

LA-Maintained Schools & Academies

There are approximately 22,000 **state-funded schools** in England. **65% of secondary schoolsⁱ and 26% of primary schoolsⁱⁱ are now academies** rather than LA-maintained schools. This report aims to provide multiple views of school performance for different school types and phases using Ofsted inspection data.

This report includes analysis of school inspection performance from the following perspectives:

- Using the current Ofsted methodology
- Excluding sponsored and converter academy predecessor grades*.
- Including sponsored and converter academy predecessor grades.
- Using the current Ofsted methodology over time.

* A predecessor grade is the grade the academy attained prior to academisation. This analysis also excluded inspections from before September 2012 (when a tougher inspection framework was introduced)

This report also looks at the progress made by LA-maintained schools since any previous inspection, comparing those that remained LA-maintained to those that became Academies.

This report makes use of data published by Ofsted, and includes **inspections from 2005 to 31st December 2017** unless explicitly stated otherwise. The **primary data source** for the counts and percentages in this report is **"Management information – schools – as at 31 December 2017"**ⁱⁱⁱ.

In March 2018 Ofsted published a consultation outcome document titled **"Changes to Ofsted's statistical reporting of inspection outcomes for maintained school and academies"**^{iv}. One of the significant methodology changes proposed in this paper is that Ofsted will include the predecessor grades of **all** schools in their analysis to provide a *"more comprehensive view of the sector"*. This change, to be introduced in June 2018, will have the most noticeable effect on sponsor-led academies where previous analysis has treated them as a new provision with no previous inspection grade.

By default the analysis in this report uses Ofsted's methodology prior to June 2018 – sponsor-led academies do not inherit their predecessor school inspection grades. However, [Section 3](#) of this report does implement the new approach Ofsted propose to use from this summer.

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1. Analysis using Ofsted's methodology

Using Ofsted's published data as at 31st December 2017, the **overall grade distribution** by school type is shown below (Fig 1). **LA-maintained schools have the highest percentage of Good or Outstanding schools with 91%, this is 5% points higher than academies with 86% Good or Outstanding.** Free schools also have a Good or Outstanding percentage of 85%. If the two academy routes are considered separately, then converter academies can be seen to have a Good or Outstanding percentage closer to that of LA-maintained schools (90%), while the Good or Outstanding percentage of sponsored academies is much lower (69%).

	LA-maintained Schools *	Academies **	Sponsored Academies	Converter Academies ***	Free Schools ****
Total Inspected	13,906	6,016	1,246	4,770	203
Outstanding or Good	91% (12592)	86% (5149)	69% (863)	90% (4286)	85% (173)
Outstanding	19% (2651)	24% (1453)	9% (110)	28% (1343)	32% (64)
Good	71% (9941)	61% (3696)	60% (753)	62% (2943)	54% (109)
Requires Improvement	8% (1134)	12% (714)	23% (289)	9% (425)	11% (23)
Inadequate	1% (180)	3% (153)	8% (94)	1% (59)	3% (7)
Not Inspected	26	785	742	43	128

FIG 1 NOTES:

The figures in the table include Ofsted inspections carried out and published on or before 31st December 2017 (as published in Ofsted monthly statistics).

- * Limited to community schools, community special schools, foundation schools, foundation special schools, voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools.
- ** Includes converter, special converter, special sponsor-led and sponsor-led. Excludes alternative provision, free schools, studio schools and UTC.
- *** Includes converter and special converter. Excludes alternative provision.
- **** Excludes alternative provision.

Comparing the performance of LA-maintained schools and academies from this perspective is affected by a number of factors.

Firstly, the Ofsted inspection framework **changes over time** and it changed substantially in September 2012^v. This means that, **from September 2012 onwards, a different set of rules were used to assess**

schools. Therefore, including inspections carried out prior to that framework may not provide the best comparison.

