

National curriculum assessments

KEY STAGE  
2

YEARS  
3–6

# Monitoring visits guidance for local authorities

Key stage 2 tests

2014



Standards  
& Testing  
Agency

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2014 key stage 2 'Monitoring visits guidance for local authorities'

Print version product code: STA/14/7149/p ISBN: 978-1-78315-393-0

Electronic version product code: STA/14/7149/e ISBN: 978-1-78315-394-7

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# 1. Introduction

Local authorities (LAs) have a statutory responsibility to monitor the administration of the key stage 2 national curriculum tests. This helps to ensure that the security and confidentiality of the test materials are maintained, and that the tests are administered correctly and consistently in accordance with the requirements set out in the published guidance. They also give headteachers a formal opportunity to demonstrate how the tests are administered in their schools.

Academies have been asked to choose whether to be monitored by their current LA, another LA or the Standards and Testing Agency (STA). References to academies in this document include free schools, as in law they are recognised as academies.

Independent schools and academies that have chosen not to be monitored by an LA will be monitored by a monitoring visits agency on behalf of STA.

STA may also make monitoring visits to maintained schools.

This guidance explains how LAs should carry out monitoring visits to schools administering the key stage 2 English reading test, English grammar, punctuation and spelling test and mathematics tests. LAs will not monitor the science sampling tests (which recommence in June 2014).

## 2. Guidance for delivering monitoring visits

LAs must make unannounced visits to schools participating in the key stage 2 tests before, during and after the test period. The visits must include at least 10 per cent of maintained schools administering the tests within their authority, including any:

- participating pupil referral units or special schools; and
- academies that have chosen to be monitored by the LA.

LAs should not make more than one visit to an individual school unless there are concerns that have already been discussed with the LA monitoring visit co-ordinator and STA.

STA selects a sample of schools that LAs should include in the 10 per cent of schools that they make monitoring visits to. STA may also request that an LA visits a particular school in their authority. In early April, STA will provide LAs with details of schools selected in the sample and any other schools that should be visited.

### 2.1 Arranging monitoring visits

STA recommends each LA identifies a person to act as monitoring visits co-ordinator. The monitoring visits co-ordinator should take responsibility for:

- arranging monitoring visits;
- providing monitoring visitors with copies of school delivery notes;
- providing monitoring visitors with information about access arrangements applications and notifications, and timetable variations;
- emailing any monitoring forms where an 'X', 'N' or 'P' has been entered in any box to STA's maladministration team; and
- forwarding all completed monitoring visit forms, including those already emailed to STA's maladministration team, to STA's monitoring visits agency.

### 2.2 Selecting and preparing monitoring visitors

Given the sensitive nature of reviewing test security, monitoring visits should only be carried out by members of staff who have a clear understanding of the requirements of the visits. They must also be familiar with the following guidance on test administration which is published on the Department for Education's (DfE's) website at [www.education.gov.uk/ks2](http://www.education.gov.uk/ks2).

- 2014 key stage 2 'Assessment and reporting arrangements'
- 2014 key stage 2 'Test administrators' guide'
- 2014 key stage 2 'Modified test administrators' guides'
- Access arrangements guidance including the information about the mental mathematics notification form and the 'Notes for readers in the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test: short answer questions'
- 'Keeping key stage 2 test materials secure' web page

All staff involved in monitoring visits must be briefed on the purpose, scope and procedures involved in conducting the visits and in the administration of the tests.

Monitoring visitors should take the following information with them for each monitoring visit.

- The number of children being assessed at the school.
- Which test materials have been delivered to the school, including materials for the level 6 tests where appropriate. Electronic copies of delivery notes received by schools with their test materials will be sent to LAs in early April.
- Details of any additional time, early opening or timetable variation applications or mental mathematics notification forms. These can be viewed on the 'Access arrangements' section of the NCA tools website at [www.education.gov.uk/ncatools](http://www.education.gov.uk/ncatools). Please note: the LA monitoring visits co-ordinator will need their registered email address and password to access NCA tools. Information about how to log into NCA tools is available on the DfE's website at [www.education.gov.uk/assessment](http://www.education.gov.uk/assessment).

