

## Children's centre inspection outcomes

This release contains:

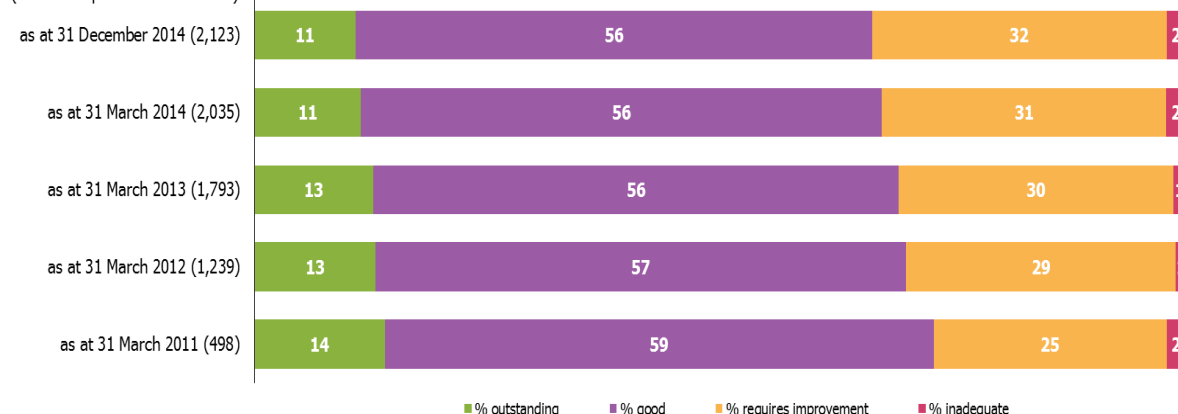
- most recent inspection outcomes completed as at 31 December 2014
- provisional data for inspections completed between 1 July 2014 and 31 December 2014
- revised data for inspections completed between 1 April 2014 and 30 June 2014.

Children's centre inspection outcomes have declined over past two years.

At the end of December 2014, 66% of open and inspected children's centres were judged good or outstanding at their most recent inspection. This is three percentage points lower than the proportion judged good or outstanding as at 31 March 2013. This is the first inspection cycle for children's centres; some centres are yet to be inspected so are not included in these findings.

**Chart 1: Most recent overall effectiveness of open inspected children's centres**<sup>1 2 3</sup>

(number of providers in brackets)



1. Data reflects information held in Ofsted systems as at the time of publication.
2. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.
3. Further information is available in the methodology, glossary and frameworks sections.

Inspection outcomes are stronger for single centres than groups.

Sixty eight per cent of single children's centres were judged good or outstanding at their most recent inspection, compared to only 50% of children's centre groups. One per cent of single centres were judged inadequate compared to 10% of children's centre groups. Caution should be taken in drawing conclusions from these figures as inspection of children's centre groups only started on 1 April 2013, whereas the inspection outcomes for single centres span the wider period 1 April 2010 – 31 December 2014.

North East and London are the highest performing regions. South West is the lowest.

At a regional level, London and the North East have the highest proportion (75%) of children's centres judged good or outstanding at their most recent inspection. The South West has the lowest proportion (53%) judged good or outstanding.



## Contents

Key findings.....	3
Methodology.....	5
Glossary .....	6
Frameworks.....	7

## Acknowledgements

Thanks to the following for their contribution to this statistical release: Nathan Hook, Alison Edwards and Michael West.

