



Standards
& Testing
Agency

Statutory guidance

2026 key stage 2 assessment and reporting arrangements

Updated 7 July 2026

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1. About this guidance

This guidance sets out the statutory requirements for key stage 2 (KS2) national curriculum assessment and reporting for the academic year 2025 to 2026. It is produced by the Standards and Testing Agency (STA) (<http://www.gov.uk/sta>), an executive agency of the Department for Education (DfE), and is relevant until the end of the academic year 2025 to 2026.

The assessment and reporting arrangements (ARA) apply to:

- maintained schools
- academies, including free schools
- special schools, including maintained special schools and special academies
- alternative provision (AP) (<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision>), including pupil referral units (PRUs), AP academies and AP free schools
- secure units
- Ministry of Defence (MoD) schools
- participating independent schools with KS2 pupils

This guidance is for:

- all staff responsible for the multiplication tables check (MTC), end of KS2 tests and teacher assessment (TA)
- headteachers and senior leadership teams

- governors and trustees
- local authority assessment co-ordinators

This document (the ARA) contains provisions made in terms of Article 11, as amended, of The Education (National Curriculum) (Key Stage 2 Assessment Arrangements) (England) Order 2003 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2003/1038/made>). The 2003 Order is made by the Secretary of State under powers provided for by Section 87 of the Education Act 2002 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/section/87>). This ARA gives full effect to the provisions in the 2003 Order concerning assessments during KS2 and has effect as if made by the 2003 Order. The ARA also contains guidance that does not form part of the law. See Legal requirements and responsibilities for further information.

2. Changes for the academic year 2025 to 2026

2.1 New Test Operations Services provider

From September 2025, Pearson Education Limited (Pearson) will provide the Test Operations Service, supporting national curriculum assessments on behalf of STA.

You can find more information about this in the New Test Operations Service provider: information for schools and local authorities (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-test-operations-service-provider-information-for-schools>).

2.2 National Curriculum Assessments Portal

The Primary Assessment Gateway has been replaced by the National Curriculum Assessments Portal (NCA Portal) (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk/>), developed by Pearson.

Managing accounts

The NCA Portal uses multi-factor authentication (MFA) to help protect pupil data and ensure secure access. On the first sign in of each day, users will

need to enter a unique 6-digit verification code, which will be sent to their registered email address.

The NCA Portal introduces updated local authority roles, each with tailored permissions to support teacher assessment, standardisation and data submission activities. Local authorities will now be responsible for managing their own user accounts and ensuring contact details are up to date in the NCA Portal. STA will use these contact details for all tailored communications to local authorities going forward.

For full instructions and support on how to access the system and manage user accounts, please refer to the guidance on [how to access the NCA Portal \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-access-the-national-curriculum-assessments-portal\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-access-the-national-curriculum-assessments-portal).

New NCA Portal activities

In addition to existing activities, users will now be able to complete new tasks within the NCA Portal.

Schools will now be able to:

- complete attendance registers alongside notification of aid for KS2 tests online
- order electronic modified large print (MLP) papers
- report maladministration for KS2 tests
- submit, view and update helpdesk requests related to own cases

Local authorities will be able to:

- approve local authority monitoring and moderation agreements with academies and participating independent schools
- complete standardisation activities directly within the NCA Portal, replacing previous processes

Further information for local authorities is available in the 'National Curriculum Assessments Portal' section within 'Changes in the academic year 2025 to 2026' of the [KS2 teacher assessment guidance \(http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-teacher-assessment-guidance\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-teacher-assessment-guidance).

2.3 National curriculum assessments customer service

The national curriculum assessments helpline, which will now be operated by Pearson, will remain open with the same contact details:

- telephone: 0300 303 3013 (Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5pm)
- email: assessments@education.gov.uk

During September, when activities for the previous and current academic years are still ongoing, arrangements will be in place to ensure that the most appropriate agents are available to answer your queries. When you make a call, there will be recorded instructions to ensure your query is directed appropriately.

NCA Portal users can now also submit helpdesk requests directly via the 'Support' section within the [NCA Portal \(http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk/\)](http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk/). Requests submitted by telephone or email will appear within the user's NCA Portal account, allowing them to track progress, receive updates and respond to queries securely within the system.

2.4 Attendance registers

KS2 test attendance registers will no longer be paper based. They will be available to complete online, on the [NCA Portal \(http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk/\)](http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk/), from the scheduled date of each test until Friday 22 May.

Within each online attendance register form, schools will also be able to submit notification of aid forms for pupils who have been supported by a scribe, transcribe, word processor or other technical or electronic aid in an end of KS2 test. This will be available from Monday 27 April until Friday 22 May.

The notification of aid form will be submitted at the same time as the attendance register form, and both can be edited before submission if required.

Information about completing the online attendance registers will be set out in the [returning test scripts \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-tests-returning-test-scripts\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-tests-returning-test-scripts) guidance, which will also be included with KS2 stationery packs.

2.5 Modified large print papers

Electronic versions of the 2026 KS2 MLP papers will be available in Microsoft Word format in the following sizes:

- 18 point (A4 portrait)
- 24 point (A4 portrait)
- 36 point (A3 portrait)
- 48 point (A3 landscape)

If you need to make further adaptations to them, please refer to our guidance on [making adaptations to MLP test materials](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/key-stage-2-tests-making-adaptations-to-modified-large-print-test-materials) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/key-stage-2-tests-making-adaptations-to-modified-large-print-test-materials>).

To access any relevant models required to administer the A4 24 point MLP papers, you must order hard copies of these versions on the [NCA Portal](http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk) (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>) by Friday 14 November. Once you have ordered your hard copies, you can order further electronic versions on the NCA Portal.

3. Important dates

These dates are subject to change. If any changes are needed due to circumstances beyond our control, we will inform schools at the appropriate time in our [assessment updates](https://www.us17.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=8088a92c9c7454749d4a06114&id=56fc8c15ed) (<https://www.us17.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=8088a92c9c7454749d4a06114&id=56fc8c15ed>) and on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/standards-and-testing-agency) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/standards-and-testing-agency>).

3.1 Important dates for 2025

Date	Action
Monday 29 September	TA guidance published
October	Access arrangements guidance published
Monday 13 October	Forms available on the NCA Portal for schools to place test orders (if required) and order modified tests (if required)
Monday 13 October	Form available on the NCA Portal for schools to confirm the local authority selected for monitoring and moderation – applicable to academies not using their geographic local authority and participating independent schools

Date	Action
Monday 13 October	Form available on the NCA Portal for local authorities to approve or reject monitoring and moderation agreements submitted by academies not using their geographic local authority and participating independent schools
November to March	Local authority moderators complete TA standardisation exercises in English writing
Monday 3 November	<u>MTC IT guidance</u> published
Friday 14 November	Deadline for maintained schools and academies to order modified versions of the KS2 tests on the NCA Portal – see <u>Standard and modified test material formats</u>
Friday 14 November	Deadline for participating independent schools to order standard and modified versions of the KS2 tests on the NCA Portal
Friday 14 November	Deadline for special schools, PRUs and secure units to place KS2 test orders on the NCA Portal for pupils working at the standard of the tests and able to access them
Friday 5 December	Deadline for participating independent schools to confirm on the NCA Portal that they have a written agreement in place with a local authority for monitoring their end of KS2 tests and external moderation of their KS2 English writing TA, if submitting
Friday 5 December	Deadline for local authorities to approve on the NCA Portal all agreements in place with independent schools for monitoring their KS2 tests and external moderation of their KS2 English writing TA, if submitting