All monitoring visitors must also carry identification that should be shown on arrival at the school.

If the monitoring visit is carried out by an individual other than the LA monitoring visits co-ordinator, the monitoring visitor should discuss their findings with the co-ordinator as soon as possible after the visit has taken place.

### 2.3 Providing information to schools

Before undertaking any monitoring visits, LAs may want to contact all schools within their authority to explain the purpose of the visits. LAs may give the names of individuals involved in the visits, but they must not identify in advance any specific schools that will be visited.

Before the test period, schools should be directed to read the information about monitoring visits that is on the DfE's website at [www.education.gov.uk/ks2](http://www.education.gov.uk/ks2).

If schools receive a visit and wish to confirm the identity of their visitor(s) they should contact their LA, for LA visitors, or the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 if the visitor is a member of STA's staff. Independent schools can also contact the national curriculum assessments helpline if they wish to confirm the identity of a visitor from the monitoring visits agency.

## 3. What to look for during monitoring visits

### 3.1 Visits before the test period

STA recommends that approximately 10 per cent of monitoring visits take place during the week leading up to Monday 12 May when the test period begins. The purpose of these visits is to check that the sealed test packs are unopened and stored securely.

When undertaking visits before the test period, the monitoring visitor should ask to see where the unopened test packs are stored and check that the school has received the correct number of packs.

The number of test packs delivered to each school will be shown on the copies of the delivery note(s) that will be sent electronically to LAs in early April. Schools should present the visitor with annotated copies of their delivery note(s) and provide details of the number of test packs that were actually delivered.

The monitoring visitor should check that all of the relevant test packs are sealed and stored securely. This must include level 6 test packs where applicable.

### 3.2 Opening materials early

STA recommends that the test packs are opened just before the administration of the tests, in the test room, in front of the children. Test packs can only be opened up to one hour before the start of a particular test if:

- a written translation is required for the mathematics tests; or
- a test paper needs to be adapted to meet individual children's needs.

If schools need to open test packs, including packs of modified test papers, more than one hour before a test is due to start, they must apply for permission to STA for early opening by Monday 3 March.

Test administrators must not open the test packs early to familiarise themselves with the test content.

If a school has an approved application for early opening, a test pack may be opened up to one school day before the test paper is administered. In exceptional circumstances a school may have received permission from STA to open test packs more than one school day before the test. Any school that has opened a test pack early must have evidence of approval to do so from STA. Monitoring visitors should ask to see evidence of this approval and should check that any materials that were opened early are stored securely.

Guidance notes for the models and the assembly of models for the modified mathematics tests may be opened up to two school days before the tests take place. Other guidance materials relating to the modified tests for children with a visual impairment or a hearing impairment may be opened one school day in advance, where stated.

If a school has received damaged test packs, the monitoring visitor should advise them to immediately contact the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013. The school may be asked to send a photograph of the damaged packages to STA.

### 3.3 Visits during the test period

The majority, approximately 80 per cent, of monitoring visits should be made during the test period, Monday 12 May to Thursday 15 May.

Monitoring visitors should arrive before the start of the administration of a test and ensure they observe the complete test administration process, including opening the test packs, the administration of the test(s) and packaging and the secure storage of the test scripts (the test papers containing the children's answers).

They should check that:

- the correct test is being administered according to the statutory timetable;
- test papers are opened just before the test, unless the school has obtained permission for early opening or it has been necessary to make adaptations to a paper in the hour before the test;
- children are seated appropriately and are able to work independently;
- wall displays are covered up or, if uncovered, do not offer any assistance to children;
- test times are adhered to;
- inappropriate assistance is not given to individual children or the group as a whole during the test;
- the different papers for the levels 3-5 and level 6 English grammar, punctuation and spelling tests are administered in numerical order;
- where a school is administering a level 6 test, the corresponding levels 3-5 test has been administered first;
- dictionaries and monolingual English electronic spellcheckers are not used during any of the English grammar, punctuation and spelling tests;
- calculators are not used during any of the levels 3-5 mathematics test papers or the level 6 mathematics Paper 1;
- mental mathematics test CDs are used, unless access arrangements are in place or a verifiable malfunction of audio equipment has occurred;
- the mental mathematics test CD is stopped only at the appropriate times, as instructed;
- access arrangements, in particular the use of readers, scribes, prompters, transcripts and additional time are administered appropriately; and
- there is evidence to show that access arrangements are used in accordance with normal classroom practice.

