, compared with 40% last year.

For the first time since the government lifted the exemption on inspecting outstanding schools, today's data includes the new grades for those schools visited this term. Ofsted is currently inspecting previously exempt schools that have gone the longest without an inspection – over half of those inspected this term had not been inspected for over 10 years – so it isn't surprising that many have not retained the top grade.

At the end of November, 87% of all schools in England were rated either good or outstanding. This is similar to the 86% reported in August 2019, prior to the EIF being introduced and before the pandemic began.

Ofsted has also today published [data on post-inspection surveys](#) completed by school leaders since the beginning of this term. It shows that 88% of leaders were satisfied with the overall process of their inspection, and 91% thought that their inspection will help them improve. These figures are similar to the results of surveys completed before the pandemic.

Ofsted's Chief Inspector Amanda Spielman said:

I am fully aware that schools are still facing very significant challenges as a result of the pandemic. So, I'm very pleased to report that schools are improving and being recognised for doing so. In fact, inspection results this term are very much in line with what we saw before the pandemic began, if not slightly improved. That will be a reassurance to parents and to schools as well.

Our inspections are intended to be constructive and supportive, so

I'm pleased that our survey results show they are valued by the vast majority of school leaders who have experienced one this term. But inspections are also incredibly important for children, who only get one chance at education and have already lost so much in the last 20 months.

No two years of inspection outcomes are ever completely alike, because the mix of schools inspected varies each year, but grouping schools by their previous inspection grade makes the data more comparable. The chart below shows the new grade profile for all schools inspected this term, grouped together by their previous grade, alongside the grade profile for schools inspected between September 2019 and March 2020. For example, of schools previously rated RI, it shows that 72% were judged good this term, 27% remained RI and 1% dropped to inadequate.

Inspection outcomes by previous overall effectiveness grade

	% Outstanding	% Good	% Requires improvement	% Inadequate
Outstanding 2021/22 (99)	53	36	9	2
Outstanding 2019/20 (344)	33	49	14	4
Good 2021/22 (291)	3	86	11	0
Good 2019/20 (1844)	2	83	12	3
Requires improvement 2021/22 (128)	0	72	27	1
Requires improvement 2019/20 (586)	0	56	36	8
Inadequate 2021/22 (25)	4	52	40	4
Inadequate 2019/20 (124)	0	40	52	8
New school 2021/22 (1)	100	0	0	0
New school 2019/20 (21)	19	57	14	10

1. The figure in brackets in the chart above is the number of schools inspected where reports have been published. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100%.
2. The way in which schools previously rated outstanding are selected for inspection will have an influence on the pattern of improvement vs decline.
3. Some schools rated good or outstanding will have had concerns highlighted in their inspection report. In these cases, the school retains its current grade but will receive a full, graded inspection within 2 years.