

Ofsted to privatise nursery inspections ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

The inspection of nurseries and childcare in England is to be privatised, Ofsted has confirmed.

The inspectorate for education and children's services is in the final stages of selecting private companies to run the checks.

Tribal Group has been made the "preferred bidder" for one area of England, it is understood, but further announcements are expected.

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Ofsted is not releasing full details of the contracts until they are finalised, but it is understood the changes will involve the out-sourcing of most of the inspection services for early years and nurseries.

Overall responsibility would rest with Ofsted.

Inspectors check a range of childcare providers from child minders to nurseries run by both schools and the private sector.

The Unison trade union, which represents many people who work in nurseries and childcare, is against the change.

Jon Richards, the union's national officer for Ofsted, said: "Many Ofsted early years inspectors have worked in childcare, meaning they are experts in assessing what makes a good standard of care for babies and toddlers.

"Switching to freelance inspectors, and making job cuts, means this vital experience will be lost from the front line.

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- reprinted from BBC News

Region: Europe ^[2]

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