

2025 Ofsted Education Framework and young carers – At a glance

Ofsted's 2025 Education Inspection Framework (EIF) sets out how it will conduct inspections of education providers in England. Under this framework, Ofsted inspections will cover:

- Academies and maintained schools
- Non-association independent schools
- Further education and skills providers
- Registered early years settings

Inspections under the framework

There are three core guidance documents for inspectors and schools on inspections under the new Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF):

- 1. Inspection toolkit** – Sets out the standards Ofsted will use to inspect providers across the different types of settings Ofsted inspects under the framework
- 2. Operating guide for inspectors** – sets out how inspectors should carry out routine school inspections.
- 3. Inspection information for state-funded schools:** Contains general information about inspections of state-funded schools.

Young carers and Ofsted inspections of education providers

Following years of campaigning by Carers Trust, multiple members of the Young Carers Alliance and young carers themselves, we are delighted that young carers have been specifically mentioned in all three of the guidance documents which Ofsted have published.

Ofsted is introducing a new five-point grading scale for each evaluation area – Urgent improvement, needs attention, expected standard, strong standard, and exceptional. Alongside each grade there will be a narrative explaining the reasons for awarding it.

The guidance makes clear that supporting young carers is not just a requirement for settings wishing to meet strong standard or exceptional. References to young carers are listed within "Expected standard".

Young carers are referenced in the following evaluation areas for academies and maintained schools:

- Grading attendance and behaviour
- Inclusive personal development and well-being

For further education and skills providers, young carers are referenced in relation to:

- Participation and development
- Learners' and apprentices' preparation for their next steps
- Inclusive participation and development

All of the guidance documents can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-toolkit-operating-guide-and-information>.

Carers Trust has produced a guide outlining all of the references to young carers within the toolkits and other guidance, as well as providing suggested actions and best practice – including from the [Young Carers in Schools](#) programme which settings can take in preparation.

When will this come into force?

The new inspection framework and accompanying documents come into force from November 2025. The first wave of inspections are for providers who have volunteered, taking place in November 2025. Non-volunteering schools will not be inspected before December 1st.

Inspections for Initial Teacher Education providers and non-associated independent schools will start from January 2026.

What difference will this make?

When Ofsted added young carers to their Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) framework in January 2024, within the space of a year 80% of inspection reports specifically referenced how well young carers are being identified and supported.

Early feedback from Young Carers Alliance members is showing that schools who have volunteered to be the first to be inspected under the new framework are being asked specific questions relating to young carers.

To find out more

The next Young Carers Alliance webinar taking place on Tuesday 11 November from 2pm to 3:30pm, "Next steps for improving educational opportunities for young carers" will be covering these changes and what they might mean for identification and support in school. You can register via <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/next-steps-for-improving-educational-opportunities-for-young-carers-tickets-1809637306899?aff=oddtcreator>.

If you have any further questions, you can contact the Young Carers team at Carers Trust on youngcarers@carers.org.