Where tests are administered in more than one room, the monitoring visitor should monitor the test administration in each room, bearing in mind that they should oversee the packaging and the secure storage of the test scripts for the whole cohort.



If the school is planning to administer a timetable variation, the monitoring visitor should check that the test scripts are securely stored in a locked cupboard until any children using timetable variations have taken the test.

If any tests have not yet been administered, the monitoring visitor should carry out the checks relating to visits before the test period.

The monitoring visitor should also carry out the checks relating to visits after the test period if a test has already been administered.

### 3.4 Visits after the test period

Up to 10 per cent of the total number of monitoring visits should be made immediately after the test period, from Friday 16 May.

The monitoring visitor should ask to be shown where the test scripts and any unused test papers are stored and check that they are secure.

The script return bags should be sealed as soon as possible on the day of each test.

This year the levels 3-5 stationery pack will include transparent inner bag(s) for packing the mental mathematics and Paper 1 test scripts on Wednesday 14 May. If a monitoring visit takes place after the administration of the levels 3-5 mental mathematics test and Paper 1, but Paper 2 has not yet been administered, the monitoring visitor should expect to find the test scripts for mental mathematics and Paper 1 sealed in the transparent inner bag(s) and stored securely.

A script return bag should only be left unsealed if a school needs to administer a timetable variation. If the school is administering a timetable variation for a level 6 test, the inner bags for the other tests must be sealed and stored securely until all the level 6 tests have been taken. After this the script return bag must be sealed.

The table below gives the dates when test scripts will be collected.

DfE number	Test script collection dates (Between 9am and 4pm )
Schools with a DfE number that ends with an even digit (including 0)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Tuesday 13 May</li> <li>● Thursday 15 May</li> </ul>
Schools with a DfE number that ends with an odd digit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Wednesday 14 May</li> <li>● Friday 16 May</li> </ul>

Schools that have test scripts remaining after Thursday 15 May will receive an additional collection on Friday 16 May.

If test scripts have already been sent for marking, the monitoring visitor should ask to see the proof of collection and check that there are no test scripts still on site that should have been sent for marking.

## 4. Completing monitoring visit forms

Monitoring visitors must complete all sections on the monitoring visit form for each school visited. All questions in both sections must be answered.

The LA monitoring visits co-ordinator's name must be provided in case STA has any enquiries regarding the visit(s).

The monitoring visits form is available to download from the DfE's website at [www.education.gov.uk/ks2](http://www.education.gov.uk/ks2).

2014 key stage 2 monitoring visit form		Standards & Testing Agency				
<small>Section A and Section B of this form must be completed in all cases (see instructions overleaf). A copy must be left with the school's headteacher, return the original to your monitoring visits co-ordinator.</small>						
School name						
DfE number		Date of visit				
Name of monitoring visitor		Headteacher				
Signature		Signature				
Section A: General administration		Y/N	Notes			
Q1. Is the school administering level 2 tests?						
Q2. Have appropriate test materials been ordered?						
Q3. Is there evidence to suggest that the equipment received was checked on arrival?						
Q4. Are test materials stored securely?						
Section B: Test-specific information						
Indicate the status of all test packs with ✓, X, N or P (see overleaf)						
Test date	Level & subject	Test	Unopened test pack storage	Complete test administration process observed	Completed test scripts storage	Test scripts sent to marker
Mon 12 May	L5-5 English	English reading test				
Mon 12 May	L6 English	English reading test				
Tue 13 May	L5-5 English	Paper 1: short answer questions Paper 2: spelling				
Tue 13 May	L6 English	Paper 1: extended task Paper 2: short answer questions Paper 3: spelling				
Wed 14 May	L5-5 mathematics	Mental mathematics test				
Thurs 15 May	L5-5 mathematics	Paper 1				
Thurs 15 May	L5-5 mathematics	Paper 2				
Thurs 15 May	L6 mathematics	Paper 1				
Thurs 15 May	L6 mathematics	Paper 2				
If you have entered an X, N or P in Section B, or have observed any other irregularities during the visit, describe below what issue you have observed and where appropriate, any actions taken.						
<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>						
Monitoring visitor's name	Headteacher's name					
Signature	Signature					

If an 'X', 'N' or 'P' is entered on the monitoring visit form, or any other irregularities are noticed during the visit, the monitoring visitor must record details of the issue and any actions taken on the form. This will enable instances where further investigation by the LA and / or STA is required to be identified.