Secondly, **when schools move from *LA-maintained* to *academy* status, the appearance of both cohorts is affected.**

For example, when a *Good* or *Outstanding* LA-maintained school converts to an academy, **the LA-maintained statistics will appear weaker** from then on. **The academy statistics will appear stronger**, because **Ofsted retain the predecessor grades of converter academies**. In fact, 64% of *Outstanding* converter academies attained their grade while classed as *LA-maintained*, as did 43% of *Good* converter academies^{vi}.

When an LA-maintained school that is *Inadequate* or *Requires Improvement* becomes a sponsored academy, **the LA-maintained picture will look stronger**. However, **the academy picture does not appear weaker**, because **Ofsted excludes the predecessor grades of sponsored academies**.

Thirdly, Ofsted has reduced the inspection frequency of *Good* and *Outstanding* schools relative to lower-performing schools. This may have resulted in the inflation of the proportion of *Good* and *Outstanding* schools in aggregated figures, as explained by Sean Coughlan of the BBC^{vii} and explored by Warwick Mansell, writing for NAHT^{viii}.

This is most likely to affect the statistics of converter academies and LA-maintained schools, as these have a higher proportion of *Good* and *Outstanding* schools (i.e. are inspected less frequently and thus less likely to be relegated to a lower grade).

1.1. Analysis using Ofsted’s methodology with a focus on Primary schools

This section will look at the distribution of Ofsted grades amongst Primary schools as determined by Ofsted. Again we use data published by Ofsted by the 31st December 2017, and the following analysis suffers the same issues when comparing LA-maintained school and academies as outlined in the previous section ([Section 1](#)).

When the phase of school is restricted to Primary schools, the distribution is as shown in the table in [Fig 2](#). The percentage of **LA-maintained schools receiving Good or Outstanding from Ofsted is 91%**, the same as in the ‘All Schools’ view. Meanwhile the number of **Academies achieving Good or Outstanding is 87%**, 4 percentage points lower than LA-maintained school, although this is a smaller difference than the ‘All Schools’ comparison. If academies are considered as two separate types, the *Good or Outstanding* percentage for **sponsor-led academies and converter academies is 71% and 90% respectively**. Free Primary schools have a *Good or Outstanding* percentage of 89% which is higher than the ‘All schools’ percentage.

	LA-maintained Schools *	Academies **	Sponsored Academies	Converter Academies ***	Free Schools ****
<i>Total Inspected</i>	12,247	3,804	726	3,078	91
<i>Outstanding or Good</i>	91% (11201)	87% (3303)	71% (519)	90% (2784)	89% (81)
<i>Outstanding</i>	18% (2239)	21% (797)	7% (49)	24% (748)	36% (33)
<i>Good</i>	73% (8962)	66% (2506)	65% (470)	66% (2036)	53% (48)
<i>Requires Improvement</i>	8% (930)	11% (435)	23% (166)	9% (269)	10% (9)
<i>Inadequate</i>	1% (116)	2% (66)	6% (41)	1% (25)	1% (1)
<i>Not Inspected</i>	22	559	539	20	61

FIG 2 NOTES:

The figures in the table include Ofsted inspections carried out and published on or before 31st December 2017 (as published in Ofsted monthly statistics).

- * Limited to community schools, community special schools, foundation schools, foundation special schools, voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools.
- ** Includes converter, special converter, special sponsor-led and sponsor-led. Excludes alternative provision, free schools, studio schools and UTC.
- *** Includes converter and special converter. Excludes alternative provision.
- **** Excludes alternative provision.

1.2. Analysis using Ofsted’s methodology with a focus on Secondary schools

This section will look at the distribution of Ofsted grades amongst Secondary schools as determined by Ofsted. Again we use data published by Ofsted by the 31st December 2017, and the following analysis suffers the same issues when comparing LA-maintained school and academies as outlined in [Section 1](#).

