

Key Stage 2 SATs Tests and Assessments (Year 6)

Why are there tests at the end of Year 6?

Year 6 Tests are taken to provide the measure of attainment of a school's pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 primary education, together with an assessment in Year 2 of the progress made from the end of Key Stage 1. Ofsted uses this information when inspecting schools.

It is not there to provide entrance exam requirements for secondary schools. The "offer day" for secondary school places is around the beginning of March, but the SATs tests are not taken until mid-May.

The latest version of these tests have been given to pupils since 2016 (in line with the changes to the National Curriculum), and it is difficult to compare performance before that date, especially in terms of progress.

Does everyone have to take the SATs?

Around 97.5% of pupils in England take the test. All maintained schools, academies and free schools must take part. Independent schools may choose to take part.

Headteachers make the final decision by mid-March as to whether a pupil takes part in the tests; they can discuss this decision with parents and teachers, SENCO, medical offers, educational psychologists etc. if they wish to do so. These pupils typically:

- Have not completed the relevant Key Stage 2 study programme,
- Are working below the overall standard of the tests, unable to answer the easiest questions,
- Are unable to participate, even with access arrangements,
- Are nearly arrived at school and whose performance cannot be established.

What Tests are there?

There are 6 Tests in total.

Reading

- Worth a total of **50 marks**, involving **three reading texts of increasing difficulty, lasting one hour**.
- Questions towards the end of the reading texts, especially the third text, can be worth multiple marks.

Grammar and Punctuation

- worth a total of **50 marks**, **lasting 45 minutes**.

Spelling

- worth a total of **20 marks**, **one mark per word**.
- not strictly timed, but **lasts approximately 15 minutes**.

Three tests in Mathematics

- Paper 1 involves **mathematical calculations (arithmetic), covering operations including fractions, decimals and percentages, plus long division and multiplication**. It is worth **40 marks** and **lasts 30 minutes**.
- Papers 2 and 3 assesses **mathematical fluency, with problems and reasoning**. Each paper is worth **35 marks** and **last 40 minutes each**.
- Overall:
83-93 out of the 110 marks are designed to test **number, calculations and fractions**, and
17-27 marks are designed to test **measurement, geometry and statistics**.

Timetable

Each test will take place on a day decided by the DfE, but may take place at a time of that day chosen by the school. It is not necessary that all pupils take the test at the same time, but pupils that haven't yet taken the test but will do so (including those that arrived late) must be separated from those that have.

In 2025, the timetable is as follows:

Monday 12 May	Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling
Tuesday 13 May	Reading
Wednesday 14 May	Mathematics paper 1 and paper 2.
Thursday 15 May	Mathematics paper 3.

What is the Pass Mark?

The pass mark changes each year, depending on the complexity of the paper.

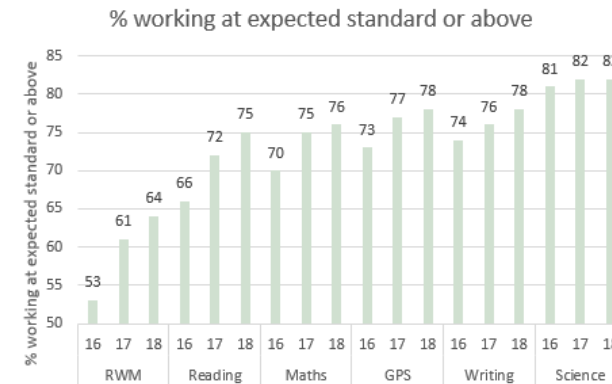
Typically, the pass mark for:

- Reading is between **21 and 28 marks** out of 50.
- Maths is between **56 and 60 marks** out of 110 over all 3 papers.
- Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS or SPaG) is **35 to 40 marks** out of 70 over both papers.

What is the Scaled Score?

To enable comparisons to be made between years, the DfE converts the number of marks a pupil has made (called the "raw score") into a score that can be compared between years (known as the "Scaled Score").

- The Scaled Score varies between 80 (for a "raw score" of 3 marks) to 120 (for nearly all questions answered correctly).
- The pass mark is a scaled score of 100. Reaching this is called "Expected Standard achieved" ("AS"), as opposed to "Expected Standard Not Achieved" ("NS").



- The high score threshold is not pre-announced, but since 2016 has been 110.
- Any pupils who do not get a raw score of 3 marks will have a Scaled Score lower than 80.
- The exact figure(s) and methodology changes each year.

The DfE publishes [the conversion between raw score and Scaled Score](#) in early July, at the same time as results are given to the school.

Do Teachers have to make any assessments at Key Stage 2?

Teachers have to make Teacher Assessments for:

Writing

- Expected Standard (EXS),
- Greater Depth within the Expected Standard (GDS),
- Working Towards the Standard (WTS),
- or a pre-key stage standard (see below).

