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[Home](#) > [Education, training and skills](#) > [Inspections and performance of education providers](#)
> [Inspection and performance of further education providers](#)

Guidance

Conduct during Ofsted inspections

Guidance on the conduct of Ofsted inspectors and Ofsted's expectations of providers during inspection.

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Applies to: **England**

Contents

- [Expectations of inspectors](#)
- [Expectations of providers](#)

Ofsted exists to be a force for improvement through intelligent, responsible and focused inspection and regulation. This is our guiding principle and is reflected in [our strategy](#). The primary purpose of

inspection under all our frameworks is to bring about improvement in education provision for learners of all ages and in the care of children and young people. We refer collectively to those we inspect as 'providers' (of education or care).

This guidance applies to all inspectors carrying out inspections in all 4 of Ofsted's remits: early years, schools, further education and skills, and social care.

Expectations of inspectors

It is important that inspectors and providers establish and maintain a positive working relationship, based on courteous and professional behaviour.

We expect our inspectors to uphold the highest professional standards in their work, and to treat everyone they meet during inspections fairly, with respect and with sensitivity.

In meeting this expectation, inspectors will:

- evaluate objectively, be impartial and inspect without fear or favour
- uphold and demonstrate Ofsted's values at all times
- evaluate provision in line with frameworks, national standards or regulatory requirements
- base all evaluations on clear and robust evidence
- declare all actual and perceived conflicts of interest and have no real or perceived connection with the provider that could undermine the objectivity of the inspection
- report honestly and clearly, ensuring that judgements are fair and reliable
- carry out their work with integrity, treating all those they meet with courtesy, respect and sensitivity
- take all reasonable steps to prevent undue anxiety and to minimise stress act in the best interests and well-being of service users, prioritising the safeguarding of children and learners at all times
- maintain purposeful and productive communication with providers and inform them of judgements sensitively, but clearly and frankly
- respect the confidentiality of information as far as possible, particularly about individuals and their work
- respond appropriately to reasonable requests
- take prompt and appropriate action on any safeguarding or health and safety issues
- use their title (such as Her Majesty's Inspector, Ofsted Inspector or Regulatory Inspector) only in relation to their work for Ofsted

At all times, we require inspectors to act in accordance with our internal policies and procedures on expected standards of behaviour and conduct, and [the Civil Service code](#).

Expectations of providers

Our expectations apply to all providers, including local authorities.

In order to establish and maintain a positive working relationship, we expect providers to:

- be courteous and professional, treating inspectors with respect and sensitivity
- enable inspectors to carry out their visit in an open and honest way
- enable inspectors to evaluate the provider objectively against the frameworks, standards or regulatory requirements
- provide evidence – or access to evidence – that will enable the inspector to report honestly, fairly and reliably about their provision; this includes the opportunity for inspectors to meet with learners or children and young people
- work with inspectors to minimise disruption, stress and bureaucracy
- ensure the good health and safety of inspectors while on their premises
- maintain purposeful and productive communication with the inspector or the inspection team
- bring any concerns about the inspection to the attention of inspectors promptly and in a suitable manner
- recognise that sometimes inspectors will need to observe practice and talk to staff and users without the presence of a manager or registered person

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[Disabled people](#)

[Driving and transport](#)

[Education and learning](#)

[Employing people](#)

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[Passports, travel and living abroad](#)

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[Working, jobs and pensions](#)

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[Worldwide](#)

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