When the phase of school is restricted to Secondary schools, the distribution is as shown in the table in [Fig 3](#). The percentage of **LA-maintained schools receiving Good or Outstanding from Ofsted is 76%**, 15 percentage points lower the ‘All Schools’ view of the distribution. The number of **Academies achieving Good or Outstanding is 82%** which is again lower than the ‘All Schools’ view but is higher than the LA-maintained secondary schools value. If academies are considered as two separate types, the *Good or Outstanding* percentage for **sponsor-led academies and converter academies is 65% and 88%** respectively. Free secondary schools have a *Good or Outstanding* percentage of 82% which is also higher than the *Good and Outstanding* percentage for LA-maintained secondary schools.

	LA-maintained Schools *	Academies **	Sponsored Academies	Converter Academies ***	Free Schools ****
<i>Total Inspected</i>	960	1,990	502	1,488	100
<i>Outstanding or Good</i>	76% (728)	82% (1638)	65% (327)	88% (1311)	82% (82)
<i>Outstanding</i>	16% (151)	28% (553)	12% (59)	33% (494)	28% (28)
<i>Good</i>	60% (577)	55% (1085)	53% (268)	55% (817)	54% (54)
<i>Requires Improvement</i>	18% (176)	14% (270)	24% (122)	10% (148)	13% (13)
<i>Inadequate</i>	6% (56)	4% (82)	11% (53)	2% (29)	5% (5)
<i>Not Inspected</i>	4	194	173	21	50

FIG 3 NOTES:

The figures in the table include Ofsted inspections carried out and published on or before 31st December 2017 (as published in Ofsted monthly statistics).

- * Limited to community schools, community special schools, foundation schools, foundation special schools, voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools.
- ** Includes converter, special converter, special sponsor-led and sponsor-led. Excludes alternative provision, free schools, studio schools and UTC.
- *** Includes converter and special converter. Excludes alternative provision.
- **** Excludes alternative provision.

2. The effect of excluding all academy predecessor grades

Section 1 used Ofsted's own methodology, so sponsored academies had their predecessor grades excluded whilst converter academies retained their predecessor grades. In addition, pre-2012 inspections were included for all school types, even though 98% of inspections of sponsored academies have taken place since September 2012, and the 2012 framework was tougher than previous frameworks.

In the table below, all academy predecessor grades are excluded (sponsored and converter), and only inspections under the post-September 2012 framework are included.

	LA-maintained Schools *	Academies **	Sponsored Academies	Converter Academies ***	Free Schools ****
<i>Total Inspected</i>	11,096	3,111	1,218	1,893	203
Outstanding or Good	88% (9782)	78% (2418)	69% (835)	84% (1583)	85% (173)
<i>Outstanding</i>	12% (1337)	16% (499)	8% (92)	22% (407)	32% (64)
<i>Good</i>	76% (8445)	62% (1919)	61% (743)	62% (1176)	54% (109)
<i>Requires Improvement</i>	10% (1134)	17% (541)	24% (289)	13% (252)	11% (23)
<i>Inadequate</i>	2% (180)	5% (152)	8% (94)	3% (58)	3% (7)
<i>Not Inspected</i>	2836	3690	770	2920	128

FIG 4 NOTES:

The figures in the table include Ofsted inspections carried out and published on or before 31st December 2017 (as published in Ofsted monthly statistics).

- * Limited to community schools, community special schools, foundation schools, foundation special schools, voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools.
- ** Includes converter, special converter, special sponsor-led and sponsor-led. Excludes alternative provision, free schools, studio schools and UTC.
- *** Includes converter and special converter. Excludes alternative provision.
- **** Excludes alternative provision.

As with the findings in **Section 1**, there is a **greater proportion of Good and Outstanding LA-maintained schools than academies**. The exclusion of academy predecessor grades and pre-2012 inspections means the proportion of *Good* and *Outstanding* LA-maintained schools and converter academies drops by 2 and 6 percentage points respectively. It should be noted, however, that Ofsted operate a risk-based approach

to inspections, which means there is a slant towards weaker schools and academies (*Requires Improvement* and *Inadequate* graded schools) being inspected more often. **This analysis also does not include short inspections.**

3. The effect of including all academy predecessor grades

In this section, **all academies are given their predecessor schools' latest overall Ofsted grade** if they have not been inspected since becoming academies. The effect of this is to increase the number of sponsored academies with an Ofsted grade by nearly 600^x. **This section**, in contrast to **Section 2**, also **includes pre-September 2012 inspections**. Pre-2012 inspections were excluded in **Section 2** as the vast majority of sponsor-led academies had been inspected as an academy since 2012. However, when including sponsor-led academies' predecessor grades, inspections from before 2012 are more common. This methodology allows for a different perspective where all school types are viewed in the same way.