3.2 Important dates for 2026

Date	Action
January	<u>KS2: registering pupils for the tests guidance</u> published
Friday 9 January	Deadline for academies to have a written agreement in place with their chosen local authority for monitoring the

Date	Action
	end of KS2 tests and external moderation of their KS2 English writing TA
Friday 9 January	Deadline for academies to confirm on the NCA Portal if they are using a non-geographic local authority for monitoring their end of KS2 tests and external moderation of their KS2 English writing TA
Friday 9 January	Deadline for local authorities to approve on the NCA Portal all agreements in place with academies for monitoring their KS2 tests and external moderation of their KS2 English writing TA
Monday 9 February	Pupil registration form available on the NCA Portal for all schools (including special schools) to complete for the end of KS2 tests – see Registering pupils for the tests
Monday 9 February	Forms available on the NCA Portal for schools to apply for early opening, compensatory marks for spelling, additional time and timetable variations
March	Test administration guidance and special consideration guidance published
Friday 6 March	Deadline for all schools (including special schools) to complete pupil registration on the NCA Portal for the end of KS2 tests
Friday 6 March	Deadline for all schools to submit applications for early opening on the NCA Portal
Monday 20 April	Deadline for schools to submit applications for compensatory marks for spelling for the end of KS2 tests on the NCA Portal
Monday 27 April	Forms available on the NCA Portal, within each online attendance register form, for schools to submit notifications of a scribe, transcript, word processor or electronic or technical aid in an end of KS2 test
Monday 27 April	MTC administration guidance published
Monday 27 April	Schools can access the MTC service using DfE Sign-in

Date	Action
Monday 27 April to Friday 1 May	Schools receive their initial consignment of KS2 test materials and stationery items
Tuesday 5 May to Friday 22 May	Local authorities carry out monitoring visits to a sample of schools – see Monitoring the tests
Monday 11 May to Thursday 14 May	Schools administer the KS2 tests – see Key stage 2 test timetable for 2026
Monday 11 May	Attendance register forms for English grammar, punctuation and spelling Paper 1 and English grammar, punctuation and spelling Paper 2 available for schools to submit on the NCA Portal
Monday 11 May	Pupil cheating form available for schools to submit on the NCA Portal
Tuesday 12 May	Attendance register form for English reading available for schools to submit on the NCA Portal
Wednesday 13 May	Attendance register forms for mathematics Paper 1 and mathematics Paper 2 available for schools to submit on the NCA Portal
Thursday 14 May	Attendance register form for mathematics Paper 3 available for schools to submit on the NCA Portal
Thursday 14 May	KS2 headteacher's declaration form (HDF) available for schools to submit on the NCA Portal
Thursday 14 May	Special consideration application form available for schools on the NCA Portal
Friday 15 May	Local authorities begin informing schools if they will receive an external moderation visit for English writing TA
Monday 18 May	Form to submit TA data available for schools and local authorities on the NCA Portal
Thursday 21 May	Deadline for schools to submit additional time applications for the end of KS2 tests
Thursday 21 May	Deadline for schools to submit timetable variation applications

Date	Action
Thursday 21 May	Deadline for schools to submit whole cohort special consideration applications
Friday 22 May	Deadline for schools to submit individual pupil special consideration applications
Friday 22 May	Deadline for schools to submit attendance register forms on the NCA Portal
Friday 22 May	Deadline for schools to submit aid notifications if pupils used a scribe, transcript, word processor, or electronic or technical aid in an end of KS2 test
Friday 22 May	KS2 test materials and mark schemes available to download from GOV.UK
Friday 22 May	Deadline for schools to notify us on the NCA Portal if a pupil cheated in an end of KS2 test
Friday 29 May	Deadline for schools to submit the KS2 HDF on the NCA Portal
Monday 1 June	Forms available on the NCA Portal for local authorities to submit information about external moderation of KS2 English writing TA
Monday 1 June to Friday 12 June	MTC administration period
Monday 1 June to Friday 19 June	MTC HDF available to schools on the MTC service
Monday 1 June to Friday 26 June	Local authorities undertake external moderation of KS2 English writing TA
Monday 15 June to Friday 19 June	Schools administer the MTC to any absent pupils or where administration has been delayed due to technical difficulties
Friday 19 June	Deadline for schools to ensure pupils have completed the MTC or have been recorded as not taking the check, and to submit their MTC HDF on the MTC service by 5pm

Date	Action
Monday 22 June	MTC results available on the MTC service for schools that have submitted their HDF
Friday 26 June	Deadline for headteachers and local authorities, where applicable, to submit KS2 TA data on the NCA Portal
Thursday 16 July	KS2 test results and marked script images available on the NCA Portal for KS2 schools
Thursday 16 July	KS2 test results available on the NCA Portal for local authorities, multi-academy trusts (MATs) and key stage 3 (KS3) schools with a year 7 intake
Thursday 16 July	Raw score to scaled score conversion tables available on GOV.UK
Friday 31 July	Deadline for local authorities to submit information about external moderation of KS2 English writing TA on the NCA Portal
Monday 7 September	Deadline for schools to submit marking review applications on the NCA Portal by 11:59pm
Autumn 2026 term	Marking review outcomes returned to schools on the NCA Portal

3.3 Key stage 2 test timetable for 2026

The KS2 tests must be taken on the scheduled day, in order, unless an application for a timetable variation has been approved by STA – see [Timetable variations](#).

Date	Tests
Monday 11 May	English grammar, punctuation and spelling Paper 1: questions
Monday 11 May	English grammar, punctuation and spelling Paper 2: spelling
Tuesday 12 May	English reading

Date	Tests
Wednesday 13 May	Mathematics Paper 1: arithmetic
Wednesday 13 May	Mathematics Paper 2: reasoning
Thursday 14 May	Mathematics Paper 3: reasoning

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Headteachers' responsibilities

All references to headteachers include acting headteachers or anyone with delegated authority in the absence of the headteacher.

Headteachers of participating schools have a duty to ensure that:

- the requirements in the ARA are implemented in their school
- teachers and other staff comply with the ARA
- the deadlines in the ARA are met
- the needs of all pupils are considered and suitable access arrangements are put in place to enable them to take part in the tests, where possible – see [Access arrangements](#)
- parents are issued with a [privacy notice \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/data-protection-in-schools/data-protection-policies-and-procedures\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/data-protection-in-schools/data-protection-policies-and-procedures) that explains how pupils' personal data is processed

End of key stage 2 tests

Headteachers of maintained schools, academies (including free schools), special schools (including maintained special schools and special academies) and participating independent schools must:

- identify which pupils will take end of KS2 tests – see [Participating pupils](#)
- consider whether any pupils will need modified versions of the tests and, if so, place a test order on the [NCA Portal \(http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk\)](http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk) by Friday 14 November – see [Standard and modified test material formats](#)

- ensure all pupils are registered for the tests on the NCA Portal (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>) by Friday 6 March (including pupils who will not participate in the tests) and check that each pupil's details are accurate (including any pupils who are registered at their school but are attending an AP school, including PRUs) – see Registering pupils for the tests
- register new pupils for the tests if they arrive in school after Friday 6 March, until Thursday 21 May (the end of the timetable variation period)
- keep all test materials secure and treat them as confidential from the point they arrive in school until Friday 22 May, after the timetable variation period has ended and all test scripts have been collected for marking – this includes unused test papers
- be able to give an accurate account of everyone with access to test materials from the point they arrive in school until Friday 22 May, including unused test papers
- follow the returning test scripts guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-tests-returning-test-scripts>) when returning completed test scripts for marking

By Friday 9 January, headteachers of academies (including free schools) must have a written agreement in place with their chosen local authority for monitoring the end of KS2 tests.

