

Ofsted Grading Criteria 2022 From The Ofsted Framework

Ofsted judgements

405. Inspectors use the following 4-point scale to make all judgements:

outstanding

good

requires improvement

inadequate

406. Outstanding is a challenging and exacting judgement. In order to reach this standard, inspectors will determine whether the school meets all the criteria for good under that judgement, and does so securely and consistently.

407. In other words, it is not enough that the school is strong against some aspects of the judgement and not against others, but it must meet each and every good criterion. In addition, there are further criteria set out under the outstanding judgement, which the school will also need to meet.

Grade descriptors for quality of education

410. In order for the quality of education judgement to be outstanding, the school must meet all of the good criteria securely and consistently and it must also meet the additional outstanding criteria.

Outstanding (1)

The school meets all the criteria for a good quality of education securely and consistently.

The quality of education provided is exceptional.

In addition, the following apply:

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The school's curriculum intent and implementation are embedded securely and consistently across the school. It is evident from what teachers do that they have a firm and common understanding of the school's curriculum intent and what it means for their practice. Across all parts of the school, series of lessons contribute well to delivering the curriculum intent.

The work given enables pupils, over time and across the school, to consistently achieve the aims of the curriculum, which is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and employment.

Pupils' work across the curriculum is consistently of a high quality.

Pupils consistently achieve highly, particularly the most disadvantaged. Pupils with SEND achieve exceptionally well.

Good (2)

Leaders adopt or construct a curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life. This is either the national curriculum or a curriculum of comparable breadth and ambition.

The curriculum may undergo necessary changes (for example, following a review by senior leaders or to take account of COVID-19) and certain aspects may be more developed than others. Where this is the case, these changes do not prevent all pupils having access to an appropriately broad and ambitious curriculum. Where adaptations to curriculum breadth are made for particular pupils, there is a clear rationale for why this is in those pupils' interests, and, where appropriate, there is a clear plan for returning all pupils to studying the full curriculum.

The school's curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and employment.

Pupils study the full curriculum; it is not narrowed:
in primary schools, a broad range of subjects (exemplified by the national curriculum) is taught in key stage 2 throughout each and all of Years 3 to 6

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The curriculum is successfully adapted, designed or developed to be ambitious and meet the needs of pupils with SEND, developing their knowledge, skills and abilities to apply what they know and can do with increasing fluency and independence.

The work given enables pupils to achieve the aims and ambition of the curriculum, which is coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge.

Teachers have good knowledge of the subject(s) and courses they teach. Leaders provide effective support, including for those teaching outside their main areas of expertise.

Teachers present subject matter clearly, promoting appropriate discussion about the subject matter being taught. They check pupils' understanding systematically, identify misconceptions accurately and provide clear, direct feedback. In so doing, they respond and adapt their teaching as necessary without unnecessarily elaborate or individualised approaches.

Over the course of study, teaching is designed to help pupils to remember long term the content they have been taught and to integrate new knowledge into larger ideas.

Any remote education is well integrated within course(s) of study, and is well designed to support the wider implementation of the school's curriculum.

Teachers and leaders use assessment well. For example, they use it to help pupils embed and use knowledge fluently, or to check understanding and inform teaching, or to understand different starting points and gaps as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders understand the limitations of assessment and do not use it in a way that creates unnecessary burdens on staff or pupils.

Teachers create an environment that focuses on pupils. The textbooks and other teaching materials that teachers select – in a way that does not create unnecessary workload for staff – reflect the school's ambitious intentions for the course of study. These materials clearly support the intent of a coherently planned curriculum, sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for future learning and employment.

Reading is prioritised to allow pupils to access the full curriculum offer.

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A rigorous and sequential approach to the reading curriculum develops pupils' fluency, confidence and enjoyment in reading. At all stages, reading attainment is assessed and gaps are addressed quickly and effectively for all pupils. Reading books connect closely to the phonics knowledge that pupils are taught when they are learning to read.

The sharp focus on ensuring that younger children and those at the early stages of reading gain the phonics knowledge and language comprehension necessary to read, and the skills to communicate, gives them the foundations for future learning.

Teachers ensure that their own speaking, listening, writing and reading of English support pupils in developing their language and vocabulary well.

Pupils develop detailed knowledge and skills across the curriculum and, as a result, achieve well. This is reflected in the work that pupils produce.

Where available, impact is reflected in results from national tests and examinations that meet government expectations, or in the qualifications obtained. Teacher assessed grades from 2020 and 2021 will not be used to assess impact.