	LA-maintained Schools *	Academies **	Sponsored Academies	Converter Academies ***	Free Schools ****
<i>Total Inspected</i>	13,906	6,605	1,835	4,770	203
Outstanding or Good	91% (12592)	79% (5244)	52% (958)	90% (4286)	85% (173)
<i>Outstanding</i>	19% (2651)	22% (1456)	6% (113)	28% (1343)	32% (64)
<i>Good</i>	71% (9941)	57% (3788)	46% (845)	62% (2943)	54% (109)
<i>Requires Improvement</i>	8% (1134)	13% (885)	25% (460)	9% (425)	11% (23)
<i>Inadequate</i>	1% (180)	7% (476)	23% (417)	1% (59)	3% (7)
<i>Not Inspected</i>	26	196	153	43	128

FIG 5 NOTES:

The figures in the table include Ofsted inspections carried out and published on or before 31st December 2017 (as published in Ofsted monthly statistics).

- * Limited to community schools, community special schools, foundation schools, foundation special schools, voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools.
- ** Includes converter, special converter, special sponsor-led and sponsor-led. Excludes alternative provision, free schools, studio schools and UTC.
- *** Includes converter and special converter. Excludes alternative provision.
- **** Excludes alternative provision.

From this perspective, only the numbers for **sponsored academies** and **all academies** change compared to the equivalent table in **Section 1**. The inclusion of sponsored academy predecessor grades has a strong effect on the proportion of sponsor-led academies achieving *Good* and *Outstanding*, dropping from **69%** to **52%**, a **decline of 17 percentage points**. This **reduces the total proportion of academies with *Good***

and Outstanding to 79% - a drop of 7 percentage points compared to **Section 1**. This is because schools that become academies through the sponsored route are typically weaker performing schools. This suggests that the Ofsted methodology is potentially obscuring the number of schools Region School Commissioners need to engage.

We would welcome further comments about the merits of taking these factors into account in Sections 2 & 3, as they result in a large gap when comparing academies to LA-maintained schools in Fig 4 & Fig 5.

Publications that compare LA-maintained schools to academies should be clear on whether or not they include grades obtained prior to academisation, as well as whether or not they encompass grades obtained under multiple frameworks.

In addition, publications comparing LA-maintained schools to academies should explain what the effect of ignoring these factors is.

4. The proportion of *Good* and *Outstanding* schools over time

The chart and table below use Ofsted’s methodology ([Section 1](#)), to compare the proportion of schools with *Good* and *Outstanding* grades over the past 3 years. At the time of analysis, Ofsted had published inspections up to the end of December 2017 ([Management Information – schools – as at 31 December 2017](#)). To remain consistent across the three years, the equivalent views of the data in December 2016^x and December 2015^{xi} are used.

