Ofsted Changes

A Guide for Parents

December 2025

We know that many of you will be aware from the news and media that Ofsted has changed its inspection framework.
Horde CE Primary School was last inspected in February 2022 and therefore we are aware that we will likely have an inspection in the coming months.

This leaflet has been created to help you as parents understand some of the changes in inspection and grade reporting.

Previously...

Previously schools were inspected in four key areas (quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development and leadership and management).
Each area was judged and schools were given either:

- **Grade 1: Outstanding** – Exceeding educational standards and preparing pupils for the next stage of education or employment at the highest possible level (15% of schools in England, 2025)
- **Grade 2: Good** – Providing sufficient support for pupils and acceptable standards of education to prepare pupils effectively for the next stage of growth (73% of schools in England, 2025)
- **Grade 3: Requires Improvement** – Educational standards are inadequate and require some revision and improvement to raise standards across the board (9% of schools in England, 2025)
- **Grade 4: Inadequate** – There are significant weaknesses in educational provisions and depending on the judgement of management and leadership different actions will be taken (3% of schools in England, 2025)

Hordle CE Primary School received an Outstanding judgement in February 2022 and an Outsanding judgement during the previous inspection in March 2016.

However, these judgements have now been replaced and are no longer comparable. When we are inspected next time, we will not be able to achieve another Outstanding as this category no longer exists.

New Framework

There is a brand new framework for schools to be inspected against. This is different to the previous framework.

When Ofsted come, they will want to look at these areas:

Achievement	Attendance and Behaviour	Curriculum and Teaching	Early Years
Inclusion	Leadership and Governance	Personal Development and Wellbeing	Safeguarding

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New Grading

Ofsted has removed the one word judgements – therefore we will not be able get an overall grade of outstanding any more as this no longer exists.

Instead, schools will get a 'report card'. Ofsted has designed this with parents in mind to help parents see areas of the school's strengths and next steps for improvement. These report cards will show colour-coded grades for the different areas.

Example report card summary

Expected standard	The 'expected standard' is just that – it means the school is doing everything that it should be doing. It's a high standard to make sure that children are receiving everything they need and deserve.
Strong standard	Where a school has gone beyond the expected standard, they might be awarded the strong standard in some areas. 'Strong standard' marks out excellent, consistent work that's making a real difference for children and learners.
Needs attention	If a school has not yet met the 'expected standard' because some aspects of provision are inconsistent, the area may be awarded Needs attention. 'Needs attention' is an indication that there is work to be done to reach the 'expected standard'. It's not a 'fail' but it highlights where issues can be addressed.
Urgent improvement	When an area needs urgent action to provide a suitable standard of education and/or care for children and learners, the area would be given 'Urgent improvement'.
Exceptional	Exceptional is the highest grade on the new report card. It is awarded only when inspectors see practice that ranks among the very best nationally and should be shared with other schools to help them improve. It recognises provision that goes beyond strong or expected standards, setting an example for others. This grade will be rare and it is not the same as the previous 'Outstanding'.

Safeguarding will not be assessed using this scale. It will be graded as met or not met.

Example report card

Schools will likely receive a mix of grades across a report card: it's perfectly possible to achieve highly in some areas and require a little more focus in others.

The report card will then be able to show parents which areas of the school are in each category and show a detailed descriptions of what inspectors found. This will help parents to understand why Ofsted have awarded different grades.

Please click **HERE** for Ofsted's Guidance for Parents or **HERE** to watch a short YouTube video on the update.

It's important to understand that the new grades can't be compared to the old ones: this is a different approach to inspection and a new way of reporting to parents.

Ofsted inspections have only just begun again and as time passes, we learn more and more about what these different standards look like in practice.

Summary

- Ofsted has introduced a new inspection framework (from November 2025).
- Our last inspection (Feb 2022) judged us Outstanding – but that grade no longer exists.
- Old system: One overall grade – Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement, or Inadequate.
- New system: No single headline grade. Instead, schools get a report card across different areas.
- Areas inspected include: achievement, behaviour & attendance, curriculum & teaching, early years, inclusion, leadership & governance, safeguarding, and personal development.
- Report cards use colour-coded standards: Expected standard (green) – meeting high expectations; Strong standard – excellent, consistent practice; Needs attention – some improvement required; Urgent improvement – immediate action needed; Exceptional – among the very best nationally (rare, not the same as old "Outstanding")
- Safeguarding is judged separately as Met / Not Met.
- Schools may have a mix of grades across areas – this is normal.
- Key point: New grades cannot be compared with old ones. A lower grade than "Exceptional" does not mean the school has declined.
- The aim is to give parents a clearer picture of strengths and areas for development.