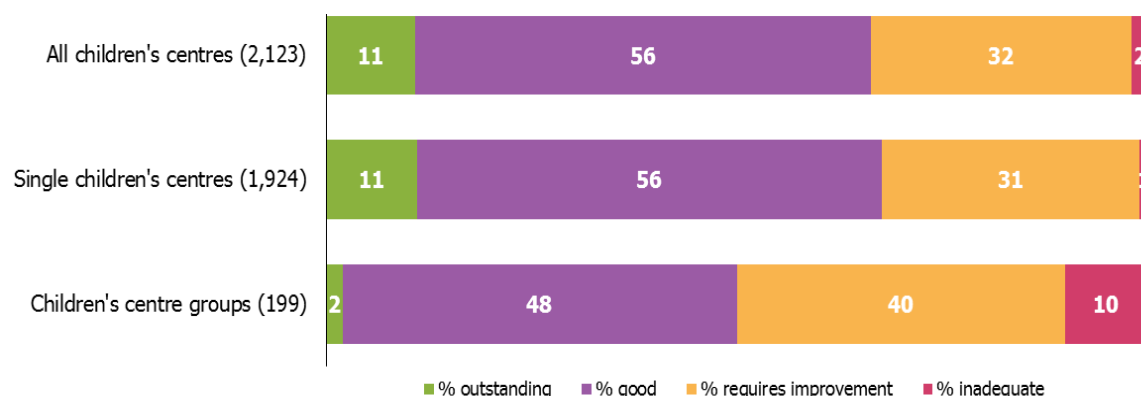
## Key findings

Ofsted began inspecting children’s centres on 1 April 2010, and as at 31 December 2014 there were 2,123 open and inspected children’s centres. Sixty six per cent of those inspected were judged good or outstanding, 32% required improvement and 2% were judged inadequate at their most recent inspection. The percentage judged good or outstanding is one percentage point lower than the 67% figure reported in the previous publication, which relates to the position as at 30 June 2014. This is a continuation of an ongoing trend; the proportion judged good or outstanding as at 31 December 2014 (66%) is three percentage points lower than the proportion judged good or outstanding as at 31 March 2013 (69%) before the inspection framework was revised. This is the first inspection cycle for children’s centres, so some centres are yet to be inspected. Children’s centres which have closed or are not yet inspected are not included in these findings.

Chart 2 shows that 68% of single children’s centres were judged good or outstanding at their most recent inspection, compared to 50% of children’s centre groups. One per cent of single centres were judged inadequate compared to 10% of children’s centre groups. Caution should be taken in drawing conclusions from these figures as inspection of children’s centre groups only started on 1 April 2013, whereas the inspection outcomes for single centres span the wider period 1 April 2010 – 31 December 2014.

**Chart 2: Overall effectiveness outcomes at most recent inspection of children’s centres inspected as at 31 December 2014** <sup>1 2 3 4 5</sup>

(number of providers in brackets)

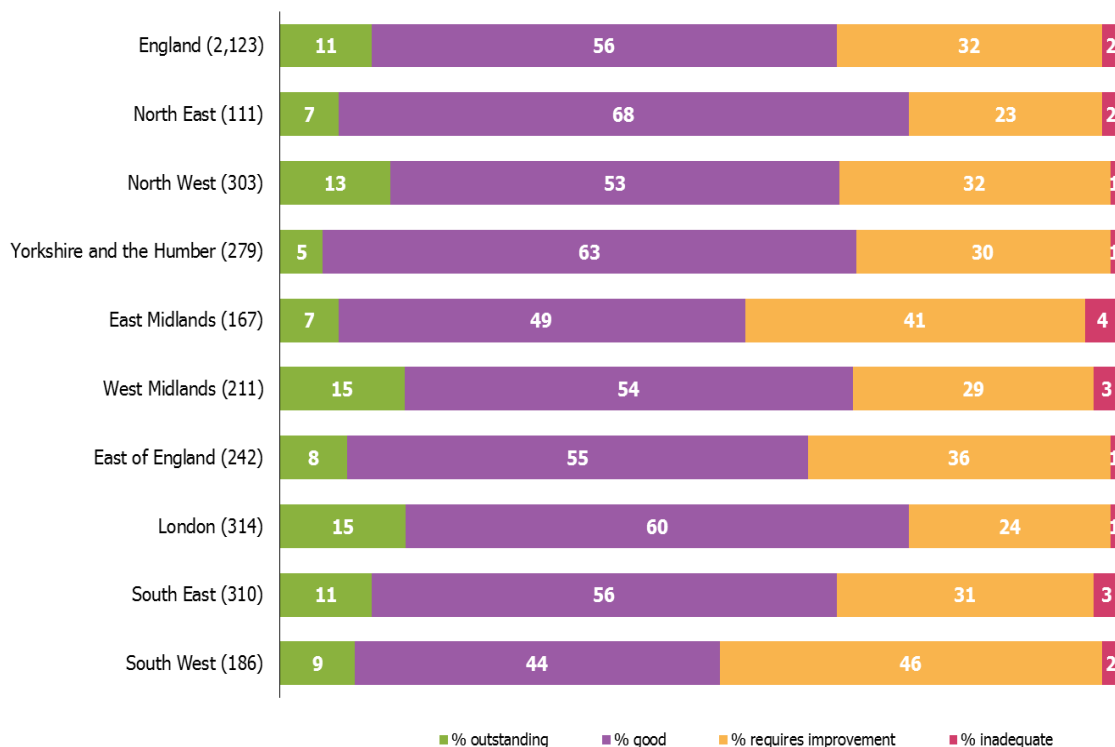


1. Inspection of children’s centres began on 1 April 2010. Inspection of children’s centre groups only began on 1 April 2013, so there are fewer.
2. Children’s centres are included if they were open on the Ofsted systems as at 31 December 2014.
3. Inspections are included if they were published on the Ofsted systems as at 31 January 2015.
4. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.
5. Further information is available in the methodology, glossary and frameworks sections.

Chart 3 shows that at a regional level, London and the North East have the highest proportion (75%) of children's centres judged good or outstanding at their most recent inspection. The South West has the lowest proportion (53%) of children's centres judged good or outstanding.

**Chart 3: Most recent overall effectiveness of children's centres inspected as at 31 December 2014, by region** <sup>1 2 3 4</sup>

(number of providers in brackets)



1. Children's centres are included if they were open on the Ofsted systems as at 31 December 2014.
2. Inspections are included if they were published on the Ofsted systems as at 31 January 2015.
3. Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100.
4. Further information is available in the methodology, glossary and frameworks sections.