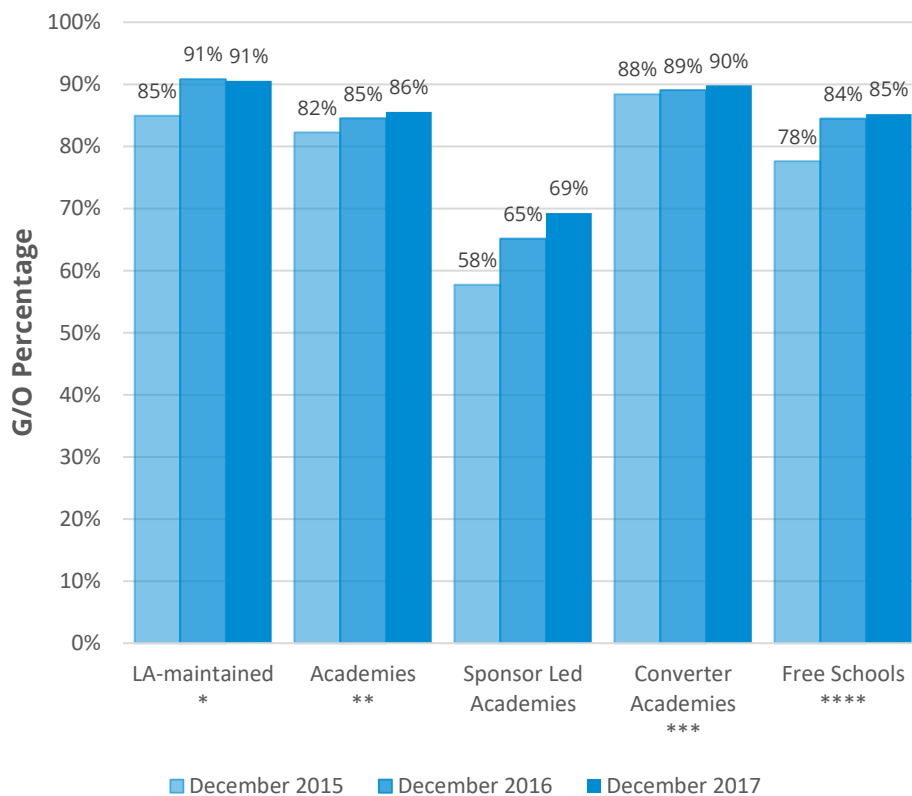


FIG 6 NOTES: The figures in the table include inspections carried out and published on or before 31st December 2017 (as published in Ofsted monthly statistics).

G/O Proportion *Good* and *Outstanding*

- * Limited to community schools, community special schools, foundation schools, foundation special schools, voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools.
- ** Includes converter, special converter, special sponsor-led and sponsor-led. Excludes alternative provision, free schools, studio schools and UTC.
- *** Includes converter and special converter. Excludes alternative provision.
- **** Excludes alternative provision.

	LA-Maintained Schools *	Academies **	Sponsored Academies	Converter Academies ***	Free Schools ****
G/O Dec. 2017	91% - 0pp.	86% ↑ 1pp.	69% ↑ 4pp.	90% ↑ 1pp.	85% ↑ 1pp.
G/O Dec. 2016	91% ↑ 6pp.	85% ↑ 3pp.	65% ↑ 7pp.	89% ↑ 1pp.	84% ↑ 6pp.
G/O Dec. 2015	85%	82%	58%	88%	78%

FIG 7 NOTES: The figures in the table include inspections carried out and published on or before 31st December 2017 (as published in Ofsted monthly statistics).

G/O Proportion *Good* and *Outstanding*

pp. Percentage points

- * Limited to community schools, community special schools, foundation schools, foundation special schools, voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools.
- ** Includes converter, special converter, special sponsor-led and sponsor-led. Excludes alternative provision, free schools, studio schools and UTC.
- *** Includes converter and special converter. Excludes alternative provision.
- **** Excludes alternative provision.

The proportion of *Good* and *Outstanding* has increased in all school types over time. **The proportion of LA-maintained schools graded *Good* and *Outstanding* has increased by 6 percentage points over the 3 years, compared to 4 percentage points for academies.** Free schools and sponsored academies have seen the greatest increase with 7 and 11 percentage points respectively. While converter academies have seen the lowest increase of 2 percentage points.

These numbers are affected by the factors discussed in **Section 1**, concerning the comparison of LA-maintained schools and academies.

5. Comparison of LA-maintained schools that academised and those that didn't

This section of the report will firstly look at schools that held a **Good Ofsted grade in December 2013**, and the grades they have now (December 2017). We have gone back 4 years to ensure that we have a large enough sample size for comparison. We compare those that remained LA-maintained to those that academised to become converter academies.

