

# Policy statement for inspecting new schools and schools that undergo a change in status

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1. This statement sets out how Ofsted will select new schools for inspection starting from the 2015/16 academic year. This includes initial inspections of different types of academy school, including free schools, which are likely to account for the majority of new schools. It also applies to academy converters.
2. The first inspection of all new schools, including academies, will usually take place within three years of opening.<sup>1</sup> In most instances, we will not select new schools for a first inspection until they are in their third year of operation.<sup>2</sup>
3. Certain types of schools judged outstanding before conversion to academy status are exempt from routine inspection unless there are concerns about their performance.<sup>3</sup> Outstanding special schools and pupil referral units that convert to academy status are not exempt from routine inspection, but will be eligible for a short inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. Regulations<sup>4</sup> provide that new mainstream academies, whose predecessor schools were most recently judged good, are also eligible for a short inspection under section 8 of the Act. In line with other good schools and outstanding special schools and pupil referral units, the short inspections of converter academies will be carried out approximately every three years.
4. Where a school that was judged good at its last inspection subsequently undergoes significant change, for example through merging with another school,<sup>5</sup> or by adding a new phase or a key stage, it will normally have a

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<sup>1</sup> 16–19 academies and 16–19 free schools are inspected under the *Further education and skills inspection handbook from September 2015*, Ofsted, 2015; [www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-education-and-skills-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-education-and-skills-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015).

<sup>2</sup> These arrangements apply to all new schools, including new maintained schools, that have yet to have their first section 5 inspection.

<sup>3</sup> See exemption regulations: [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/1293/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/1293/made). All exempt schools remain subject to Ofsted's risk assessment process.

<sup>4</sup> The Education (School Inspection) (England) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2015; [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/1639/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/1639/made).

<sup>5</sup> The reference here is to a situation where the good school remains open and incorporates another school which closes, and where the good school retains its Department for Education establishment number and URN so is not legally a new school.



section 5 inspection instead of a short inspection. Thereafter, if the school is judged good, it will be eligible for a short inspection.

5. Ofsted may conduct a section 8 monitoring inspection of any new school at any time, including within three years of opening, where information we hold or receive causes sufficient concern.
6. This policy does not apply to fee-paying independent schools, which are covered by separate inspection arrangements, further details of which can be found at: [www.gov.uk/guidance/being-inspected-as-a-non-association-independent-school](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/being-inspected-as-a-non-association-independent-school).