Headteachers of participating independent schools that wish to receive test materials must also:

- issue a privacy notice (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/data-protection-in-schools/data-protection-policies-and-procedures>) to the parents of any pupils taking the tests, and receive approval for their child's participation, before placing a test order
- place orders for standard and modified tests on the NCA Portal (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>) by Friday 14 November
- have a written agreement in place with their chosen local authority for monitoring their end of KS2 tests and moderating their KS2 English writing TA, if submitting, and confirm this on the NCA Portal (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>) by Friday 5 December
- register eligible pupils for the tests by Friday 6 March

If an independent school fails to meet any of these deadlines, they will not be able to participate in the tests.

Key stage 2 headteacher's declaration form

After all test scripts have been collected for marking, headteachers must complete and submit the 'KS2 headteacher's declaration form' on the NCA Portal (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>), as detailed in article 5(4) of the

2003 Order (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2003/1038/contents/made>). This requirement applies to all maintained schools, academies (including free schools), special schools (including maintained special schools and special academies) and participating independent schools, even if all pupils are working below the standard of the KS2 tests or are unable to access them.

The HDF confirms that the tests have been administered according to the published guidance or that any issues have been reported to STA. The form will be available from Thursday 14 May and must be submitted by 5pm on Friday 29 May.

If you cannot complete the HDF or make any errors in your submission, contact the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 or at assessments@education.gov.uk.

Multiplication tables check

Schools can access the MTC service using DfE Sign-in (<https://services.signin.education.gov.uk/>) from Monday 27 April.

Headteachers of maintained schools, academies (including free schools) and special schools (including maintained special schools and special academies) must:

- ensure that suitable IT equipment is available to administer the check, as detailed in the MTC IT guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/multiplication-tables-check-it-guidance>)
- ensure all year 4 pupils are registered for the check using the MTC service (<https://services.signin.education.gov.uk/>), including pupils who are not expected to take the check
- consider whether any pupils will need access arrangements and, where appropriate, allow them to practise using the 'try it out' check
- administer the check to all participating pupils within the check window, from Monday 1 June to Friday 12 June
- administer the check to any pupils who were absent during the first 2 weeks, or where check administration has been delayed due to technical difficulties, from Monday 15 June to Friday 19 June – headteachers can make any decisions about administering the check in week 3 and do not require STA's permission
- ensure all registered pupils have either a 'complete' check status or a reason recorded for not taking the check on the MTC service (<https://services.signin.education.gov.uk/>) by Friday 19 June
- submit the MTC HDF on the MTC service (<https://services.signin.education.gov.uk/>) by 5pm on Friday 19 June

Independent schools cannot participate in the MTC.

Teacher assessment and moderation

Headteachers of maintained schools, academies (including free schools), special schools (including maintained special schools and special academies) and participating independent schools must:

- use funds available within the school's overall resources to give those carrying out TA sufficient opportunity to become familiar with the TA frameworks (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-assessment-frameworks-at-the-end-of-key-stage-2>), pre-key stage standards (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pre-key-stage-2-standards>) and engagement model (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-engagement-model>)
- ensure TA guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-teacher-assessment-guidance>) is reviewed and followed
- ensure the relevant framework or guidance is used to make each pupil's TA judgements
- ensure TA judgements are an accurate assessment of pupils' attainment
- submit TA data on the NCA Portal (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>), for all pupils at the end of KS2, by Friday 26 June
- notify STA's Teacher Assessment team at TAMOD.DATA@education.gov.uk of any issues that may have affected the integrity of the TA

Academy headteachers must choose a local authority for external moderation of their KS2 TA. They must have a written agreement in place with their chosen local authority and should confirm on the NCA Portal (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>) if they intend to use a non-geographic local authority by Friday 9 January. After this date, academies will:

- no longer be able to choose a non-geographic local authority
- be recorded on the NCA Portal as being moderated by the geographic local authority, and must put an agreement in place with them, if there is no confirmed non-geographic local authority agreement

Headteachers of participating independent schools who wish to compare their TA in English writing with local or national data must also have a written external moderation agreement in place with their chosen local authority and confirm this on the NCA Portal (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>) by Friday 5 December.

4.2 Local authorities' responsibilities

Local authorities must take reasonable steps to ensure that participating schools follow the guidance in this ARA. This also applies to academies and participating independent schools that have an agreement in place with the local authority.

Local authorities should ensure that participating schools:

- understand and follow the statutory requirements set out in this ARA, as well as any funding agreement requirements
- are offered support on all aspects of assessment at KS2
- are aware of the need to store all assessment materials securely
- are aware of their deadline to submit TA data on the NCA Portal
- meet the requirements for transferring records between schools, including the completion of the common transfer file (CTF) (<http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/common-transfer-file>) as noted in the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2005/1437/made>)

Key stage 2 tests

Responsibilities include:

- ensuring training and advice is available to schools on all aspects of the KS2 tests
- viewing reports of their schools' applications for early opening, additional time and timetable variations to help inform monitoring visits
- carrying out monitoring visits to a sample of schools before, during and after the KS2 test period – see Monitoring the tests
- informing STA of any irregularities that could affect the integrity, security or confidentiality of the national curriculum assessments or could lead to results that do not reflect pupils' unaided work

Teacher assessment and moderation

Responsibilities include:

- arranging a robust programme of moderation to ensure that all schools the local authority is responsible for are moderated at least once every 4 years (excluding 2020 and 2021), or more frequently, to validate English writing TA judgements
- collecting, quality assuring and submitting TA data on behalf of schools, if agreed, on the NCA Portal (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>) by Friday 26 June
- approving monitoring and moderation agreements in place with academies and participating independent schools

- recording moderation data for English writing TA on the [NCA Portal](http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk) (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>) for all schools externally moderated in the academic year 2025 to 2026
- informing STA of irregularities within any school's submitted TA data and discussing next steps to take
- moderating participating independent schools in the first year they opt in, and then at least once every 4 years
- ensuring moderators are set up with access to the [NCA Portal](http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk) (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>), to enable them to complete standardisation exercises as part of the moderator recruitment process
- ensuring [TA guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-teacher-assessment-guidance) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-teacher-assessment-guidance>) is reviewed and followed

4.3 School responsibilities

Teachers must comply with the provisions of this ARA when carrying out assessment and reporting functions.

4.4 Governing bodies' responsibilities

Governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of participating independent schools must carry out their functions to ensure that the KS2 national curriculum assessments are administered in their schools according to this ARA.

4.5 Academy trusts' responsibilities

An academy's funding agreement will usually require the academy trust to ensure that the KS2 national curriculum assessments are administered in the school according to this ARA.