The report will then look at LA-maintained schools that held an *Inadequate* Ofsted grade in 2013. Here, we compare those that remained LA-maintained to those that became sponsor-led academies.

Good LA-maintained schools are compared against converter academies, because LA-maintained schools that are graded **Outstanding** and **Good** by Ofsted and choose to academise typically do so through the **converter route**. **Inadequate** LA-maintained schools are compared to sponsor-led academies, because LA-maintained schools that are graded **Requires Improvement** or **Inadequate** typically academise through the **sponsor-led route**.

Within this analysis, we have included short inspections but excluded academies that were re-inspected prior to academisation.

5.1. Good LA-maintained schools in 2013

For LA-maintained schools that held a *Good* grade in December 2013, we are interested in comparing the change in Ofsted grade by December 2017 and if they have academised to become a converter academy or remained an LA-maintained school.

In December 2013, **10599 LA-maintained schools held a Good Overall grade**. 8801 were still LA-maintained in December 2017, and **7477 had been re-inspected** (including short inspections). Of those, 5970 remained **Good (79.8%)**, 588 became **Outstanding (7.9%)**, 810 were **Requires Improvement (10.8%)**, and 109 became **Inadequate (1.6%)**.

By December 2017, 1399 of the LA-maintained schools in December 2013 had academised to become converter academies. Of these, **297 had been inspected since academisation** (including short inspections). 220 of them remained **Good (74.1%)**, 21 became **Outstanding (7.1%)**, 47 were **Requires Improvement (15.8%)**, and 9 became **Inadequate (3.0%)**.

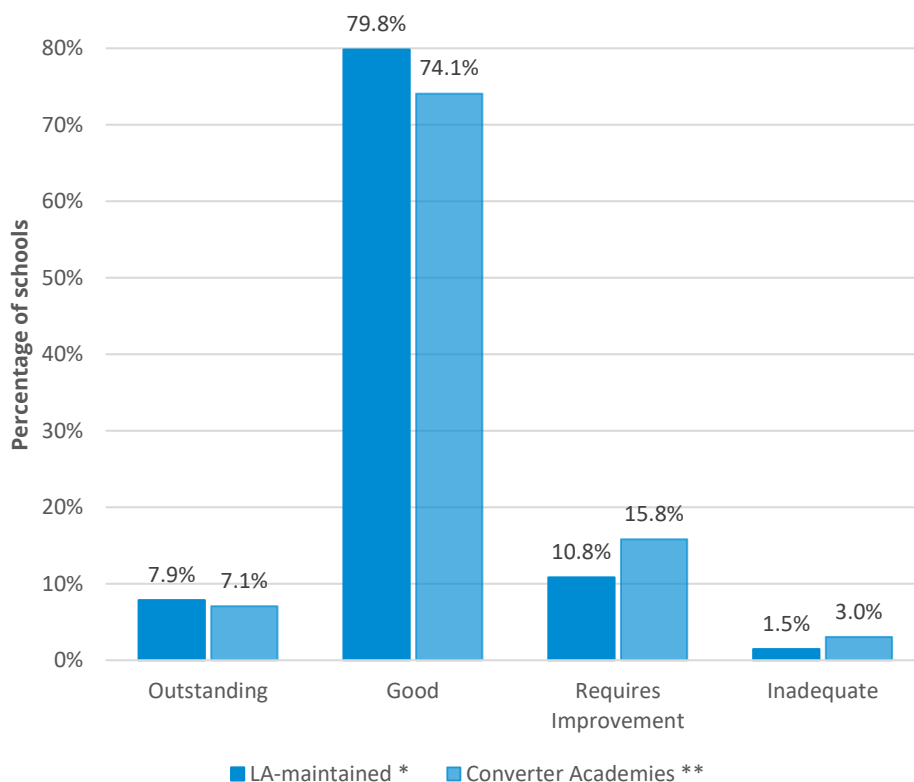


FIG 8 NOTES: The figures in the table include inspections carried out and published on or before 31st December 2017 (as published in Ofsted monthly statistics).