Science

- Working at the Expected Standard (EXS)
- Has Not Met the Expected Standard (HNM).

Where a pupil is working below the standard of the Key Stage 2 tests (below WTS), then one of the following will be used:

- Pre-key stage standards 1 to 6. Standards 5 and 6 are Working Towards and Working At the Key Stage 1 Expected Standard.
- If a pupil has not reached Pre-key standard 1, then in 2018/19 P-scales 1 to 4 should be used instead.

All assessments are made on the basis of “can do” statements. If a pupil moves, then it is the school where the pupil was registered at the beginning of the test week that should submit the Assessments.

Teacher Assessments need to be submitted to their LA near the end of June, although individual LAs may have their own, earlier, deadlines.

What about pupils who don't get entered in the test?

Additionally, teachers have to make judgements in subjects (Reading or Maths) for pupils who were not entered into that exam.

By definition, these judgements will be based on the pre-key stage standards. In previous years, Teacher Assessments in Reading and Maths were needed for all pupils – this is no longer the case.

Additionally, the Headteacher must explain to parents, before the tests begin, why their children are not being entered.

A report must also be written to the parents and the chair of the governing body which contains:

- An explanation as to why,
- What action the school has taken, or special support the pupil has been offered,
- How the school analyses and monitors the pupils' needs, and where it is recorded, and
- Whether these circumstances are likely to be short-term or long-term.

This report will also be placed on the pupil's education record.

The parents have a right to appeal this decision.

How is Progress calculated?

Progress is calculated in Reading, Writing and Maths by comparing the pupil's performance against the National Average of all pupils who had a similar Key Stage 1 prior attainment.

For example, if a pupil had a Key Stage 1 Average Point Score of 17.0, then their performance would be compared against that of all pupils nationally who had a Key Stage 1 Average Point Score of between 17.00 and 17.49.

- For Reading and Maths tests, a pupil's performance is measured by their Scaled Score (between 80 and 120).
- For Reading and Maths judgements (where a pupil has not been entered into the test), the teacher assessment is converted into a Scaled Score. This methodology changes each year, but is typically between 59 and 79.
- For Writing only, the pupil's Teacher Assessment is converted into a Scaled Score, either between 59 and 79 (if a pre-key stage judgement has been made), or 91 (WTS), 103 (EXS) or 113 (GDS).

Any pupils who do not have a Key Stage 1 Average Point Score do not have a progress score.

It is not possible to accurately calculate pupils' potential progress scores prior to the tests, and Ofsted recommends that schools do not do so.

What does the Progress score indicate?

- A positive progress score indicates the number of Scaled Scores above their National figure that the pupil has achieved.
- A negative progress score does not indicate that no progress has been made between Key Stage 1 and Stage 2. Instead, it indicates the number of Scaled Scores below their National figure that the pupil has achieved.

The fine-tuning of the Progress Scores is complex.

For more information, including how the DfE fine-tunes progress for pupils with extremely negative progress scores,

- please see [our article about Key Stage 2 progress](#),
- or read [the official Primary school accountability document](#) on the gov.uk website.

Please note that this methodology for calculating progress will change in 2019/20, as pupils taking the SATs tests in 2020 will no longer have Key Stage 1 Average Point Scores. The 2019/20 methodology for calculating progress has not been announced.

What is the floor and coasting standard?

The previous floor and coasting standards will not apply in 2019. It indicated the schools that needed support.

Instead, the DfE will use a range of measures – including Ofsted judgements – to make this determination.

What information is published?

July (Public)

In early July, schools receive the Raw Score and Scaled Score that each pupil has received. The DfE may also publish “interim” national averages this day [on the gov.uk website](#).

August/September (Public)

In late August or early September, the DfE publishes [on the gov.uk website](#) the “provisional” national and LA averages. It does not include progress scores or the results of any appeals at this stage. Additionally, schools receive a provisional calculation of their progress scores.

December (Public)

In mid-December, the DfE publishes [on the gov.uk website](#) the “revised” national and LA averages, including progress scores. It also publishes on [the Compare School Performance website](#) school-level results (the “performance tables”). These results are downloadable.

ASP / IDSR (Schools, LA and Ofsted Only)

The DfE publishes school-level results on the Analyse School Performance (ASP) website and Ofsted’s Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR). Ofsted Inspectors use these to inform themselves about the school before their visit. This is accessible only by the schools, LAs and Ofsted.

It is typically published twice in “provisional” form - once in October in a headline form, and again in November with additional cohort types, such as an analysis of the results of disadvantaged pupils.

In February, the ASP website and Ofsted’s IDSR is updated with the “revised” or “validated” school figures.

What do schools need to give parents?

Before the end of the summer term, schools will need to give parents:

- The results of any tests, including Scaled Scores, and whether pupils met the Expected Standard, with comparisons to school and national averages.
- The results of any Teacher Assessments, with comparisons to school and national averages.
- For pupils who did not sit any tests, a statement as to why this was.