5. 2026 national curriculum tests

5.1 Overview of tests

The KS2 tests consist of:

- English grammar, punctuation and spelling Paper 1: questions
- English grammar, punctuation and spelling Paper 2: spelling
- English reading
- mathematics Paper 1: arithmetic
- mathematics Paper 2: reasoning
- mathematics Paper 3: reasoning

English grammar, punctuation and spelling test

The English grammar, punctuation and spelling test focuses on the relevant elements of the English programmes of study

(<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-english-programmes-of-study>).

English reading test

The English reading test focuses on the relevant elements of the English programmes of study (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-english-programmes-of-study>) and includes a mixture of text types. The test is designed so that the texts are presented in increasing level of difficulty.

Mathematics test

The mathematics test focuses on the assessable elements of the mathematics programmes of study

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-mathematics-programmes-of-study>) and has 2 components: arithmetic and reasoning.

5.2 Scaled scores

Scaled scores (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/scaled-scores-at-key-stage-2>) are used to report national curriculum test outcomes.

5.3 Past test materials

Past test materials (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-past-test-materials>) are available to help teachers prepare for the KS2 tests. These include past standard and MLP versions of the tests, test administration instructions and mark schemes.

You can request versions of the braille papers, or ask for advice if a pupil requires a font size larger than A4 24 point, from the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 or by emailing MTH@iwanttoconnect.co.uk.

5.4 Test orders

Maintained schools and academies (including free schools)

Maintained schools and academies:

- do not need to place a test order for standard versions of the KS2 tests – we will calculate the required quantities based on their autumn census data
- should order modified tests, if required, on the NCA Portal (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>) by Friday 14 November – see Standard and modified test material formats and Participating pupils
- must complete pupil registration on the NCA Portal (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>) by Friday 6 March – Registering pupils for the tests

Independent schools

Where independent schools choose to participate in the KS2 tests for one or more subjects, they must:

- issue a privacy notice (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/data-protection-in-schools/data-protection-policies-and-procedures>) to the parents of any pupils taking the tests, and receive approval for their child's participation, before placing a test order
- place orders for standard and modified tests on the NCA Portal (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>) by Friday 14 November
- put an agreement in place with a local authority to monitor the tests and confirm this on the NCA Portal (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>) by Friday 5 December

Schools that do not complete these steps will not be granted access to the pupil registration form on the NCA Portal (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>) and may not receive test materials.

To confirm participation and receive test materials, independent schools must also complete pupil registration by Friday 6 March – see [Registering pupils for the tests](#).

Special schools, pupil referral units and secure units

Special schools, PRUs and secure units must place test orders on the [NCA Portal](#) (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>) by Friday 14 November if any pupils are working at the standard of the tests and are able to access them – see [Standard and modified test material formats](#). If you have no pupils who will take the tests, you can leave the test order as ‘zero’.

However, you must complete [pupil registration](#) (<http://www.gov.uk/guidance/key-stage-2-tests-guide-to-registering-pupils-for-the-tests>) by Friday 6 March, even if no pupils will take the tests. This includes confirming each pupil’s assessing status or that you have no pupils on roll.

Schools with no pupils taking the tests will not receive test materials in the initial KS2 delivery week.

If the deadlines have passed, but you believe some of your pupils may reach the standard of the tests by May 2026, you can still amend their status to ‘assessing’. You will then:

- receive standard test materials for these pupils after the initial KS2 delivery is complete – we will dispatch additional test materials daily from Monday 27 April up to the day of each test
- be able to order modified test materials for these pupils, if required, from the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013

5.5 Standard and modified test material formats

We provide test materials on white paper, in the following formats:

- standard versions, which are A4 booklets (297mm x 210mm) in 12 point font with multi-tonal diagrams and illustrations
- enlarged print versions, which have multi-tonal diagrams and illustrations but are produced in larger format booklets (364mm x 257mm) in 15 point font – all text, pictures and non-scaled diagrams are larger than the standard versions
- MLP versions, which are in an A4 format (297 x 210mm), using a larger bold 24 point Arial font – multi-tonal diagrams and illustrations are substituted for high-contrast designs or require the use of physical models

- electronic versions of the MLP papers will be available in Microsoft Word format, to allow further adaptations (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/key-stage-2-tests-making-adaptations-to-modified-large-print-test-materials>) necessary for individual pupils' specific needs – they will be available in the following sizes:
 - 18 point (A4 portrait)
 - 24 point (A4 portrait) – schools will also need to order the hard copy versions of these tests to receive any required models
 - 36 point (A3 portrait)
 - 48 point (A3 landscape)
- contracted (Grade 2) Unified English Braille (UEB) (297mm x 270mm) for English reading, English grammar, punctuation and spelling and mathematics – diagrams are produced in tactile formats or as physical models
- uncontracted (Grade 1) UEB for KS2 English reading only – uncontracted braille is suitable for pupils who have not learnt to read contracted braille

All schools can order modified versions of the tests using the modified test order form on the NCA Portal (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>) until Friday 14 November.

The modified versions of the tests are primarily designed for pupils with visual impairments, although they may be suitable for pupils with other needs. Modified papers may be appropriate even where a pupil may not necessarily have an identified special educational need or disability (SEND). If schools choose to administer the modified papers, they must understand that these have been specifically developed for visually impaired pupils with these accessibility needs in mind and are intended primarily for pupils requiring such adjustments.

Schools should order the modified test format which aligns with a pupil's normal classroom practice. Schools can seek further advice about normal classroom practice from their local authority's visual impairment service.

Schools can adapt the supplied test materials to meet their pupils' needs – for example, by photocopying onto coloured paper or following an approved early opening application – see Access arrangements. Schools must ensure that any adaptations are necessary, do not result in an advantage to pupils and do not amount to maladministration.

Pupils using MLP or braille versions of the tests automatically qualify for up to 100% additional time in all tests as an access arrangement. This automatic adjustment does not prevent or restrict a schools' ability to apply for, submit notifications for, or use other access arrangements where a pupil has specific needs warranting this – see Access arrangements.

If a pupil who does not have a visual impairment uses an MLP version of the KS2 test papers, they would still automatically qualify for up to 100% additional time in all of the tests. However, it is up to the school to determine the appropriate amount of additional time to allow the pupil for each test. This could be based on what is normal classroom practice for the pupil, the use of past KS2 test materials, notes recorded in teaching plans, individual pupil support plans or the pupil's classwork.

Schools can contact the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 or email MTH@iwanttoconnect.co.uk to:

- place or amend a modified test order after Friday 14 November, until Friday 1 May – for example, where a pupil arrives in school after this date or if a pupil's needs change
- ask for further advice about which modified materials may be suitable
- ask for advice if a pupil requires a font size larger than A4 24 point, or the adaptable electronic MLP versions are not suitable
- request hard copies of braille tests from previous years

5.6 Delivery of test materials

Schools will receive their initial consignment of test materials, including any modified test orders and script despatch stationery, in the week beginning Monday 27 April.

We will calculate the quantities of standard test materials and stationery each school requires using the pupil registration data available after the Friday 6 March deadline – see [Registering pupils for the tests](#). We will calculate the quantities of modified test materials required using the test orders data available on the same date.

We will not send KS2 mark schemes to schools, but we will publish them on GOV.UK on Friday 22 May.

If test materials have not arrived by Friday 1 May, or they arrive unsealed or damaged, schools should contact the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013.