- * Limited to community schools, community special schools, foundation schools, foundation special schools, voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools.
- ** Includes converter and special converter. Excludes alternative provision.

Therefore, comparing the two samples, **88%** of schools that remained **LA-maintained remained *Good* or *improved***, while **81%** of schools that converted to **academies remained *Good* or *improved* when re-inspected**.

We chose to go back 4 years, to 2013, as this provides a Converter Academy sample large enough to make a comparison with, although the LA-maintained schools sample is larger.

5.2. Inadequate LA-maintained schools in 2013

Similar analysis can be done for schools that held an *Inadequate* grade in December 2013. In this case, we compared sponsor-led academies to LA-maintained schools, as *Inadequate* schools are most likely to academise in this way.

In 2013, **429 LA-maintained schools held an *Inadequate* Overall grade**. 152 were still LA-maintained in 2017, and all **152 had been re-inspected** (including short inspections). Of those, 114 became **Good (75.0%)**, 1 became **Outstanding (0.7%)**, 33 were **Requires Improvement (21.7%)**, and 4 remain **Inadequate (2.6%)**.

By December 2017, 212 of the LA-maintained schools in December 2013 had academised to become sponsor-led academies. Of these, **155 had been inspected since academisation** (including short inspections). 88 of them became **Good (56.8%)**, 4 became **Outstanding (2.6%)**, 53 were **Requires Improvement (34.2%)**, and 10 remained **Inadequate (6.5%)**.

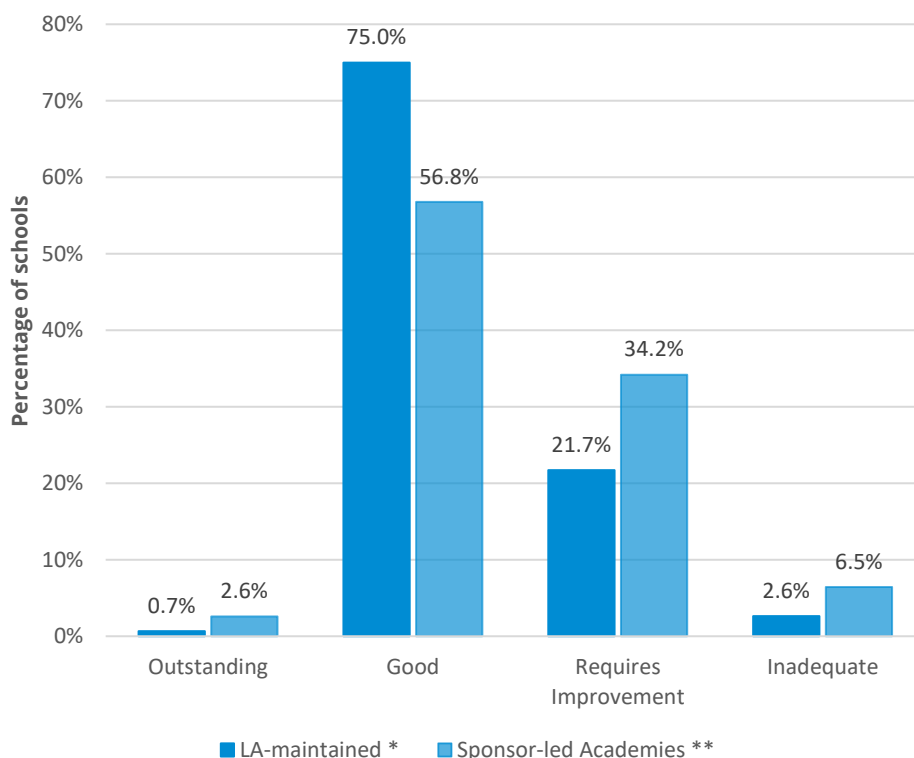


FIG 9 NOTES: The figures in the table include inspections carried out and published on or before 31st December 2017 (as published in Ofsted monthly statistics).

- * Limited to community schools, community special schools, foundation schools, foundation special schools, voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools.
- ** Includes special sponsor-led and sponsor-led. Excludes alternative provision.