### 4.1 At the end of the visit

Before leaving the school the monitoring visitor should meet with the headteacher or delegated member of staff to discuss the findings of the visit. If the monitoring visitor has placed an 'X' or 'N' in any box on the monitoring visit form, they should advise whether the school should make changes to its test administration procedures for any remaining tests.

If the monitoring visitor did not find anything that gave them cause for concern, they should make this clear.

Both the monitoring visitor and the headteacher, or delegated member of staff, should sign the monitoring visit form to confirm the visit took place and that any feedback about the administration of the key stage 2 tests has been given to the school.

A copy of the monitoring visit form and any annotated delivery notes should be left with the headteacher, or delegated member of staff. Monitoring visitors must not add any additional detail or make changes to the monitoring visit form after this point.

### 4.2 After the visit

If the monitoring visitor has placed an 'X', 'N' or 'P' in any box on the monitoring visit form, the issue should be discussed immediately with the LA monitoring visits co-ordinator. The monitoring visit form and any annotated delivery notes (where applicable) should be scanned and emailed to STA's maladministration team at [testadmin.sta@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:testadmin.sta@education.gsi.gov.uk). All instances where schools have an 'X', 'N' or 'P' on their monitoring visit form will be followed up by STA's maladministration team.

If no irregularities were identified during the visit, the completed monitoring visit form must be sent to the LA monitoring visits co-ordinator immediately after each visit. The deadline for returning the completed monitoring visit forms to the LA monitoring visits co-ordinator is Friday 23 May.

The LA monitoring visits co-ordinator must send all completed forms, including those already emailed to STA's maladministration team by Tuesday 27 May, to:

STA's monitoring visits agency,  
c/o Customer Intentions, Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA),  
Stag Hill House,  
Guildford,  
Surrey,  
GU2 7XJ.

Delivery notes do not need to be forwarded to STA's monitoring visits agency unless there are issues of concern noted on the monitoring visit form.

LAs should consider keeping copies of completed monitoring visit forms for their own reference.

### 4.3 Follow up

STA's maladministration team will work with LAs to investigate any irregularities reported on the monitoring visit form.

In cases where STA has investigated an allegation of maladministration and has doubts about whether a child's answers represent their own independent and unaided work, test results may be amended or annulled.

## 5. Checklists

### 5.1 Organising your monitoring visits

#### Monitoring visit co-coordinator

- Have you identified LA staff / consultants to undertake the monitoring visits? These may be different to the person responsible for organising and reporting monitoring visits.
- Have you informed all maintained schools, and academies where appropriate, within your LA that are participating in key stage 2 tests about the purpose of the monitoring visits before any visits are made?

You may give the names of those undertaking the monitoring visits and an LA contact, however you must not identify in advance any specific schools that will be visited.

- Have you identified at least 10 per cent of schools administering the key stage 2 tests, including any school selected by STA for monitoring, pupil referral units, special schools, and academies that have chosen to be monitored by your LA?

You should include visits before, during and immediately after the test period.

- Have you put together a briefing session or pack for LA staff / consultants to ensure that the requirements are understood and that they are familiar with the published guidance relating to the administration of the tests?

### 5.2 What to take on a monitoring visit

#### Monitoring visitors

- Do you know how many children are participating in the tests at the school?
- Do you know if the school has children registered for the level 6 test(s)?
- Do you have details of the test materials that have been sent to the school? These details can be found on the electronic copies of the delivery notes provided to LAs.
- Do you have details of any additional time or early opening applications, mental mathematics notification forms, timetable variation applications or notifications?

This information can be downloaded from the 'Access arrangements' section of the NCA tools website at [www.education.gov.uk/ncatools](http://www.education.gov.uk/ncatools).