Delivery and collection locations

We will deliver the test materials to school addresses taken from [Get Information about Schools \(GIAS\)](#) (<http://www.get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/>). Schools must ensure their details are up to date and sign into GIAS using [DfE Sign-in](#) (<https://services.signin.education.gov.uk/>) to make changes.

Where schools operate across multiple sites, the headteacher should securely transport test materials between them, if this is practical. However, some schools have very dispersed sites and others may move to a temporary site part way through the academic year. If you would like to discuss alternative delivery and collection arrangements, you should contact the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013.

Additional test materials and amended orders

We will check for changes to the pupil registration data made after Friday 6 March. If required, we will dispatch additional test materials daily from Monday 27 April up to the day of each test.

We will also check for changes to modified test orders until Friday 1 May and deliver to schools where required.

If you need additional KS2 test materials on the day of a test, contact the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 as soon as possible to discuss options including a same day delivery.

5.7 Security of test materials

Headteachers must ensure the integrity, security and confidentiality of the tests is maintained so that no pupil has an advantage. Schools must follow the guidance on keeping materials secure in the test administration guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-tests-test-administration-guidance-tag>) and treat all test materials as confidential from when they arrive in schools until Friday 22 May, after the timetable variation period has ended and all test scripts have been collected for marking.

6. Test participation

6.1 Participating pupils

Most pupils taking the KS2 tests will:

- be in year 6
- reach the age of 11 by the end of the academic year
- move on to KS3

Teachers should use their knowledge of each pupil when considering whether to administer the tests to them. They may also use past test materials to inform these decisions.

Pupils who should not take the tests

Pupils should not take the tests if they:

- have not completed the relevant KS2 programmes of study
- are working at the pre-key stage 2 standards (<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pre-key-stage-2-standards>) or being assessed using the engagement model (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-engagement-model>)
- they are working at the standard of the KS2 tests but are unable to participate, even when using suitable access arrangements
- they are not in a fit physical or mental state at the time of the tests

If the 2026 KS2 tests are incorrectly administered to pupils who should not have participated, their test scripts must still be sent for marking. This includes test scripts of pupils who start a test and are unable to complete it. Pupils will be awarded test outcomes based on their achievements in those tests and their results must be reported to parents – see Reporting to parents.

Decisions on participation in the tests

Headteachers make the final decision about whether it is appropriate for a pupil to take the tests. In instances where a headteacher has cause to consider whether a pupil should participate, they should:

- discuss the pupil's circumstances and needs with their parents and teachers
- consult, if appropriate, with their Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO), educational psychologist, medical professional or other specialist staff to consider access arrangements that might be appropriate to enable pupils to demonstrate their full abilities

If a headteacher decides a pupil should not take one or more of the tests, they should report this decision to the pupil's parents.

6.2 Registering pupils for the tests

All schools must register pupils on the NCA Portal (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>) between Monday 9 February and Friday 6 March. Any pupils who arrive in school after this date must also be added

to pupil registration. You can make updates to your pupil registration data until 11:59pm on Thursday 21 May.

All pupils enrolled at maintained schools, academies and special schools (including maintained special schools and special academies) who will complete the KS2 programmes of study in the academic year 2025 to 2026 must be registered for the tests (<http://www.gov.uk/guidance/key-stage-2-tests-guide-to-registering-pupils-for-the-tests>). This includes pupils who are working below the overall standard of the tests, and ultimately will not take them, and pupils who are working at the overall standard of the tests but cannot access them.

Independent schools that have placed a test order must complete pupil registration by Friday 6 March to participate in the tests.

6.3 Access arrangements

KS2 tests are intended to assess pupils' abilities in a fair and comparable way. They are designed so that most pupils with SEND can participate using the standard versions. However, a small number of pupils may need additional arrangements. Access arrangements (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-tests-access-arrangements>) are adjustments that schools can make to support specific pupils.

6.4 Timetable variations

If any pupils cannot take the tests on the days specified in the statutory timetable, the school may apply for a timetable variation on the NCA Portal (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>). The application must be approved by STA before the pupil takes the tests. An approved timetable variation allows an individual pupil, group of pupils or whole cohort to take the test up to 5 school days after the scheduled test day.

You can find more information, including acceptable reasons for making applications and headteacher's responsibilities, in the timetable variations guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/key-stage-2-tests-how-to-apply-for-a-timetable-variation>).

7. Test administration

7.1 Administering the tests

Schools must follow the [test administration guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-tests-test-administration-guidance-tag) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-tests-test-administration-guidance-tag>), which we will publish in March.

We will also provide test administration instructions with the KS2 tests. They may contain test-specific content, so must only be accessed immediately before the administration of each test.

7.2 When to administer tests

Schools must administer the KS2 tests on the days specified in the statutory timetable – see [Key stage 2 test timetable for 2026](#). Headteachers are responsible for deciding the start time of the tests, and all pupils should take each test at the same time, where possible. Tests must never be taken before the day specified in the statutory timetable and must be taken in the order specified unless there are exceptional circumstances, such as a start time variation or an approved timetable variation – see [Timetable variations](#).

If necessary, schools can administer a test in multiple sittings on the scheduled day of the tests – for example, if a pupil arrives late or the school has a large cohort and not enough staff to administer the tests to all pupils at the same time. Schools do not need to notify us about this, but should be prepared to explain the arrangements if they receive a monitoring visit or a request from STA's Maladministration team.

7.3 Monitoring the tests

Local authorities have a statutory duty to carry out monitoring visits to at least 10% of maintained schools that are administering the tests. Local authorities are also expected to monitor at least 10% of academies and participating independent schools that have selected them for monitoring. We may identify schools for local authorities to include in their samples.

Local authorities will carry out monitoring visits to a sample of schools between Tuesday 5 May and Friday 22 May.

For further information, schools and local authorities should refer to the [guidance on monitoring visits \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-tests-monitoring-visits-guidance-and-form\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-tests-monitoring-visits-guidance-and-form), which we will update in March.

Academies

Academies must choose which local authority is responsible for monitoring their end of KS2 tests and must have a written agreement in place with their chosen local authority. Academies will be presumed to be working with their geographic local authority, unless they have confirmed on the [NCA Portal \(http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk\)](http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk) that they have chosen an alternative local authority by Friday 9 January.

If a school becomes an academy on or after Monday 1 September 2025, they will be part of their geographic local authority arrangements for monitoring the 2026 tests and will be unable to select an alternative local authority until the academic year 2026 to 2027.

Where an academy fails to have an agreement in place with a local authority, they will be non-compliant and may have their results annulled.

Independent schools

Independent schools must choose a local authority for monitoring their end of KS2 tests, have a written agreement in place with them and confirm this on the [NCA Portal \(http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk\)](http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk) by Friday 5 December. This can be their closest geographic local authority or another one of their choosing.

8. Teacher assessment

TA processes for schools and local authorities are documented in the [KS2 TA guidance \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-teacher-assessment-guidance\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-teacher-assessment-guidance).

This sets out the local authority requirements for standardisation and moderation, and provides guidance for schools when carrying out TA judgements.

9. Marking and test results

9.1 Marking of the tests

The KS2 tests are marked according to the published mark schemes, by markers recruited and trained by STA's marking supplier.