Can the school appeal the marks given?

In early July, schools are able to review on screen pupils’ scripts.

If the mark scheme has been correctly applied or a clerical error has occurred, the school can apply for a review. However, the school only has 10 days from release of the scripts to make this decision.

Marks will only be updated if there is a significant change in the results: generally, this requires a change of at least two Scaled Scores, or a “Expected Standard Not Achieved (NS)” changes to “Expected Standard Achieved (AS)” (or vice versa).

There is no charge if the review results in a change; otherwise there is a charge of £5-£9.

What access arrangements are available?

[The following access arrangements are available](#), most of which need to be applied by the school ahead of the time of the test:

- **Additional time.** This is typically an extra 25%, but may be an extra 100% for pupils use the Modified Large Print or braille versions.
- **Early opening for adaptations** (for instance, photocopying the test onto colour paper, or setting up tactile diagrams).
- **Compensatory marks for the spelling paper.** The National average raw score for the spelling paper will be given to pupils who cannot access the spelling paper due to hearing impairment.
- **Scribes** can be used to write answers dictated by the pupil, if routinely used or if a child has been injured.
- **Transcripts**, if necessary to improve legibility of a pupil's answers.
- **Word processors**, if it is the normal classroom function, without use of the spell check function.
- **Written or oral translations** (of the maths papers only) **or readers** (of the maths papers or Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling papers only), if it is the normal classroom function.
- **Prompters**, for pupils with severe attention problems.
- **Rest breaks**, for pupils who find it difficult to concentrate or who may experience fatigue.

Can the school see which questions were answered correctly per pupil?

In early July, schools are able to review on screen pupils' scripts, and the schools are able to manually review them.

In late July/early August, the DfE release the results by Question via the ASP service (accessible only by schools and LAs). This contains a summary analysis per pupil per topic/strand, or per question.



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Past papers are available on [the Practice Materials of the KS2 website](#). This also includes the mark schemes, which indicate how marks are awarded, including in multi-point questions

What if pupils are ill on the day of the test?

If pupils are ill on the day of the test, [Schools can apply for the test to be moved to a different day](#), up to 5 school days later.

Timetable variations can also be applied if the pupil had an important appointment that cannot be rearranged (e.g. a hospital appointment) or is observing a religious or cultural festival.

Also, if a pupil's performance has been affected by extremely distressing circumstances, [special consideration](#) will be taken into account when calculating the school's overall performance, adding 3 points to the pupil's Scaled Score for this purpose only.

Where can I get more information?

Official Information for Parents

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-1-and-2-national-curriculum-tests-information-for-parents>.

Administration information

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-key-stage-2-tests>

Past Papers and Mark Schemes

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-practice-materials>

Access Arrangements

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-tests-access-arrangements>

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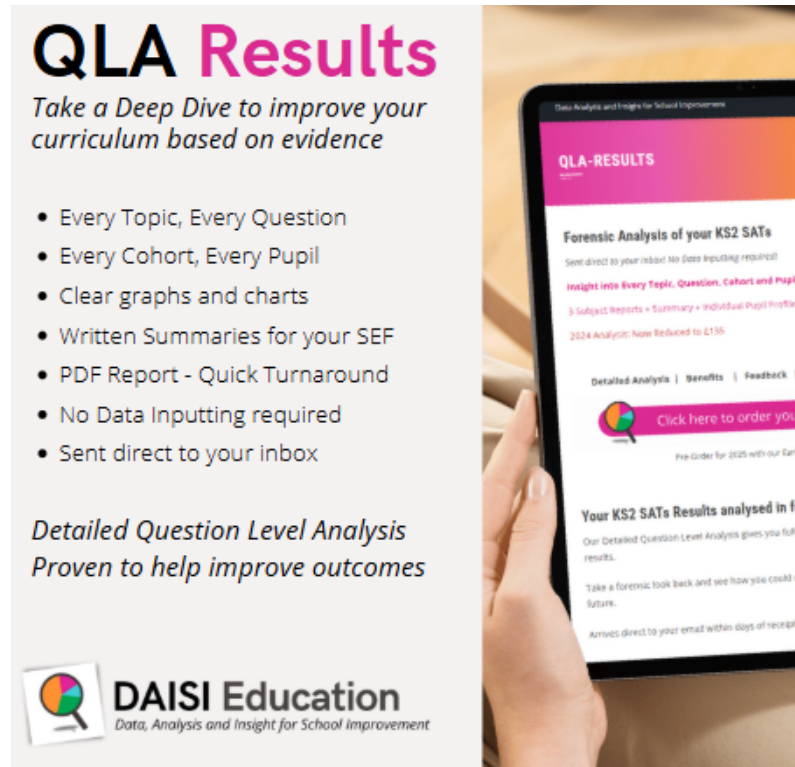
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