## 5.3 Monitoring visits before the test period

### Monitoring visitors

- Are the unopened test packs securely stored?
- If a school has opened a test pack early, have you seen evidence to show they have permission to do so? Are the test packs being kept securely?
- Have you confirmed that the school has checked their consignment against the delivery note received with the test materials, and that the number of packs corresponds to the information on the copy of the delivery notes provided for your visit?

## 5.4 Monitoring visits during the test period

### Monitoring visitors

- Are the packs for tests that are yet to be administered unopened and stored securely?
- Is the school administering the correct test according to the statutory timetable?  
A test must not be taken before the day specified in the statutory timetable.
- Are the different papers for the levels 3-5 and level 6 English grammar, punctuation and spelling tests being administered in numerical order?
- Where a school is administering a level 6 test, has the corresponding levels 3-5 test been administered first?

When observing a test being administered, have you checked that:

- children are seated appropriately and are able to work independently?
- displays / materials are covered up or, if uncovered, do not offer any assistance to children?
- test times are adhered to?
- no inappropriate assistance is given to children, either individually or as a group?
- no dictionaries or monolingual English electronic spell checkers are used during any of the English grammar, punctuation and spelling tests?
- calculators are not used during any of the levels 3-5 mathematics test papers or the level 6 mathematics Paper 1?
- mental mathematics test CDs are used, unless access arrangements are in place or a verifiable malfunction of audio equipment has occurred?
- the mental mathematics test CD is used and is stopped only at the appropriate times, as instructed?

- access arrangements, where used, are administered appropriately and in accordance with the guidance published on the DfE's website?
- there is evidence to show the access arrangements are used in accordance with normal classroom practice?
- you have observed the administration of the whole test?
- you have observed the collation and packing of the test scripts and the sealing of the script return bag(s) or transparent inner bag(s)?

## 5.5 Monitoring visits after the test period

### Monitoring visitors

- Have you confirmed that the cupboard where the test scripts and any unused test papers are stored is secure and locked?
- Have the script return bags been packed and sealed in the cupboard?  
If the school is administering a timetable variation for a level 6 test, check that the inner bag(s) for the other test(s) have been sealed and stored in the cupboard.
- Have you seen the proof of posting receipt for any sets of test scripts that have already been collected for marking?

## 5.6 Completing the monitoring visit form at the end of the visit

### Monitoring visitors

- Have you completed all sections on the monitoring visit form, indicating the status of all test packs?
- Have you discussed any issues observed and, where appropriate, included any actions taken with the headteacher or delegated member of staff?
- Has the headteacher or delegated member of staff signed the monitoring visit form to confirm the visit and that any feedback about the administration of the tests has been given to the school?
- Have you given a copy of the completed monitoring visit form and annotated delivery note(s) (if applicable) to the headteacher or delegated member of staff?

## 5.7 Submitting monitoring visit forms and follow-up

### Monitoring visitors

- Have you forwarded the monitoring visit form and annotated delivery note(s) to your LA monitoring visits co-ordinator by Friday 23 May?

### Monitoring visit co-ordinator

- Have you emailed any monitoring visit form(s) with an 'X', 'N' or 'P' entered in any box on the form to STA at [testadmin.sta@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:testadmin.sta@education.gsi.gov.uk)?
- Have you sent all monitoring visit forms to STA's monitoring visits agency by Tuesday 27 May?



# About this publication

## Who is it for?

This guidance is for local authorities (LAs) that have a statutory responsibility to monitor the administration of the key stage 2 national curriculum tests.

Schools are also advised to read this guidance so they are familiar with how monitoring visits will take place.

## What is it for?

This guidance explains how LAs should carry out monitoring visits to schools that are administering the tests.

## Related materials

2014 key stage 2 'Assessment and reporting arrangements'

2014 key stage 2 'Test administrators' guide'

2014 key stage 2 'Modified test administrators' guides'

'Keeping key stage 2 test materials secure' web page

## For more copies

A PDF version of this document can be downloaded from the Department for Education's website at [www.education.gov.uk/ks2](http://www.education.gov.uk/ks2).