The 2026 KS2 tests will be marked according to the same published marking principles as in 2025. These principles are detailed in the general guidance on marking in the 2025 KS2 mark schemes for English reading (<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-tests-2025-english-reading-test-materials>), English grammar, punctuation and spelling (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-tests-2025-english-grammar-punctuation-and-spelling-test-materials>) and mathematics (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-tests-2025-mathematics-test-materials>). We work with the marking supplier to ensure tests are marked fairly and consistently.

We will publish the mark schemes for the 2026 KS2 tests in our collection of past test materials (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-past-test-materials>) on Friday 22 May.

9.2 Return of results

Test results (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/key-stage-2-tests-how-to-access-results-and-test-scripts>) will be available to view and download from the NCA Portal (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>) from 7:30am on Thursday 16 July:

- KS2 schools
- local authorities
- MATs
- KS3 schools with a year 7 intake – these schools can search for pupils' results using their unique pupil numbers (UPNs)

Each pupil registered for the tests should receive:

- a raw score (the number of marks awarded)
- a scaled score
- confirmation of whether they met the expected standard

We will publish the raw score to scaled score conversion tables for the 2026 tests in our collection of past test materials

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-past-test-materials>) on Thursday 16 July, to help schools understand how pupils' scaled scores are derived from their raw scores.

9.3 Return of test scripts to schools

Test scripts that have been marked onscreen will be available for KS2 schools on the [NCA Portal](http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk) (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>) from Thursday 16 July.

We will still return hard copies of test scripts that have been marked on paper to schools by Tuesday 7 July, including braille versions of the tests and school-modified papers (but not test scripts photocopied onto coloured paper). Schools should check the [NCA Portal](http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk) (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>) to ensure they know which scripts were marked on paper.

Schools must report any concerns about returned test scripts as soon as possible to the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013.

9.4 Reviews of marking

Schools can apply for a [review of marking](https://www.gov.uk/key-stage-2-tests-how-to-apply-for-a-review-of-key-stage-2-results) (<https://www.gov.uk/key-stage-2-tests-how-to-apply-for-a-review-of-key-stage-2-results>) on the [NCA Portal](http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk) (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>), if they believe there is evidence that a specific part of the mark scheme has not been applied correctly or a clerical error has occurred. The deadline for applications is 11:59pm on Monday 7 September.

Most reviews will be undertaken onscreen using the original scans of the pupil's test scripts. Test scripts marked on paper must be returned by the school for the review to take place. The marking supplier will arrange the collection directly with the school.

Schools will receive the outcomes of marking review applications on the [NCA Portal](http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk) (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>) in the autumn 2026 term. All test scripts reviewed onscreen will be available on the NCA Portal. Any test scripts reviewed on paper will be returned to schools by this date.

9.5 How assessment results at the end of KS2 will be used

DfE will publish school-level results of primary school tests and assessments for the academic year 2025 to 2026. They will also produce and securely share KS2 school-level results with primary schools, academy trusts, DfE regional teams, local authorities and Ofsted for school improvement purposes and to inform inspection. Primary schools will also be able to access their own performance data via the [schools checking exercise](https://check-your-performance-measures-data.education.gov.uk/hc/en-gb) (<https://check-your-performance-measures-data.education.gov.uk/hc/en-gb>).

National, regional, local authority, school-level and MAT-level KS2 performance data will be published for the academic year 2025 to 2026, including by pupil and school characteristics.

KS2 results from the academic year 2025 to 2026 will also be used to calculate baselines for future [Progress 8](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/progress-8-school-performance-measure) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/progress-8-school-performance-measure>) scores. DfE may use aggregated data to inform future policy and to direct support and resource where it is needed. This may include setting criteria to allocate additional funding.

For more information about how results are used in school accountability, including how specific circumstances such as pupils working below the standard are treated when calculating school performance measures, please refer to DfE's [primary school accountability guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/primary-school-accountability) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/primary-school-accountability>).

10. Multiplication tables check

10.1 Overview of the multiplication tables check

The [MTC](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/multiplication-tables-check) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/multiplication-tables-check>) is an onscreen assessment, designed to determine whether pupils can fluently recall their multiplication tables up to 12 through a set of 25 timed questions. It will identify pupils who have not yet mastered this mathematical skill, so schools can give them additional support.

Schools can access the MTC service using DfE Sign-in (<https://services.signin.education.gov.uk/>) from Monday 27 April to review their pupil register and use the 'try it out' check to familiarise pupils with the process and format of the check.

A range of access arrangements will be available to support pupils. Schools do not need to request permission to use access arrangements for the MTC, but the support given must not advantage or disadvantage individual pupils. Pupils should familiarise themselves with access arrangements using the 'try it out' check, to ensure the arrangements meet their needs before taking the official check.

The check window opens on Monday 1 June for a 2-week period. All participating pupils must complete the check during this time. Schools must administer the check to pupils who were absent during the first 2 weeks, or in case of any delays due to technical difficulties, from Monday 15 June to Friday 19 June.

Headteachers, or anyone with delegated authority in the absence of the headteacher, must submit the HDF using the MTC service (<https://services.signin.education.gov.uk/>), once all pupils have completed the check or been recorded as not taking the check, by 5pm on Friday 19 June.

MTC IT guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/multiplication-tables-check-it-guidance>) will be available from Monday 3 November to help IT support staff who manage the school's ICT network prepare for the check administration.

Further information to support schools administer the check will be available in the MTC administration guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multiplication-tables-check-administration-guidance>) on Monday 27 April.

10.2 Check participation

Participation in the MTC is statutory for all year 4 pupils registered at maintained schools, academies (including free schools) and special schools (including maintained special schools and special academies).

Schools must administer the check to all pupils in year 4, unless the headteacher decides it would not be appropriate for a pupil to take the check. Where this is the case, the headteacher must record the reason on the MTC service (<https://services.signin.education.gov.uk/>).

Pupils should not take the check if they:

- are absent during the entire 3-week check period

- are unable to access the check, even when using access arrangements
- are working below expectation for year 2 in multiplication tables (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-mathematics-programmes-of-study>) and are considered unable to answer the easiest questions
- have just arrived in school during the check window, with English as an additional language, and there is not enough time to establish the standard at which they are working
- have been incorrectly registered for the check

Decisions on participation in the check

The headteacher's decision regarding participation is final. When a pupil is not entered for the check:

- schools must inform the pupil's parents and should explain the decision
- if appropriate, schools should provide parents with documentary evidence to support the decision
- schools should explain how they are helping the pupil to learn their multiplication tables

10.3 Results

Schools can access results (a total score for each pupil) on the MTC service (<https://services.signin.education.gov.uk/>) from Monday 22 June, providing all pupils have completed the check or been recorded as not taking the check and the HDF has been submitted.

DfE will not publish school-level results for the MTC. There will be a statistical publication at national and local authority level.

DfE will share pupil and school-level results securely with schools. Pupil-level data will also be released in Get information about pupils (https://interactions.signin.education.gov.uk/e403c4e0-c7ef-4796-9f02-a54b19c8d3e2/usernamepassword?clientid=GIAP&redirect_uri=https://get-information-pupils.service.gov.uk/auth/cb). DfE will also produce and securely share MTC results with academy trusts, DfE regional teams, local authorities and Ofsted for school improvement purposes and to inform inspection.

Schools are encouraged to benchmark themselves against the national and local authority average MTC attainment (<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/multiplication-tables-check-attainment>) scores published by DfE.