Comparing the two samples: Although the majority of both LA-maintained and sponsor-led academies improved from *Inadequate*, **a larger proportion of LA-maintained schools (75.7%) are now Good or Outstanding compared to sponsor-led academies (59.4%)**. The proportion of *Outstanding* LA-maintained schools and sponsor-led academies is small compared to the proportion of *Good* schools.

The same analysis was considered for *Outstanding* and *Requires Improvement* schools, however the number of schools that have become academies, and have been inspected since opening as an academy, is too small in these two cases to enable a comparison.

5.3. Analysis of the time taken to improve a school from *Inadequate* to *Good*

This section of the report will **consider the number of inspections taken for a school to progress from *Inadequate* to *Good* or *Outstanding***, and if the school has remained LA-maintained during that time or if it academised and became a sponsor-led academy. We consider sponsor-led academies for comparison in this case as *Inadequate* graded LA-maintained school are most likely to academise in this way.

For this analysis we use December 2013 as a starting point and consider schools that were both inspected to be *Inadequate* and where LA-maintained at that time. As in [Section 5.2](#) this when comparing those schools that have remained LA-maintained and those that have academised to become sponsor-led academies similar sample sizes for both group are produced.

Of the 429 LA-maintained schools that were inspected as *Inadequate* in 2013, 152 remained LA-maintained by December 2017. Of these, **116^{xii} schools achieve a *Good* or *Outstanding* Ofsted grade** in the intervening time. Of the 116 schools to achieve *Good* or *Outstanding* and been *inadequate* in 2013, **56% where graded as *Good* or *Outstanding* at their next Ofsted inspection** while the remaining **44% required two Ofsted inspections** before being graded as *Good* or *Outstanding*. Of those that took two inspections to become *Good* or better all were graded as *Requires Improvement* at their first inspection, improving from *Inadequate*.

212 of the *Inadequate* LA-maintained schools in 2013, have academised to become sponsor-led academies by December 2017. Of these, **92 have been inspected as *Good* or *Outstanding*** since opening as academies. **All 92 achieved this at their first inspection since academisation.** None of the 92 schools that academised and achieved *Good* or *Outstanding* Ofsted grades were re-inspected as LA-maintained schools between December 2013 and opening as academies.

It should be noted however, that the average time for re-inspection of schools that remain LA-maintained is **one year and six months**, while the average time between a school re-opening as a sponsor-led academy and their first inspection is **two years and ten months**. Therefore sponsor-led academies have almost twice the amount of time to improve before being re-inspected, than LA-maintained schools.

Further analysis

In addition to this short report, interested parties can contact watchsted@angelsolutions.co.uk for more information.

Footnotes

- i. 2184 out of 3386 Secondary schools are now academies.
- ii. 4363 out of 16784 Primary schools are now academies.
- iii. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/673111/Management_information_-_schools_-_31_December_2017.xlsx
- iv. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/690513/Consultation_response_-_changes_to_Ofsted_stats.pdf
- v. The Ofsted framework also changed in September 2015, however there is insufficient data to concentrate on only the common inspection framework.
- vi. Considering inspections published up to the 31st December 2017 (as published in Ofsted monthly statistics) there are 1343 *Outstanding* converter academies. 859 of those *Outstanding* converter academies attained their grade as an LA-maintained school. There were 2943 *Good* converter academies, 1278 of those were attained as an LA-maintained school.
- vii. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-30319949>
- viii. <http://www.naht.org.uk/welcome/news-and-media/blogs/warwick-mansell/digging-beneath-the-surface-of-ofsted-record-rise-claim/>
- ix. 153 Academies could not be matched to their predecessor schools, of these 78 had multiple predecessors and could therefore not be matched to a single predecessor grade.
- x. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/583262/External_MI_Schools_December_2016.xlsx
- xi. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/507161/External_Management_information_-_Schools__Dec-2015.xlsx
- xii. One school was inspected as *Good* before being later re-inspected as *Requires Improvement*.