

05 March 2024

Dear parent or carer

Inspection of Washington Academy by Ofsted

We have just told your child's school that we will inspect it on 06 March 2024. The lead inspector will be Chris Carr, HMI. We are writing to you because we would like to know what you think about the school. Please take a few minutes to read the leaflet that came with this letter. It explains why we inspect schools and what happens during an inspection.

Your views about the school are important to us

If you are a registered parent or carer of a pupil at the school (including pupils on sick leave or who are temporarily excluded), you can tell us your views about the school by completing Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, at: <https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Ofsted Parent View asks for your opinion on some aspects of your child's school, including the progress made by your child, the quality of teaching, how the school deals with bullying and poor behaviour. It also provides a free-text box for you to make additional comments, if you wish. The inspectors will use the online survey responses when inspecting your child's school. Written comments can also be sent to the school in a sealed envelope, marked confidential and addressed to the inspection team.

To register your views, you will need to provide your email address, which will be held securely. It will not be used for any purpose other than providing access to the online survey. Neither schools nor Ofsted will have access to any email addresses.

Please complete the online survey by **11am** on 06 March 2024 as this will give the inspection team more time to consider your views. However, we will consider all online responses that are completed during the inspection, although the free-text box facility will not be available after noon on 07 March 2024.

Speaking to an inspector

If you are unable to complete the online survey, it may be possible to speak to an inspector during the inspection, for instance at the start of the school day, or to pass on messages to the inspectors if you are unable to speak to them in person. Inspection administrators will be happy to make the necessary arrangements. If concerns are raised about child protection, we may have to pass the information we receive to social services or the police. You can contact the administrators on 03000131224. Inspectors will be pleased to receive your comments, but cannot deal with complaints about individual pupils or settle disputes between you and the school.

Gathering personal information on inspection

Inspectors will gather any personal information necessary to assist them in inspecting a school. [Our privacy policy](#) sets out what personal information we collect, what we do with it, how long we keep it and individuals' rights under data protection legislation. The contact details for Ofsted's Data Protection Officer are: Email - informationrequest@ofsted.gov.uk; Post - Information management team, Ofsted, 2 Rivergate, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6EH.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete the online survey.

Yours faithfully

Kellie Paterson

Inspection support administrator

School inspections

A guide for parents

This document applies to all maintained schools, including special schools and pupil referral units. It also covers academies, city technology colleges, city colleges for the technology of the arts and some non-maintained special schools in England.

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Why does Ofsted inspect schools?

We inspect schools to provide information to parents, to promote improvement and to hold schools to account for the public money they receive. School inspections are required by law. We provide an independent assessment of the quality and standards of education in schools, and check whether pupils are achieving as much as they can.

Who inspects schools?

His Majesty's Inspectors and Ofsted Inspectors (who in most cases are serving school leaders who inspect for Ofsted for an agreed number of days each year) carry out the inspections. All inspectors have been trained to, and assessed against, Ofsted's standards.

When do inspections happen?

When Ofsted has judged a school to be good or outstanding after a [a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 \(the Act\)](#), we will then normally go into the school about once every 4 years to confirm that the school remains good or outstanding and that safeguarding is effective. This is called an [ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Act](#). Ofsted does not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection, but if we find some evidence that the school would now receive a higher or lower grade, we will carry out a graded inspection. Usually, this is within 1 to 2 years of the date of the ungraded inspection, but if we have serious concerns about a school, for example in relation to safeguarding, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

Although most good or outstanding schools will be inspected as outlined above, some good or outstanding schools will automatically receive a graded inspection instead of an ungraded inspection if our risk assessment process indicates that the quality of provision in the school may have deteriorated significantly, or if a school has undergone significant change, such as in its age range.

A school judged as requires improvement at its last inspection is a school that is not yet good but overall provides an acceptable standard of education. The school is inspected again within a period of 2.5 years. If a school has been judged as requires improvement at two successive inspections, it will be subject to monitoring from inspectors to check its progress and is inspected again within a period of 2.5 years.

Outstanding schools that were formerly exempt from routine inspections

Between 15 May 2012 and 13 November 2020, maintained primary and secondary schools and academies judged to be outstanding in their overall effectiveness at their most recent graded inspection were exempt from routine inspections. These schools are now once again [subject to routine inspections](#). This also applies to academy

converter schools that were formerly exempt because the overall effectiveness of their predecessor school was outstanding at its most recent graded inspection.¹

All formerly exempt schools will receive an initial graded or ungraded inspection before 1 August 2025. Those schools that received their last graded inspection before September 2015 will receive an initial graded inspection. Those that received their last graded inspection after this date will normally receive an initial ungraded inspection. If that ungraded inspection indicates that outstanding performance may not have been maintained, we will normally carry out a graded inspection within the next 12 months or as soon as possible thereafter and, in any event, before 1 August 2026. Beyond these initial inspections, future inspections for these schools will take place as set out in the section above.

How long do inspections last?

A graded inspection usually lasts 2 days. However, ungraded inspections of good or outstanding primary schools and good or outstanding maintained nursery schools with fewer than 150 pupils normally last for 1 day. The number of inspectors on the inspection team will vary according to the size and nature of the school.

What judgements do inspectors make on a graded inspection?

