

Reporting requirements for early years inspectors

Key principles of report writing

Reports should:

- tell the story of what it is like for a child at this setting
- be written in short sentences, using clear, simple language so that everyone can understand them
- use Tahoma size 12 font
- use correct grammar, punctuation and spelling and be free from jargon
- use the active rather than passive form of verbs
- be written in bullet points or prose where required in the template
- spell out the most important findings, key strengths and weaknesses and make clear recommendations for improvement
- avoid using phrases directly from the handbook, inspection criteria and grade descriptors or the statutory framework
- take care not to identify children where numbers are small.

Summary of key findings for parents (the front page)

Inspectors must:

- write in bullets
- make sure this section fits on the front page
- include enough detail to explain why the setting's overall effectiveness has been judged as outstanding/good/requires improvement/inadequate
- evaluate the three areas: 'meeting the needs', 'children's well-being' and 'leadership and management'
- include key strengths and weaknesses
- ensure that weaknesses in the key judgements lead to what the setting needs to do to improve
- be clear why a good setting is not yet outstanding.



What the setting needs to do to improve

Inspectors must:

- use the appropriate heading(s) in the template depending on the seriousness of the weaknesses
- liaise with the Applications, Regulatory and Contact (ARC) team where appropriate
- raise actions where there have been breaches of legal requirements
- insert areas for improvement that are drawn from the most significant weaknesses and spell out clearly what needs to improve
- avoid simply repeating statutory requirements
- be clear what needs to be done to meet the requirements of the Childcare Register where appropriate
- write actions and recommendations in a style that is easy for everyone to understand and that can easily be 'measured' at the next inspection/monitoring visit.

Inspection activities

- List the activities and the sources of evidence.
- State if this inspection was carried out following the risk assessment process only where concerns are well-founded and reported on.

Inspection findings

Inspectors must:

- fit this section on one page unless the setting is judged inadequate and requires more detail to explain why this judgement has been reached
- use this section to exemplify the key judgements, including reporting non-compliance or breaches of requirements.

Inspectors must report on:

- how well leaders and managers understand and implement the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the impact of teaching on all children's progress, including those from different groups (giving examples where appropriate)
- how well children are prepared for school or the next stage in their learning
- any variations in the learning of different groups of children
- the effectiveness of care practices and their impact on children's confidence and self-motivation as well as their physical and emotional well-being

- the impact of the setting's partnership with parents (and, as appropriate, with other settings, and external agencies)
- the effectiveness of supervision and training for staff, including the impact of staff qualifications
- the rigour with which managers check and review the quality of provision and children's progress and use the information to set targets and drive improvement
- how well children are safeguarded
- any findings that relate to concerns that triggered the inspection following the risk assessment process.

Note: these 'musts' can be reported anywhere in the report including on the front page. There is no need to repeat findings in different sections.

Information about the setting – (short paragraph) should include:

- date of initial registration
- location, where appropriate, and opening times
- organisation and links with other settings, including schools where appropriate
- whether the setting receives specific funding
- staffing levels and qualifications
- any specific educational philosophy.

Reports will be deemed 'not fit for publication' if:

- there is a mismatch between grade and text
- one of the reporting requirements is omitted
- the summary of key findings contradict reporting elsewhere in the report
- the report contains spelling, grammar and punctuation errors
- the report implies that Ofsted has a preference for a particular model or style of practice.