

# Ofsted to privatize early years [UK] <sup>[1]</sup>

In Practice, Children and Young People Now

**Author:** Higgs, Lauren

**Source:** Children and Young People Now

**Format:** Article

**Publication Date:** 4 Dec 2008

## AVAILABILITY

See text below.

## EXCERPTS

Ofsted (the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) is to privatise early education and childcare inspections, according to an internal document seen by CYP Now.

The inspectorate wants to outsource services because its childcare inspectors feel "demotivated and undervalued". The document also refers to Ofsted's successful work with the private sector on school inspections as grounds for change.

Ofsted has said outsourcing early years inspections will provide better outcomes and save money, although a timetable for the changeover has not yet been finalised.

...

Steve Alexander, chief executive of the Pre-school Learning Alliance, said: "Privatising an inadequately funded service will not overcome financial shortfalls."

Unions have reacted angrily to the plans, claiming the move will drive down standards and put the safety of children at risk.

Jon Richards, Unison senior national officer for Ofsted, said the decision had been driven by senior management's "siege mentality".

He said: "It is outrageous that Ofsted is privatising early years inspections. Parents need to have confidence in the system and know their children are well cared for. There is a danger jobs will go and the quality of inspections will fall if the focus shifts from raising and maintaining standards to cutting costs and making a profit."

Neil March, national officer for Ofsted at the Public and Commercial Services Union, said Ofsted should address low staff morale instead of just outsourcing its work.

He said: "Outsourcing early years inspections will lead to corners being cut and a loss of expertise. Introducing the profit motive, combined with the naive belief that the private sector holds all the answers, will end in failure and further demoralise staff."

Ofsted was unable to comment as CYP Now went to press.

Ofsted is an inspections service in the United Kingdom that was established by the Education and Inspections Act. Ofsted carries out inspections and regulatory visits to education and care services and reports directly to parliament.

- reprinted from Children and Young People Now

**Region:** Europe <sup>[2]</sup>

**Tags:** privatization <sup>[3]</sup>

legislation and regulation <sup>[4]</sup>

Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/08/12/ofsted-privatize-early-years-uk>

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/08/12/ofsted-privatize-early-years-uk> [2] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/region/europe> [3]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/privatization> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/legislation-and-regulation>