

Ofsted's equality objectives 2016–2020

The Equality Act 2010 sets out that all public bodies will publish equalities objectives every four years. This document identifies the equalities objectives that we have chosen to focus on over the next four years, from 2016 to 2020, to improve equality, diversity and inclusion in Ofsted.

We recognise and take very seriously our broad responsibilities as both an employer and as a provider of a service to members of the public.

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Introduction

Ofsted's aim is to promote the improvement of care and education services to at least a good standard, with a particular focus on outcomes for the disadvantaged and vulnerable. We are committed to supporting the development of a highly educated, productive and safer society, where children and young people can succeed whatever their background.

As a result, promoting equality is at the heart of all we do. Our equality objectives cover how we consider equality when we inspect and regulate, and how we will ensure that our own staff and those we contract with have equality of opportunity.

Our objectives have been developed in consultation with staff, including our employee equality networks. Associated actions and success measures will be embedded in our corporate, team and regional plans and we will report annually on our progress. We will review our objectives and targets to ensure that they continue to be appropriately challenging.

Objective 1

In all its inspections, Ofsted will assess the extent to which providers demonstrate due regard to the equality duty.

1.1. In education inspections, inspectors will assess the extent to which the provider inspected gives due regard to relevant legal duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010. Inspectors will assess how the provider promotes equality of opportunity and takes positive steps to prevent any form of discrimination, either direct or indirect, against those with protected characteristics in all aspects of their work.

1.2. In education inspections, inspectors will take into account the extent to which gaps in achievement between different groups of children and learners, including those with protected characteristics, are being narrowed when evaluating the effectiveness of a provider's leadership and management.

1.3. In inspections of children's social care services, inspectors will assess the extent to which help, care and protection are sensitive and responsive to those with protected characteristics.

Actions

To ensure that we meet these objectives, we will:

- be clear in all our published inspection frameworks that inspectors will take these factors into account when coming to their decisions
- carry out regular quality assurance checks to ensure that inspectors are acting in accordance with the relevant framework and other relevant guidance/training

- provide training to inspectors if weaknesses in inspection practice are found or there are new developments they should be aware of
- consult widely, including with our employee networks, before making changes to inspection arrangements, to ensure that the views of those with protected characteristics are taken into account when developing how we inspect
- report annually on the quality of our work in this area and on any causes for concern that we may identify.

Success criteria

- Improved quality of reporting on equalities against baselines for each remit area.
- In-depth information and analysis published on equalities in specific remit areas as part of annual reports.
- Stakeholder groups recognise Ofsted's impact as a result of assessing the extent to which providers are meeting the equality duty.

Objective 2

Ofsted will report on performance in local areas in identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities by introducing a new type of inspection in 2016.

Actions

To ensure that we meet this objective, we will:

- work with the Care Quality Commission on a new inspection framework on this area, which will look across health and education services
- consult widely, including with those with protected characteristics, to ensure that we take their views into account when developing the framework
- publish the new inspection framework and any related guidance so that local areas, service users and providers are clear about what we expect
- quality assure our inspections to make sure they are robust and helpful to service users
- report on our findings in relation to individual local areas and highlight any national issues, including both good practice and causes for concern, in our Annual Report.

Success criteria

- New inspection framework published by May 2016.
- Inspections begin in May 2016.
- Impact of inspections evidenced by evaluation and stakeholder feedback.

Objective 3

Ofsted will promote equal opportunities for its entire workforce, including both staff and directly contracted Ofsted Inspectors, tackling bullying and discrimination whenever it occurs.

3.1. Ofsted will increase the diversity of its workforce.

3.2. Ofsted will increase diversity within its Senior Civil Service to better align with the wider Senior Civil Service workforce profile.

3.3. Ofsted will tackle unfair treatment and inappropriate behaviour to reduce the proportion of its staff, particularly those with protected characteristics, reporting experience of discrimination, bullying and harassment.

Actions

To ensure that we meet this objective, we will:

- continue to monitor and evaluate the impact of our recruitment practices
- introduce targeted developmental activity for employees from under-represented groups who have been identified as having the potential and aspiration to gain promotion to the next grade
- offer development opportunities, such as shadowing inspections, to senior leaders and future senior leaders, targeting groups that are under-represented in our inspector workforce
- increase awareness of equalities, diversity and inclusion through communications and training
- ensure that all new employees undertake equality training and all managers undertake training in unconscious bias.

Success criteria

- Improved representation of under-represented groups across grades and roles.
- Improved diversity within Ofsted's Senior Civil Service grades.
- Reduction in discrimination, bullying and harassment as reported in the People Survey.



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