Updates from Ofsted and the DFE October 2026

Please click on the links below to access documents.

Education inspection framework (EIF)

Updated: 18 September 2026-Ofsted

Updated to include inspection of education, skills and work activities in prisons and young offender institutions

Glossary: education inspection terminology
Updated 1 July 2026- Ofsted
Updated glossary to reflect the changes made to early years inspection documents that came into force in September 2026.

An update on achievement and how we use data on inspection
Uploaded July 2026- Ofsted Webinar
A webinar explaining how inspectors gather and evaluate evidence about pupil achievement, including the role of data in inspection.

Renewed education inspection framework: webinar for school governors
Uploaded July 2026- Ofsted Webinar
A webinar explaining how Ofsted inspects governance under the renewed EIF.

Education inspection framework: engagement programme

Updated: 28 August 2026- Ofsted

Details of Ofsted's programme of webinars to help familiarise providers with the November 2025 education inspection framework changes.

School inspection: toolkit, operating guides and information –
Updated September 2026 see the 'Summary of changes' for full details.

Early years inspection: toolkit, operating guide and information –
Updated September 2026
see the 'Summary of changes' for full details.

Further education and skills inspection: toolkit, operating guides and information –
Updated September 2026
See the 'Summary of changes' for full details.

School inspection data summary report (IDSR) guide –
Updated September 2026- Ofsted
Ofsted have updated the IDSR for all schools with the Department for Education's 2026 spring school census,

- Updated the IDSR for all schools with the DfE's 2026 provisional KS2, 3-term exclusions, and 1-term absence data.
- Updated the IDSR for all schools with the DfE's 2026 spring school census, new similar schools' comparator for achievement, and format changes.

- Updated the IDSR for all schools with the DfE's 2025/26 daily attendance collection up to and including summer part 1.

IDSR: news and updates

News and information about updates for each inspection data summary report (IDSR) release, including any new functionality, features and bug fixes

Ofsted inspections and visits: deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence –
Updated September 2026
Ofsted have updated this to clarify deferral requests for state-funded schools with a RISE advisor during pre-registration inspections.

Compare your good level of development (GLD) data

Updated 22 October 2026- DFE

How to use the good level of development (GLD) data tool to access the 'Compare your GLD data report' and dashboard.

Contextual good level of development (GLD) score methodology

Updated to reflect the changes in the GLD tool and incorporation of data for 2025 to 2026

Primary assessments: future dates

Updated 10 October 2026- DFE

- Academic year 2026 to 2027
- Academic year 2027 to 2028
- Academic year 2028 to 2029

Statistics: key stage 1

Updated 8 October 2026- DFE

Added 'Phonics screening check attainment: England 2026'.

Phonics screening check attainment: England 2026

Published 8 October 2026- DFE

Provisional information including breakdowns by pupil characteristics, school characteristics, region and local authority.

Early years free school meals (EYFSM) expansion grant: 2026 to 2027

Published 24 June 2026- DFE, Updated 10 October 2026- DFE

Methodology, allocations and conditions of grant for the 2026 to 2027 financial year.

Added 'Early years free school meals expansion grant allocations: November 2026' and removed 'Early years free school meals expansion grant 2026 to 2027: calculator tool'.

English Baccalaureate: eligible qualifications

Updated 20 October 2026- DFE

A list of qualifications that formerly counted towards the English Baccalaureate (EBacc).

Updated to clarify that, while EBacc entry and attainment measures were removed in autumn 2025, the attached list still determines which qualifications are eligible in some of the Progress 8 and Attainment 8 slots.

Martyn Oliver's speech to the Confederation of School Trusts annual conference
Published 16 October 2026- Sir Martin Oliver- Ofsted's Chief Inspector

Sir Martyn Oliver, spoke at the Confederation of School Trusts 2026 annual conference in Birmingham. The following are excerpts from his speech

Inspections so far…

First, let's quickly recap the past year. We have done just over 4,000 full school inspections.

From the published report cards, we are still seeing a mix of grades, both across schools and within trusts – which is what we'd expect.

The purpose of our report cards is to allow for this nuance, and to highlight different strengths and areas for improvement.

'Expected standard' is the grade we've seen most often so far.

We give this grade where schools are doing all the things they need to be doing right by their pupils – giving them a solid, supportive education that sets them up well in life.

In the 'inclusion' evaluation area, 9 out of 10 grades are at 'expected standard' and above, and that's even higher for the 'personal development and wellbeing' evaluation area.

That is being driven by dedicated 'leadership and governance', where more than 8 in 10 grades are at 'expected standard' and above.

That tells us that there are thousands of leaders who know what their plans are and are well on the way to executing them successfully.

We hear your concerns that poor attendance might have a knock-on effect on the 'attendance and behaviour' grade and drag grades down even where pupils behave well.

But I am really pleased to tell you that well over 8 out of 10 grades in this evaluation area are 'expected standard' and above.

In the 'curriculum and learning' evaluation area, nearly 8 in 10 grades are at 'expected standard' and above, and that figure is getting on for almost three-quarters of 'achievement' grades.

Achievement is an area we also heard concern about, with some saying that any school that's below average – so, by that definition, nearly half of schools – would be at 'needs attention' or below. This is clearly not the case!

The spirit of the trust sector

Trust inspection will be a way to …… celebrate where trusts take on schools and do the difficult, necessary, long-term work to turn them around.

To share trust best practice – including helping parents to understand the tremendous value that trusts bring up and down the country, as well as in their own neighbourhood.

Trust inspection will allow us to show where excellent work is happening – work not currently captured at the level of an individual school inspection.

It will be a way to look at context and locality and the difference being made in an area.

It will allow us to help address underperformance where it does exist, and support improvement, taking a wider view of a set of schools and identifying where more can be done.

Independent research finds Ofsted's new-look inspections are more collaborative and respectful
Published 9 October 2026- Ofsted Press Release

A year after new-look inspections began, most education providers feel generally positive about their experience under Ofsted's renewed education inspection framework (EIF), according to independent research published today.

Funding for books and reading materials for secondary schools
Published 12 October 2026- DFE Guidance

Guidance setting out information for secondary schools on funding for books and reading materials, as part of the National Year of Reading 2026.It sets out more information regarding this funding, including access, eligibility, timelines and further support.

You do not need to apply to access this offer. Eligible schools will automatically receive access to the DfE-appointed supplier's platform, Browns Books, and the associated discounts.

Funding allocations have been determined based on the number of pupils in key stage 3 and key stage 4, using the most recent available school census data. Allocations are weighted by school size and disadvantage, with a minimum entitlement of £450 and a maximum entitlement of £1400 per school. This approach ensures that funding is distributed fairly and proportionately across schools of different sizes, while reflecting levels of disadvantage.

You must spend your allocation by the end of the 2026 to 2027 financial year. All orders must be placed by 31 March 2027. Any unspent allocation remaining after the end date will be unavailable.

More enriching activities for hundreds of thousands of children
Published 18 September 2026, updated 5 October- DFE Press Release.

More than 400 secondary schools in disadvantaged communities will benefit from tailored support backed by £22.5 million through the government's Enrichment Expansion programme.

A list of areas can be found in the link above. Areas were selected based on a measure covering IDACI (Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index) and CNI (Community Needs Index), weighted to enable representation across all 9 government regions and alignment with Department for Education Place Missions

Schools and colleges: apply for the condition improvement fund

Updated 22 October 2026- DFE

How eligible schools and colleges can apply for the condition improvement fund, which aims to keep buildings safe and in good working order.

Updated as applications for 2027-2028 are now open.

Condition improvement fund: guidance for schools

Updated 22 October 2026- DFE

T Level funding

Updated 19 October 2026- DFE

- Added a bitesize webinar link to the T Levels funding guide 2026 to 2027 document, and to the Record your T Level data correctly in academic year 2026 to 2027 document.

- Updated '2026 to 2027 T Level and foundation year programme cost weightings and funding bands' to include the new learning aim references for the generation 2 Health and Science T Levels

Manage your education estate

Published 26 February 2026- DFE, Updated 14 October 2026- DFE

This service is for people who are responsible for looking after school and college buildings, land and facilities. Use this service to:

- find resources and guidance to help you manage your estate
- complete the school estate management standards annual return
- view data about the condition of your estate
- view your funding allocations
- explore Department for Education (DfE) funding opportunities

read updates about estate management policy, guidance and more to help you manage your school and college buildings, land and facilities.

Contracted Ofsted Inspectors for schools and further education and skills

Updated: 14 September 2026- Ofsted

Ofsted have updated the information on becoming an Ofsted Inspector in schools and further education and skills, to show that the register of interest is currently open only to applicants applying through the pilot route.

Academy trust handbook

Updated 1 October 2026- DFE

- Updated the Academy Trust Handbook 2026 to further clarify procurement requirements for management information systems (MIS) in paragraph 2.30.
- We have updated the Academy Trust Handbook 2026 to clarify procurement requirements for energy and management information systems (MIS) in paragraphs 2.29 and 2.30 and reflected this in the ‘What has changed’ section.