DfE may use aggregated data to inform future policy and to direct support and resource where it is needed. This may include setting criteria to allocate additional funding.

11. Maladministration

The term 'maladministration' refers to any act that:

- affects the integrity, security or confidentiality of the national curriculum assessments and teacher assessment
- could lead to results that do not reflect pupils' unaided work

STA has a statutory duty to investigate any matter brought to its attention relating to the accuracy or correctness of any pupil's test results. The maladministration investigation procedures

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-1-and-2-maladministration-investigation-procedures>) explain how we process allegations, as well as roles and responsibilities for school visits. This is supported by guidance for local authorities carrying out maladministration investigation visits (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stages-1-and-2-investigating-allegations-of-maladministration>) on behalf of STA.

If headteachers, teachers, test administrators and other staff do not comply with the provisions of this ARA, and other published guidance, this could result in the school being investigated for maladministration. In cases where the accuracy or correctness of a pupil's results may be affected, the Secretary of State has power to determine the pupil's result and notify the headteacher accordingly.

Anyone with concerns about the assessments, their administration, or any allegations of maladministration, should report them to STA's Maladministration team at STA.maladministration@education.gov.uk or the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013.

12. Reporting to parents

12.1 Annual reports

Headteachers of maintained schools, including maintained special schools, must prepare annual reports for every pupil's parents. Headteachers must arrange for parents to discuss the report with their child's teacher.

The term 'parent' is defined in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/576>) as:

- a parent of a pupil
- any person who is not a parent of a pupil, but who has parental responsibility for the pupil
- any person who has care of a pupil

Academy trusts' requirements are set out in their academy agreements.

12.2 What reports must cover

The report must start from the day after the last report was given, or the date of the pupil's admission to the school, if later. It must be made available to parents before the end of the summer term.

The report must cover the pupil's:

- achievements
- general progress
- attendance record

For pupils in year 4, headteachers must report to parents by the end of the summer term either:

- their child's MTC score (including for pupils who have since left the school)
- the reason their child did not participate in the check, or the reason why they have not received a result – for example, where results are affected by maladministration

At the end of KS2, the report must include:

- a brief account of what the TA and national curriculum test results show about the pupil's progress individually and in relation to other pupils in the same year, drawing attention to any particular strengths and weaknesses
- the results of any national curriculum tests taken, including the pupil's scaled score and whether they met the expected standard

- the outcomes of statutory national curriculum TA in English writing and science
- a statement explaining why TA was not completed or tests were not taken, where relevant
- the pre-key stage standards achieved by the pupil, for pupils working below the standard of the national curriculum and engaged in subject-specific study
- a qualitative narrative commentary of the pupil's achievements and progress in the areas of engagement identified in the engagement model, for pupils working below the standard of the national curriculum and not engaged in subject-specific study
- comparative information about the attainment of pupils of the same age in the school
- comparative information about the attainment in the core subjects of pupils of the same age nationally, which will be published in the 'National curriculum assessment: key stage 2, 2026 (interim)' statistics publication on [Explore Education Statistics \(https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics\)](https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics)

If the headteacher does not receive a national curriculum test result before the end of the summer term, they must provide it to parents within 15 school days of receiving it.

For maintained schools, reports must cover pupils' general progress in statutory subjects. This includes subjects within the KS2 national curriculum as well as religious education, unless a child has been withdrawn from this subject by their parents under Section 71 of the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998 \(http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/contents\)](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/contents).

These content requirements are based on Schedule 1 of the [2005 Regulations \(http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2005/1437/made\)](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2005/1437/made).

12.3 Pupils not participating in the tests

If a headteacher decides that a pupil should not take one or more of the end of KS2 tests, they should explain this decision to the pupil's parents before the test period. They should also write a report that:

- refers to any action the school has already taken, or special support the pupil has been offered
- identifies any procedures used by the school to analyse and monitor the pupil's needs, and where the information is recorded

- identifies whether these circumstances are likely to be long or short term

The report should be sent to the chair of the governing body and added to the pupil's educational record.

Details of the parents' right to appeal the decision should be included in the report. If a headteacher believes that a parent may have difficulty understanding the report, they should offer appropriate assistance.

12.4 Pupils who change schools

If a pupil changes school before the end of the academic year, the headteacher of the receiving school should ensure an annual report is written for the pupil and issued to the pupil's parents. The report should draw upon information transferred from the pupil's previous school – see Transferring records to a pupil's new school. The parents should have the opportunity to discuss the report with their child's teacher.

12.5 Pupils registered at more than one school

Regulation 9 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/1751/made>) allows the dual registration of families that travel for occupational purposes. Regulations 9(3) and 9(4) define which school would be the base school (school of ordinary attendance). Regulation 9(1) applies to a pupil who:

- has no fixed abode because their parent is engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place
- is at the time registered as a pupil at 2 or more schools

If a pupil is registered at more than one school, each headteacher should write an annual report for the parents. Each headteacher should also arrange for the parents to discuss the report with their child's teacher, if they wish.

13. Keeping and maintaining records

13.1 Pupils' educational records

Maintained schools and non-maintained special schools must ensure that educational records are maintained and disclosed to parents on request, as prescribed in the 2005 Regulations (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2005/1437/made>). Educational records include information about pupils (and former pupils):

- processed by, or on behalf of, the governing body or a teacher
- originating from, or supplied by, local authority employees
- originating from, or supplied by, teachers or other employees of the school

Information processed by a teacher solely for the teacher's own use is excluded from the definition of educational records.

Maintained schools and non-maintained special schools must also keep curricular records on every pupil. Curricular records form a 'subset' of a pupil's educational record. They are a formal record of a pupil's academic achievements, skills, abilities and the progress they make at a school. These records must be updated at least once every academic year.

Schools are data controllers and are therefore required to comply with data protection legislation including the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2016/679/contents>) and the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents>). This means schools are responsible for ensuring that any processing of personal data (the collection, retention, storage and security of all personal information they hold) meets the provisions of the DPA 2018 and complies with data protection legislation. This includes:

- personal information appearing in a pupil's educational record
- any other information they hold which identifies individuals, including pupils, staff and parents

13.2 Disclosure of educational records

There are several pieces of legislation under which information may be accessed from public organisations, including schools. These include the UK GDPR, DPA 2018 and Freedom of Information Act 2000

(<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/contents>). Access to a pupil's educational record held by a maintained school or non-maintained special school is covered by a parent's right of access under the 2005 Regulations.

Under the 2005 Regulations, a maintained school's governing body must ensure that a pupil's educational record is made available for parents to see, free of charge, within 15 school days of receipt of the parent's written request. If a parent makes a written request for a copy of the record, this must also be provided within 15 school days of receipt of the request. Governing bodies can charge a fee for these copies, but this must not be more than the cost of supply. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) provides further information on charges (<https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/schools/pupils-info/>).

The 2005 Regulations describe the material that is exempt from disclosure to parents. This relates to information that the pupil could not lawfully be given under data protection legislation. It also relates to information that they would not have a right of access to. This includes material that may cause serious harm to the physical or mental health or condition of the pupil or someone else. A school may not fulfil a parent's request for these records if there is a court order in place which limits a parent's exercise of parental responsibility. This affects the parent's entitlement to receive such information.

The ICO (<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/uk-gdpr-guidance-and-resources/individual-rights/right-of-access/>) can provide further advice.