Pupils are ready for the next stage of education, employment or training. They have the knowledge and skills they need and, where relevant, they gain qualifications that allow them to go on to destinations that meet their interests and aspirations and the intention of their course of study. Pupils with SEND achieve the best possible outcomes.

Pupils read widely and often, with fluency and comprehension appropriate to their age. They are able to apply mathematical knowledge, concepts and procedures appropriately for their age.

Grade descriptors for evaluating behaviour and attitudes

412. In order for the behaviour and attitudes judgement to be outstanding, the school must meet all of the good criteria securely and consistently and it must also meet the additional outstanding criteria.

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Outstanding (1)

The school meets all the criteria for good in behaviour and attitudes securely and consistently.

Behaviour and attitudes are exceptional.

In addition, the following apply:

Pupils behave with consistently high levels of respect for others. They play a highly positive role in creating a school environment in which commonalities are identified and celebrated, difference is valued and nurtured, and bullying, harassment and violence are never tolerated.

Pupils consistently have highly positive attitudes and commitment to their education. They are highly motivated and persistent in the face of difficulties. Pupils make a highly positive, tangible contribution to the life of the school and/or the wider community. Pupils actively support the well-being of other pupils.

Pupils behave consistently well, demonstrating high levels of self-control and consistently positive attitudes to their education. If pupils struggle with this, the school takes intelligent, fair and highly effective action to support them to succeed in their education.

413. In order to judge whether a school is good or requires improvement, inspectors will use a 'best fit' approach, relying on the inspection team's professional judgement.

Good (2)

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour and conduct. These expectations are commonly understood and applied consistently and fairly. This is reflected in pupils' positive behaviour and conduct. Low-level disruption is not tolerated and pupils' behaviour does not disrupt lessons or the day-to-day life of the school. Leaders support all staff well in managing pupils' behaviour. Staff make sure that pupils follow appropriate routines. Leaders, staff and pupils create a positive environment in which bullying is not tolerated. If bullying, aggression, discrimination and derogatory language occur, they are dealt with quickly and effectively and are not allowed to spread.

There is demonstrable improvement in the behaviour and attendance of pupils who have particular needs.

Pupils' attitudes to their education are positive. They are committed to their learning, know how to study effectively and do so, are resilient to setbacks and take pride in their achievements.

Pupils have high attendance, within the context of the pandemic. They come to school on time and are punctual to lessons. When this is not the case, the school takes appropriate, swift and effective action.

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Suspensions are used appropriately. The school reintegrates suspended pupils on their return and manages their behaviour effectively. Permanent exclusions are used appropriately as a last resort.

Relationships among pupils and staff reflect a positive and respectful culture; pupils are safe and they feel safe.

Grade descriptors for personal development

414. In order for the personal development judgement to be outstanding, the school must meet all of the good criteria securely and consistently, and it must also meet the additional outstanding criteria.

Outstanding (1)

The school meets all the criteria for good in personal development securely and consistently.

Personal development is exceptional.

In addition, the following apply:

The school consistently promotes the extensive personal development of pupils. The school goes beyond the expected, so that pupils have access a wide, rich set of experiences. Opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests are of exceptional quality.

There is strong take-up by pupils of the opportunities provided by the school. The most disadvantaged pupils consistently benefit from this excellent work.

The school provides these rich experiences in a coherently planned way, in the curriculum and through extra-curricular activities, and they considerably strengthen the school's offer.

The way the school goes about developing pupils' character is exemplary and is worthy of being shared with others.

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Good (2)

The curriculum extends beyond the academic, vocational or technical and provides for pupils' broader development. The school's work to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of a high quality.

The curriculum and the school's effective wider work support pupils to be confident, resilient and independent, and to develop strength of character.

The school provides high-quality pastoral support. Pupils know how to eat healthily, maintain an active lifestyle and keep physically and mentally healthy. They have an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships and of the protected characteristics.

The school provides a wide range of opportunities to nurture, develop and stretch pupils' talents and interests. Pupils appreciate these and make good use of them.

The school prepares pupils for life in modern Britain effectively, developing their understanding of the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

The school promotes equality of opportunity and diversity effectively. As a result, pupils understand, appreciate and respect difference in the world and its people, celebrating the things we share in common across cultural, religious, ethnic and socio-economic communities.

Pupils engage with views, beliefs and opinions that are different from their own in considered ways. They show respect for the different protected characteristics as defined in law and no forms of discrimination are tolerated.