Inspectors will make graded judgements on overall effectiveness and the 4 key judgements:

- the quality of education
- behaviour and attitudes
- personal development
- leadership and management.

When applicable, inspectors will also make a graded judgement on the effectiveness of the early years or sixth-form provision in the school.

Inspectors use the following four-point scale to make all judgements:

- grade 1 (outstanding)
- grade 2 (good)
- grade 3 (requires improvement)
- grade 4 (inadequate).

¹ Academy converter schools are schools that have been approved by the Secretary of State to convert to become an academy.

The school must take all reasonable steps to make sure that parents of pupils at the school receive a copy of the inspection report.

What happens if Ofsted judges a school to be inadequate?

If inspectors judge a school to be inadequate, it will be placed in one of the following 2 categories of concern.

- **special measures** – this means the school is both:
 - failing to provide its pupils with an acceptable standard of education
 - not showing the capacity to make the improvements needed.
- **serious weaknesses** – this means that the school's performance requires significant improvement but meets only one, or neither, of the conditions for special measures. A school with serious weaknesses will have one or more of the key judgements graded inadequate (grade 4) and/or have important weaknesses in the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

A maintained school judged as inadequate and placed in a category of concern will be issued with an academy order by the Secretary of State for Education, to require it to become a new sponsored academy.² Inspectors will not normally monitor the school unless there are concerns or there is a delay in the school becoming a sponsored academy.

For academies, maintained nursery schools and non-maintained special schools that have been judged as inadequate and placed in a category of concern, inspectors will visit these schools to check on their progress until they can be removed from the category (unless, for academies, they are re-brokered with a new sponsor to become a new sponsored academy). Ofsted will normally re-inspect these schools within 2.5 years of the publication of the inspection report that placed them in a category of concern.

How much notice do you give to a school before you inspect?

Most schools receive notice of their inspection between 10:30am and 2pm on the morning of the school day before the inspection begins.

However, Ofsted can inspect any school without notice where this is judged to be appropriate.

² Pupil referral units judged as inadequate will also be issued with an academy order and will be required to become an alternative provision sponsored academy. Maintained nursery schools and non-maintained special schools judged as inadequate are not subject to academy orders.

What happens during an inspection?

Inspectors talk to the headteacher and other school leaders who are responsible for making key decisions about how the school operates (for example on curriculum and behaviour), governors, staff and pupils, and consider your views as a parent. If the school is an academy, they also talk to any trust leaders who have a role in running the school, including the chief executive officer and executive headteachers or directors of education (where applicable). They also talk to trustees. They spend most of their time observing a wide range of lessons and looking at the quality of education in the school, and the impact of the curriculum. Inspectors give specific attention to the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills in lessons.

They also look at the personal development, behaviour, attitudes and welfare of pupils at the school, the promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; and how well the school is led and managed.

For information about the inspection of boarding or residential provision in schools, you should refer to the [guidance for schools on being inspected as a boarding or residential school](#).

Inspection and the COVID-19 pandemic

Our approach to inspection will take into account the COVID-19 pandemic and the disruption it has caused to schools. Inspectors will discuss the impact of the pandemic with the school, including how the school leadership responded to the situation, and will take that into account in their assessment of the school.

Schools that were last inspected before the start of the pandemic may receive their first routine inspection up to 2 years later than they would have previously. This is due to the suspension of routine inspection activity as a result of COVID-19.

How can I make my views known?

If you are the registered parent of a child at the school, the school will send you a letter notifying you of the dates of the inspection. This letter provides you with details and options for providing your views. Our survey site, [Ofsted Parent View](#), is the main source we use to gather parents' views about a school. Inspectors will use the views expressed on Ofsted Parent View when inspecting your child's school.

Can I speak to the inspectors?

You may have the chance to speak to the inspectors during the inspection, for example at the start of the school day. The inspection administrators will be happy to pass on messages to the inspectors and may be able to arrange telephone conversations if you are unable to speak to them in person. Their contact details will be in the letter that tells you about the inspection. Please remember that inspectors cannot deal with complaints concerning individual pupils or settle disputes between you and the school.

What happens after the inspection?

The lead inspector reports their judgement to the headteacher and governors. The inspection findings are published in a report for the school, parents and the wider community. Inspection reports provide information about the effectiveness of the school's work and contain recommendations about what the school should do to improve further. Reports are published on [our reports website](#).

Where can further details be found about school inspections?

The [education inspection framework](#) sets out the principles that apply to inspection and the main judgements that inspectors make when carrying out inspections.

The [school inspection handbook](#) and [school monitoring handbook](#) set out the statutory basis for inspections, what schools can expect at inspections and provide guidance for inspectors on making their judgements.

What happens if I have concerns about the inspection?

Complaints are rare, but we treat them very seriously. You can find out more about our [complaints procedure on our website](#) or by calling our helpline on 0300 123 4666.

If you need any more information about our work, please visit [Ofsted on Gov.UK](#) or call our helpline.

What happens if I have concerns about my child's school?

If you are concerned about your child's school, you should start by talking directly to the teachers or headteacher or, if necessary, the governing body or the local authority/academy trust. Find out how to [Complain about a school](#).

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted
No. 160054
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