13.3 Transferring records to a pupil's new school

Headteachers of maintained schools, including maintained special schools, must ensure the statutory requirements for the transfer of records between schools are fulfilled, including the completion of the CTF. This requirement is set out in the 2005 Regulations (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2005/1437/contents/made>), as amended.

If a pupil moves to another school in England, Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland, the pupil's CTF and educational records must be passed to the new school. Academies are not subject to this requirement but are expected to adhere to the following protocols as a matter of good practice.

Schools should arrange to exchange data by another secure method if transferring information to a school outside England, where school to school (S2S) (<https://www.gov.uk/school-to-school-service-how-to-transfer-information>) is not available. Information must be transferred within 15 school days of the pupil ceasing to be registered at their previous school.

The pupil's CTF should be sent to the new school either:

- through the S2S secure file transfer system
- over a secure network that can only be accessed by the local authority, the governing body or a teacher at any school within that local authority

If either school is unable to send or receive information in this way, local authorities may provide the file. However, there must be agreed and secure local arrangements in place.

If the new school is unknown, DfE recommends that the school should still complete the CTF and load it onto S2S. If a school does not receive CTFs for a new pupil, they can ask their local authority to search for the files on S2S.

Schools can refer to the CTF

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/common-transfer-file>) and S2S (<https://www.gov.uk/school-to-school-service-how-to-transfer-information>) guides for details on:

- what information CTFs should contain
- handling records for pupils where their destination is not known
- sending CTFs between schools

Schedule 2 to the 2005 Regulations

(<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2005/1437/contents/made>), as amended, explains more about the content of CTFs.

14. Legal requirements and responsibilities

14.1 How the arrangements apply to different types of school

Maintained schools (including maintained special schools)

Maintained schools, including maintained special schools, with pupils in KS2 must administer statutory assessments.

Academies (including free schools, special academies and AP academies)

All references to academies include free schools as, in law, they are academies. The following information also applies to special academies and AP academies.

An academy trust's academy agreement may say that the trust must ensure each of its academy schools follows guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Education in relation to assessments of pupils' performance. If so, the trust's academy schools must comply with the ARA and take part in statutory assessments on the same basis as maintained schools. The KS2 ARA is only applicable if the academy provides education to pupils at this stage.

Academies are not required to follow the national curriculum. They need to teach a broad and balanced curriculum which, as a term of their academy agreement, includes English, mathematics and science. For AP academies, this only includes English and mathematics.

Academies must choose which local authority is responsible for monitoring their end of KS2 tests and moderating their TA. They must have a written agreement in place with their chosen local authority, and inform STA if this is not their geographic local authority, by Friday 9 January. Academy trusts must ensure their academy schools have complied with the external moderation, monitoring and data submission requirements in this publication.

Independent schools

Independent schools in England may choose to take part in the assessments for one or more subjects at the end of KS2, although they are not required to do so. Participating independent schools must follow the guidance in this ARA.

Independent schools cannot participate in the MTC.

Pupil referral units

Pupils who attend a PRU but are on the register of a maintained school or academy are expected to take the statutory assessments. Their results should be reported by the school where the pupil is registered. It is the responsibility of maintained schools and academies to register such pupils for the KS2 tests.

Pupils not on the register of a maintained school or academy, but who attend a PRU, are expected to receive a comparable education to a pupil in a mainstream school. Therefore, it is recommended that KS2 tests form part of their educational provision, where appropriate.

Ministry of Defence schools

MoD schools take part in national curriculum assessments in line with the administration in England. This includes administering the MTC and KS2 tests, and submitting TA data.

Overseas schools

Overseas schools that are not MoD schools cannot formally participate in the KS2 assessments. They will be able to download the 2026 KS2 materials from GOV.UK from Friday 22 May, after the test administration period. The MTC is not available to download.

Non-maintained special schools

Non-maintained special schools may take part in the KS2 assessments, including the MTC, although they are not required to do so. If they choose to participate, they should follow the arrangements in this ARA.

Non-maintained special schools that choose to participate in the KS2 tests must place a test order by Friday 14 November and complete pupil registration by Friday 6 March on the NCA Portal (<http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk>).

Home-educated pupils

Pupils receiving elective home education (EHE) cannot take part in the KS2 assessments unless they are on the register of a maintained school, academy or participating independent school.

Home educators will be able to download the 2026 KS2 materials from GOV.UK from Friday 22 May, after the test administration period. The MTC is not available to download.

14.2 Special educational provision and reasonable adjustments

Mainstream schools must use their best endeavours to ensure that special educational provision is made for those pupils who need it.

All schools must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to minimise any disadvantage to disabled pupils compared to their peers. See Access arrangements and Timetable variations for information about the adjustments available for the KS2 tests.

14.3 Regulatory concerns

If you have any regulatory concerns that STA has not fully addressed in line with the published procedures, you can raise them with the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual)

(<http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual>). Ofqual regulates qualifications, examinations and assessments in England.

15. Help and support

15.1 Useful websites and links

- [NCA Portal \(http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk\)](http://www.ncaportal.education.gov.uk)
- [How to access the NCA Portal guidance \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-access-the-national-curriculum-assessments-portal\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-access-the-national-curriculum-assessments-portal)
- [GIAS \(http://www.get-information-schools.service.gov.uk\)](http://www.get-information-schools.service.gov.uk)
- [Collection of KS2 tests guidance \(http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-key-stage-2-tests\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-key-stage-2-tests), including future test dates, information for parents and guidance on access arrangements, test administration, maladministration and results
- [Collection of past test materials \(http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-past-test-materials\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-past-test-materials), including past standard and MLP papers, mark schemes and scaled score conversion tables – you can request copies of past braille papers from the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 or from MTH@iwanttoconnect.co.uk
- [Collection of KS2 TA guidance \(http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/key-stage-2-teacher-assessment\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/key-stage-2-teacher-assessment), including TA frameworks and guidance, exemplification materials and instructions for submitting TA data
- [Collection of guidance for local authorities \(http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-guidance-for-local-authorities\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-guidance-for-local-authorities), including information on data collection, monitoring visits, maladministration and TA
- [Collection of MTC guidance \(http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/multiplication-tables-check\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/multiplication-tables-check), including IT guidance, information for parents, check administration guidance, the MTC privacy notice and assessment framework
- [DfE Sign-in \(https://services.signin.education.gov.uk/\)](https://services.signin.education.gov.uk/)
- [MTC help centre \(https://help.multiplicationtablescheckservice.education.gov.uk/hc/en-gb\)](https://help.multiplicationtablescheckservice.education.gov.uk/hc/en-gb)

- [STA videos on YouTube \(https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLXjcCX3hH9LXHRFtcSAR5l9Mh-ldfX5O4\)](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLXjcCX3hH9LXHRFtcSAR5l9Mh-ldfX5O4)
- [STA assessment updates \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sta-assessment-updates\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sta-assessment-updates)

15.2 General enquiries

For general enquiries about the KS2 tests, contact the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 or email assessments@education.gov.uk.

For general enquiries about the MTC, contact the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 between 9am and 5pm (selecting the option for MTC) or [send us a message \(https://help.multiplicationtablescheckservice.education.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/requests/new?ticket_form_id=\)](https://help.multiplicationtablescheckservice.education.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/requests/new?ticket_form_id=).



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