

Introduction

Following a consultation period, Ofsted has confirmed changes to short inspections from January 2018 – stating that all three proposals were “supported overall” by respondents.

What’s changed?

On 5 December 2017, the consultation response confirmed the following three changes to short inspections:

A 48-hour turnaround where concerns are raised

If, during a short inspection of a ‘good’ school, serious concerns are raised about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, the short inspection will be converted to a full section 5 inspection, usually within 48 hours. Inspections will also be converted where evidence suggests that a school is likely to be judged as ‘inadequate’ overall.

Some ‘outstanding’ schools also receive short inspections: nursery schools, special schools and pupil referral units. If, during a short inspection of an outstanding school, inspectors see evidence indicating that a school is likely to be judged as inadequate, the short inspection will be converted into a section 5 inspection, usually within 48 hours.

A section 5 inspection within two years where a school is unlikely to reach its current judgement

If, during a short inspection of a good school, or a non-exempt outstanding school, inspectors are not confident that the school would receive its current grade if a section 5 inspection was conducted, they will send a letter to the school setting out their strengths and priorities for improvement. A section 5 inspection will then take place, typically within one to two years but no later than five years since the school’s previous full inspection. The short inspection’s findings will not result in a change to the school’s previous judgement for overall effectiveness.

A section 5 inspection within two years where a good school is moving towards outstanding

If, during a short inspection of a good school, inspectors identify practice indicating that the school is moving towards outstanding, they will send a letter setting out the school’s strengths and priorities for improvement. A section 5 inspection will then take place “typically” within the next two years and “possibly much sooner”.