

Jason Marantz
Director of Education and Inclusion
Hackney Education
1 Hillman Street
Hackney
London
E8 1DY

020 8820 7039
jason.marantz@hackney.gov.uk

Thursday 22 January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

As the Director of Education and Inclusion in Hackney, I am writing to share important information about the revised Ofsted inspection framework, which came into effect in November 2025.

Ofsted will no longer give schools a single overall judgement such as “Outstanding” or “Requires Improvement.” Instead, schools will receive a new report card with a five-point grading scale across a number of inspection areas.

The new gradings are:

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

Safeguarding will now be evaluated as a stand alone measure. . This change emphasises that keeping children safe is a collective responsibility. Schools will receive a straightforward judgement of either "Met" or "Not Met".

Ofsted has been very clear that the new grades cannot be directly compared with judgements under the previous framework. For example, the former judgement of ‘Requires Improvement’ does not mean the same as the new ‘Needs Attention,’ grade, and ‘Outstanding’ is not equivalent to ‘Exceptional.’

Ofsted has explained that the “Needs Attention” should be taken as advisory. It will highlight areas where improvement is required to reach the Expected Standard; rather than representing a failure. The intention is to identify issues early, before they escalate to a point where urgent improvement is needed.

Expectations in many areas have risen under the new inspection framework. When evaluating schools using the new inspection toolkit, Ofsted expects most schools to be graded at the 'Expected Standard', indicating that the school provides an effective education and meets all statutory expectations. Some schools may achieve a 'Strong Standard' in particular areas, while very few schools nationally are expected to be graded as 'Exceptional.'

This means that a school previously judged as 'Good' may now receive grades at the "Expected Standard," even where its provision has continued to improve, because the benchmarks within the new framework are higher than before.

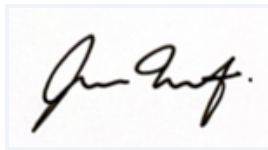
I would like to reassure parents and carers that Hackney has a very strong track record of inspection outcomes within its schools. Under the previous Ofsted framework, 100% of Hackney schools were judged to be 'Good' or 'Outstanding'. This reflects the sustained quality of education across the borough and our schools' commitment to delivering the best possible outcomes for children and young people.

We are confident that Hackney schools are well prepared for their next inspection under the new framework. Schools are generally inspected within four years of their previous inspection, with a statutory requirement for an inspection to take place within five school years of the end of the academic year in which the last inspection occurred.

More information for parents and carers about the new Ofsted framework can be found at: [Understanding Ofsted report cards and grades](#). If you have any questions, please direct these to your child's school.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us provide the very best education for Hackney's children and young people.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jason Marantz', enclosed in a light blue rectangular box.

Jason Marantz
Director of Education and Inclusion