

Nursery child protection concern [GB] ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Almost one in three early years childcare providers is offering only inadequate or satisfactory child protection, inspectors have found. Ofsted inspected 21,212 providers in England, and rated 842 inadequate for child protection, while some 6,057 were satisfactory. Almost a thousand providers were rated inadequate in promoting child welfare.

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About one in 20 providers were judged to be inadequate in leading and managing the new Early Years Foundation Stage, the learning framework for children aged under five.

Nurseries and childcare providers were also assessed on how well they helped children enjoy or achieve, learn and make a positive contribution.

Figures released last summer showed the proportion of childminders rated good or outstanding overall had fallen from 62% to 54% during the previous three years.

These are the first inspection figures published since the introduction of this curriculum last September, which means children must achieve "learning goals".

Critics have described the foundation stage as "overly prescriptive" and encouraging a "tick-box mentality".

Separate figures show the number of childcare providers operating in June this year dropped by 666 to 95,535.

Andrew Fletcher, joint chief executive of the National Childminding Association, said: "These figures suggest that the economic conditions for many providers are proving challenging, with a decline in the number of nurseries and childminding settings.

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Figures released last year showed a decrease of 11.5% in registered childminders between June 2004 and June 2008, with an increase in regulation being blamed for the decline.

- reprinted from BBC News

Region: Europe ^[2]

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[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/09/11/nursery-child-protection-concern-gb> [2]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/region/europe> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/region/international> [4]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/quality>