
5 January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to share important information about changes to Ofsted school inspections. These changes started in November 2025.

Ofsted will no longer give schools one overall grade like “Outstanding” or “Requires Improvement”. Instead, schools will receive a report card with grades covering different areas of their performance. There will be five grades:

- Exceptional
- Strong Standard
- Expected Standard
- Needs Attention
- Urgent Improvement

A school may receive different grades in different areas. For example, a school may do very well in some areas and be identified as needing more work in others. It is important to understand that the old grades are not the same as the new grades. They cannot be compared:

- the old grade “Outstanding” is not the same as the new grade “Exceptional”
- the old grade “Requires Improvement” is not the same as “Needs Attention”.

Ofsted still has high expectations.

- The “Expected Standard” means the school is doing everything that it should be doing. This is a high standard set to ensure that your children are receiving everything that they need and deserve. Because expectations are higher, a school that was previously graded “Good” may now be graded “Expected Standard”, even if the school has improved.
- Some schools may be graded as “Strong Standard” in some areas. Very few schools will receive “Exceptional” gradings.
- The grade “Needs Attention” means the school needs to improve in that area to reach the Expected Standard. It is not a failure. It helps schools fix small issues before they become bigger problems.

You can find more information for parents and carers here: [Understanding Ofsted report cards and grades – GOV.UK](#)

We are very proud of all of our Brent schools and the strong education they provide for pupils. We are confident that our Community Schools will be well prepared for their next Ofsted inspection, which normally happens within four years of the last inspection. Thank you for your continued support in helping our schools give your children the best possible education and start in life.

Yours sincerely



Shirley Parks
Director, Education, Partnerships and Strategy,
Children, Young People and Community Development, Brent Council