The school provides pupils with meaningful opportunities to understand how to be responsible, respectful, active citizens who contribute positively to society. Pupils know how to discuss and debate issues and ideas in a considered way.

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Grade descriptors for leadership and management

Outstanding (1)

The school meets all the criteria for good in leadership and management securely and consistently.

Leadership and management are exceptional.

In addition, the following apply:

Leaders ensure that teachers receive focused and highly effective professional development. Teachers' subject, pedagogical and pedagogical content knowledge consistently build and develop over time. This consistently translates into improvements in the teaching of the curriculum.

Leaders ensure that highly effective and meaningful engagement takes place with staff at all levels and that issues are identified. When issues are identified, in particular about workload, they are consistently dealt with appropriately and quickly.

Staff consistently report high levels of support for well-being issues.

Good (2)

Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high- to all pupils. This is realised through strong, shared values, policies and practice.

Leaders focus on improving teachers' subject, pedagogical and pedagogical content knowledge in order to enhance the teaching of the curriculum and the appropriate use of assessment. The practice and subject knowledge of staff, including ECTs, build and improve over time. This includes building teachers' expertise in remote education.

Leaders aim to ensure that all pupils successfully complete their programmes of study. They provide the support for staff to make this possible. They create an inclusive culture and do not allow gaming or off-rolling. Leaders engage effectively with pupils and others in their

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community, including, when relevant, parents, employers and local services. Engagement opportunities are focused and have purpose.

Leaders engage with their staff and are aware and take account of the main pressures on them. They are realistic and constructive in the way they manage staff, including their workload.

Leaders protect staff from bullying and harassment.

Those responsible for governance understand their role and carry this out effectively. Governors/trustees ensure that the school has a clear vision and strategy, that resources are managed well and that leaders are held to account for the quality of education.

Those with responsibility for governance ensure that the school fulfils its statutory duties, for example under the Equality Act 2010, and other duties, for example in relation to the 'Prevent' duty and safeguarding.

The school has a culture of safeguarding that supports effective arrangements to: identify pupils who may need early help or who are at risk of neglect, abuse, grooming or exploitation; help pupils reduce their risk of harm by securing the support they need, or referring them in a timely way to those who have the expertise to help; and manage safe recruitment and allegations about adults who may be a risk to pupils.

Grade descriptors for early years provision in schools

418. In order for the early years provision of a school to be judged outstanding, it must meet all of the good criteria securely and consistently, and it must also meet the additional outstanding criteria.

Outstanding (1)

The school meets all the criteria for good in the effectiveness of early years securely and consistently.

The quality of early years education provided is exceptional.

In addition, the following apply:

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The EYFS curriculum provides no limits or barriers to the children's achievements, regardless of their backgrounds, circumstances or needs. The high ambition it embodies is shared by all staff.

The impact of the curriculum on what children know, can remember and do is strong. Children demonstrate this through being deeply engaged and sustaining high levels of concentration. Children, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, do well. Children with SEND achieve the best possible outcomes.

Children are highly motivated and are eager to join in. They share and cooperate well, demonstrating high levels of self-control and respect for others. Children consistently keep on trying hard, particularly if they encounter difficulties.

Good (2)

Leaders adopt or construct a curriculum that is ambitious and designed to give children, particularly the most disadvantaged, the knowledge, self-belief and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.

The curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced. It builds on what children know and can do, towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills for their future learning.

There is a sharp focus on ensuring that children acquire a wide vocabulary, communicate effectively and, in Reception, secure a knowledge of phonics, which gives them the foundations for future learning, especially in preparation for them to become confident and fluent readers.

The school's approach to teaching early reading and synthetic phonics is systematic and ensures that all children learn to read words and simple sentences accurately by the end of Reception.

The school has the same academic ambitions for almost all children. For children with particular needs, such as those with SEND, their curriculum is designed to be ambitious and to meet their needs.

Children benefit from meaningful learning across the curriculum.

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Staff are knowledgeable about the areas of learning they teach. They manage the EYFS curriculum and pedagogy in relation to the learning needs of their children. Staff are expert in teaching systematic, synthetic phonics and ensure that children practise their reading from books that match their phonics knowledge.

Staff present information clearly to children, promoting appropriate discussion about the subject matter being taught. They communicate well to check children's understanding, identify misconceptions and provide clear explanations to improve their learning. In so doing, they respond and adapt their teaching as necessary.

Staff read to children in a way that excites and engages them, introducing new ideas, concepts and vocabulary.