### Revisions to previous release

The previous release related to inspections between 1 April 2014 and 30 June 2014. Three inspections were carried out in this period but were not published in time to be included in the provisional publication. One centre was judged good, one required improvement and one centre was judged inadequate for overall effectiveness. A revised list of inspections in this period, including these three centres are included in the data file for this publication. The inclusion of these inspections has not impacted on the key findings.

## Methodology

These official statistics report on children's centre inspections carried out in England under Section 3A of the Childcare Act 2006.

'Overall effectiveness' includes the judgement 'How effective is the children's centre in meeting the needs and improving outcomes for families?' from the previous framework and 'The overall effectiveness of the children's centre' from the current framework. The overall effectiveness judgement is the only outcome recorded across frameworks.

'Satisfactory' judgements were recorded at inspections that took place up until 31 March 2013. For inspections on or after 1 April 2013, a 'requires improvement' judgement is recorded.

This is the first inspection cycle for children's centres; some centres are yet to be inspected. The most recent outcome data therefore does not include a most recent outcome for all open children's centres. A new children's centre framework was introduced on 1 April 2013. This is a continuation of the same inspection cycle – please see the framework section below for more details.

Where a previously inspected single centre has joined a group, once the centre is inspected as part of that group only the group inspection outcome will be included in the data. If the group has yet to be inspected, the previous single centre inspection outcome will be shown. When a centre leaves a group and becomes a single centre it will not be included in the data until it is inspected.

The data shown in this document together with additional local authority level data and provider level data can be found in the data file here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/childrens-centres-statistics> Numbers of centres in each local authority are small, so Ofsted does not include analysis of data at this level and caution should be taken in drawing conclusions from these figures.

Following this publication the data will be updated twice a year. Inspections up to the end of March will be published in June each year, inspections up to the end of August will be published in November each year. Further data over time is published at <http://dataview.ofsted.gov.uk>

Revisions to data in this publication are published in line with Ofsted's revisions policy for official statistics, which can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-standards-for-official-statistics>

## Glossary

The core purpose of Sure Start children's centres (as defined in the Sure Start children's centres statutory guidance, April 2013) is to improve outcomes for young children and their families and reduce inequalities between families in greatest need and their peers in:

- child development and school readiness
- parenting aspirations and parenting skills; and
- child and family health and life chances.

The statutory definition of a children's centre is defined in the Childcare Act 2006 as a place or a group of places:

- which is managed by or on behalf of, or under arrangements with, the local authority with a view to securing that early childhood services in the local authority's area are made available in an integrated way;
- through which early childhood services are made available (either by providing the services on site, or by providing advice and assistance on gaining access to services elsewhere); and
- at which activities for young children are provided.

Children's centres also signpost or provide childcare, encourage and support parents who wish to consider training and employment. They aim to support the improvement in the overall health and well-being of young children and their families while improving the outcomes for children including those from deprived backgrounds. They aim to raise parents' aspirations for their children and themselves, encourage parental engagement in their children's early learning and development to help children overcome development barriers and make a good start in their school careers.

Many local authorities manage their children's centres in groups with a variety of shared management and services. If two or more centres share leadership and management and provide integrated services across an area in one local authority we will inspect them as a children's centre group, otherwise we will inspect them as single centres.

## Frameworks

Children's centre inspections are governed by Part 3A of the Childcare Act 2006 as amended by Part 9 of the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009.

The current framework came into force in April 2013, and sets out the statutory basis for Sure Start children's centre inspections conducted from April 2013 – and reflects that some local authorities manage their children's centres in groups with a variety of shared management and integrated services, as distinct from single children's centres.

Inspections carried out under this framework focus on the impact children's centres are having on young children and their families, especially those families that centres have identified as being in most need of intervention and support.

Ofsted must inspect all children's centres, at least once within five years, or sooner where the Secretary of State for Education requires this. Centres may be inspected more frequently where Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) or the Secretary of State have concerns about the performance of a children's centre and consider that it would be appropriate.

Inspectors make three key judgements that contribute to the judgement of the overall effectiveness of the centre – access to services; the quality and impact of services; the effectiveness of leadership, governance and management of the centre.

Local authorities submit information on children's centres to the Department for Education (DfE) via the Sure Start\_On database which is shared with Ofsted.

Ofsted publishes information on the inspection of children's centres on its website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-framework-for-childrens-centre-inspection-from-april-2013>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childrens-centre-inspection-handbook-for-inspections-from-april-2013>

If you have any comments or feedback on this publication, please contact Selina Gibb on 03000 130 407 or [Selina.Gibb@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:Selina.Gibb@ofsted.gov.uk)

### © Crown copyright

You may re-use this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/> or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London, TW9 4DU or e-mail: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk)