# Ofsted framework 2025
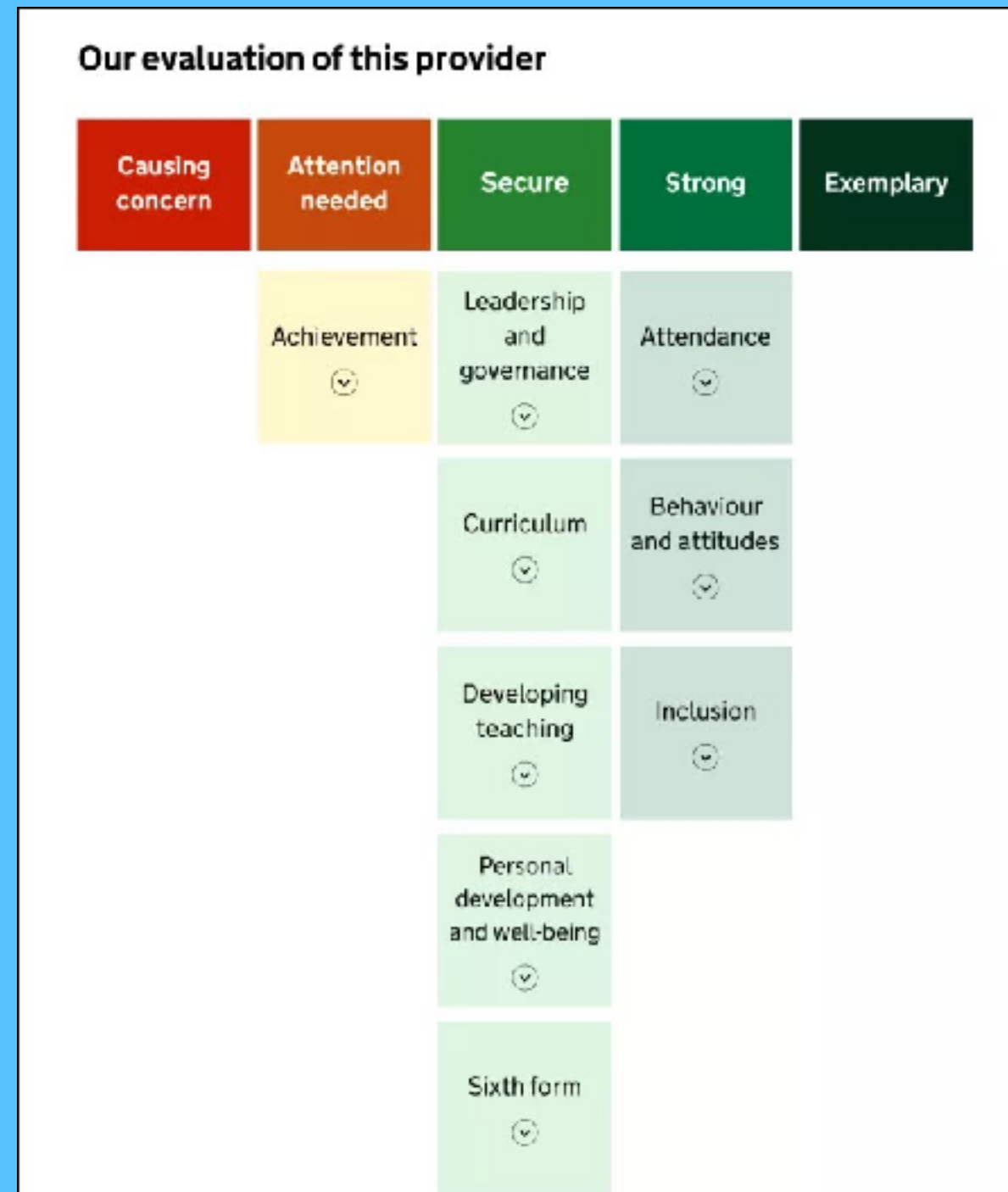


**Implications for schools and families**

Brian Foster - January 2026

# The report card

The report card covers:

- Safeguarding

- Inclusion

- Curriculum and teaching

- Achievement

- Attendance and behaviour

- Personal development and wellbeing

- Leadership and governance

- Early years (if applicable)

- Sixth form (if applicable)

Safeguarding will be judged separately as a stand-alone area, as either 'met' or 'not met'.

The other areas will be judged on a 5-point grading scale. These grades have been renamed since the consultation proposals, and will be:

- Exceptional

- Strong standard

- Expected standard

- Needs attention

- Urgent improvement

The report card will also include a short narrative explanation for each grade.

# Statutory duties

- The 6 core areas intentionally reflect the areas Ofsted is obliged to inspect against for schools by law.

- The Education Act 2005 says that the Chief Inspector's school inspection reports must cover:

  - the achievement of pupils

  - the quality of teaching

  - the quality of the leadership in and management of the school

  - the behaviour and safety of pupils

and must also consider:

  - the spiritual, moral, social and cultural [personal] development of pupils at the school

  - the extent to which the education at the school meets the needs of the range of pupils at the school, and in particular the needs of pupils who have SEND (covered by the inclusion evaluation area)

# Safeguarding

- Report cards are designed "to advise parents and carers on who to trust with the care and education of their child".

- Inspections focus on the impact of the systems and processes that leaders use to support the continuous improvement and effective running of the school.

- Parents can complain to Ofsted but Ofsted won't investigate their individual complaints; they may carry out an inspection to check whether the necessary systems are in place.

- Inspections should test whether the school has established a whole-school, open and positive safeguarding culture that puts pupils' interests first.

- Inspectors should evaluate the extent to which leaders fulfil their responsibilities in relation to child-on-child violence, which includes staff training to promote early intervention, child protection, monitoring and reporting. It includes online abuse and sexual harassment.

# Safeguarding

Inspectors evaluate the extent to which schools have effective policies and practice to:

- protect pupils from maltreatment and harm, whether within or outside the home or online

- recognise that pupils who do not attend school (children missing education) might indicate safeguarding concerns, including neglect, emotional, physical or sexual abuse, or other harms

- actively seek and listen to the views and experiences of pupils, staff, and parents and carers, dealing promptly with any concerns

- provide training for all staff to understand their safeguarding responsibilities

- pay attention to vulnerable groups

- recognise child-on-child violence is a safeguarding issue

- work with other agencies

# Ofsted's approach to inclusion:

- Inclusive providers are at the heart of their communities. They have high expectations and aspirations for every child and learner. They are particularly alert to the needs of those who may require the most support to achieve well and have positive experiences of education, including those who are disadvantaged, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being.

- They recognise that barriers to learning and well-being are dynamic and not always fixed traits – and that these arise from multiple interacting factors at individual, family, provider, community and societal levels.

- Leaders set a clear and ambitious vision for inclusion at the provider. They put this at the core of their planning and policies and communicate it to children, learners, staff, and parents and carers. They create a culture in which every child and learner belongs, and feels safe, welcomed and valued. They make sure that all children and learners access a high-quality education, taught by experts with high ambition who strive to develop every child and learner's potential. They encourage all to participate in wider enrichment opportunities, so that all children and learners can achieve, belong and thrive.

- Providers identify needs early, showing compassion and curiosity to identify those who experience hidden vulnerabilities. They make reasonable adjustments, including ensuring that the learning environment is accessible and supportive. They support transitions between phases and, where appropriate, deliver evidence-based, targeted support for those who need it.

- Providers work in a close and effective partnership with parents and carers and other agencies to secure the best possible outcomes for every child and learner, regardless of their starting points.

# Inclusion

 This evaluation area considers how leaders and staff identify and support:

- socioeconomically disadvantaged pupils (those eligible for the Pupil Premium)

- pupils with SEND; this means pupils receiving special educational needs (SEN) support, and those with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

- pupils who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, such as children in need and looked-after children

- pupils who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being, which may include pupils who share a protected characteristic

# Inclusive curriculum and teaching

In gathering evidence inspectors consider the extent to which:

- staff know how to identify and remove barriers to achievement for their pupils through effective curriculum design, formative assessment and adapting their practice to meet pupils'needs

- the school's approach to the curriculum and teaching draws explicitly on the best available evidence, including high-quality research relating to supporting disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being

- any additional adults in the classroom are deployed to enable all pupils to access high-quality teaching from their class teacher and to develop pupils' independence over time

- reasonable adjustments or adaptations to the curriculum or teaching for specific pupils' needs are well targeted and effective in reducing barriers; adaptations focus on pupils' long-term success rather than short-term fixes; leaders consider the possible downsides of any adaptations and mitigate these

# Achievement

This evaluation area considers:

- whether the school provides a high-quality education for all pupils (the impact), especially disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being, that gives them the necessary knowledge, skills and qualifications to succeed in life, and equips them for the next stage of their education, training or employment

- pupils' attainment and progress over time in national tests and examinations, where relevant

- the progress that pupils make across the curriculum from their starting points, so that they know more, remember more and are able to do more

- Keep-up not catch-up

# Attendance and behaviour

This evaluation area considers:

- whether leaders and other staff create a calm, orderly, respectful, supportive and positive environment in which pupils can thrive

- the impact of the school's work on the attendance, behaviour and attitudes of all pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being, such as young carers

inspectors consider the extent to which leaders:

- know and understand their pupils, the influences on them given the context of the school and the challenges they may face in maintaining positive behaviour

- promote good attitudes to learning and regular attendance, especially for disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND, those who are known (or previously known) to children's social care, and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or well-being

- pay close attention to every element of the school's work to make sure that the school is a place that pupils want to attend

- have high expectations for all pupils' attendance, behaviour and attitudes, and design effective policies that communicate these high expectations clearly to all staff, pupils and parents, including expectations related to mobile phones

- implement agreed policies effectively so that they are applied consistently by staff

# Behaviour, including bullying

In gathering evidence about behaviour, including bullying, inspectors consider the extent to which:

- leaders and staff establish appropriate routines and explicitly teach and model the behaviour they expect from pupils, so that these are well understood approaches are adapted to meet pupils' individual needs as necessary

- leaders train and support teaching and non-teaching staff to challenge poor behaviour, including low-level disruption that prevents learning, and they agree on consequences for poor behaviour and apply these confidently and consistently

- poor behaviour is prevented from disrupting lessons or the school's day-to-day life

- relationships between pupils and staff show kindness, courtesy, empathy and respect, reflecting a positive culture

- leaders and staff create a positive environment in which bullying, unlawful discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, victimisation, physical and/or sexual violence and derogatory language are not tolerated

- leaders recognise that bullying takes various forms, and is often motivated by prejudice against particular groups, for example on grounds of race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, SEND, or because a pupil is adopted, in care or has caring responsibilities; it might be motivated by actual differences between pupils, or perceived differences

- leaders ensure that the school has a culture in which staff are trained and empowered to deal with child-on-child violence; they assume it happens in the community and, potentially, in school, even in the absence of specific reports, so establish a whole-school approach to tackle it

- pupils feel confident reporting incidents of bullying, aggression, unlawful discrimination or derogatory language when these occur, and leaders deal with them quickly and effectively so that they are not allowed to spread

- leaders and staff support pupils who are affected by bullying, aggression, unlawful discrimination or derogatory language so that they feel safe and confident at school

- sanctions, including isolation, suspension and permanent exclusion, are used proportionately and appropriately to tackle behaviour that does not reflect leaders' high expectations

- leaders reintegrate suspended pupils and those returning from off-site direction and alternative provision carefully on their return to school and manage their behaviour effectively

- leaders work with pupils and parents to communicate expectations about behaviour and to foster partnerships between home and school

- leaders work with the local authority, other agencies and partners, where necessary

# Personal development and well-being

School are expected to have a suitable and coherent programme of personal development, through both the curriculum and the wider opportunities and experiences they provide for pupils. The school should support pupils to develop the knowledge and skills they need for participation and success in later life as well as pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.

Key features of this area for Travellers include:

- promoting equality of opportunity so that all pupils can thrive together and understand that individual characteristics make people unique; this includes, but is not limited to, an age-appropriate understanding of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010

- enabling pupils to recognise online and offline risks to their well-being – for example, risks from criminal and sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, substance misuse, gang activity, radicalisation and extremism – and making them aware of the support that is available

- developing pupils' age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships through relationships and sex education