Staff are knowledgeable about the teaching of early mathematics. They ensure that children have sufficient practice to be confident in using and understanding numbers. The mathematics curriculum provides a strong basis for more complex learning later on. Over the EYFS, teaching is designed to help children remember long term what they have been taught and to integrate new knowledge into larger concepts. This is checked well by staff and leaders. Leaders understand the limitations of assessment and avoid unnecessary burdens on staff or children.

Staff create an environment that supports the intent of an ambitious, coherently planned and sequenced curriculum. The resources are chosen to meet the children's needs and promote learning.

The curriculum and care practices promote and support children's emotional security and development of their character. Staff teach children the language of feelings, helping them to appropriately develop their emotional literacy (see pages 8 to 9 of the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage', which set out the personal, social and emotional development (PSED) area of learning). Leaders and staff are particularly attentive to the youngest children's needs.

Staff give clear messages to children about why it is important to eat, drink, rest, exercise and be kind to each other. They teach children to take managed risks and challenges as they play and learn, supporting them to be active and develop physically.

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Staff provide information for parents about their children's progress, in line with the requirements of the EYFS. They provide information to parents about supporting their child's learning at home, including details about the school's method of teaching reading and how to help their children learn to read.

Children develop detailed knowledge and skills across the 7 areas of learning in an age-appropriate way. Children develop their vocabulary and use it across the EYFS curriculum. By the end of Reception, children use their knowledge of phonics to read accurately and with increasing speed and fluency.

Children are ready for the next stage of education, especially for Year 1 in school, if applicable. They have the knowledge and skills they need to benefit from what school has to offer when it is time to move on. By the end of Reception, children achieve well, particularly those children with lower starting points.

By the end of Reception, children have the personal, physical and social skills they need to succeed in the next stage of their education. Most children achieve the early learning goals, particularly in mathematics and literacy.

Children enjoy, listen attentively and respond with comprehension to familiar stories, rhymes and songs that are appropriate to their age and stage of development. Children develop their vocabulary and understanding of language across the 7 areas of learning.

Children demonstrate their positive attitudes to learning through high levels of curiosity, concentration and enjoyment. They listen intently and respond positively to adults and each other. Children are developing their resilience to setbacks and take pride in their achievements.

Children are beginning to manage their own feelings and behaviour, understanding how these have an impact on others. They are developing a sense of right from wrong.

Grade descriptors for overall effectiveness

421. Inspectors will use all their evidence to evaluate what it is like to attend the school. In making their judgements about a school's overall effectiveness, inspectors will consider whether the standard of education is good or whether it exceeds good and is outstanding. If it is not good, then inspectors will consider whether it requires improvement or is inadequate.

422. In judging the school's overall effectiveness, inspectors will take account of the 4 key judgements.

423. In coming to each of these key judgements, inspectors will also draw on evidence from the inspection of any early years provision or sixth-form provision and consider its impact in the wider context of the school.

424. Inspectors will judge the effectiveness of any early years provision or sixth-form provision. For either case or both, inspectors will give a grade, summarise the key findings and explain the effectiveness grading in the inspection report. However, inspectors may decide not to give a grade and not to report on the early years or sixth-form provision if there is the risk that it is possible to identify individual pupils because numbers are so small. Typically, this will be when there are fewer than 5 pupils.

425. The grade for early years and/or the grade for the sixth-form provision may be the same as, or higher or lower than, the overall effectiveness grade. Inspectors will take into account the size of the early years and sixth-form provision in relation to the size of the school when considering the impact of these judgements on the overall effectiveness grade.

Inspectors will explain any difference between the early years and/or sixth-form provision grade(s) and the overall effectiveness grade in the report.

426. Inspectors will always make a written judgement about the effectiveness of the arrangements for safeguarding pupils.

427. Before making the final judgement on overall effectiveness, inspectors will always consider the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school, and evaluate the extent to which the school's education provision meets different pupils' needs, including pupils with SEND.

Outstanding (1)

The quality of education is outstanding.

All other key judgements are likely to be outstanding. In exceptional circumstances, one of the key judgements may be good, as long as there is

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convincing evidence that the school is improving this area sustainably and securely towards outstanding. Typically this will mean meeting each and every one of the good criteria but falling short on the outstanding for that key judgement.

Safeguarding is effective.

Good (2)

The quality of education is at least good.

All other key judgements are likely to be good or outstanding. In exceptional circumstances, one of the key judgement areas may require improvement, as long as there is convincing evidence that the school is improving this area sustainably and securely towards good.

Safeguarding is effective.