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Standards  
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Agency

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# Science sampling arrangements

Updated 2 March 2020

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## Important dates

The biennial science sampling tests for pupils at the end of key stage 2 (KS2) will take place in June 2020.

Selected pupils will sit the tests on a single day during a 2-week period from Monday 8 June to Friday 19 June.

We will notify those schools selected to take part by email on 27 April 2020.

## About the 2020 science tests

Pupils at the end of the KS2 programme of study do not routinely sit a science test, as their performance is measured using teacher assessment judgements.

However, in order to monitor overall national performance, a sample of pupils sit tests in science on a biennial basis.

The sample contains approximately 1,900 schools and we select up to 10 pupils per school to take the tests. The sample is selected in such a way as to ensure it is representative of the population. This means that each eligible pupil at the school has an equal chance of being selected.

Each test consists of 3 papers that will take 25 minutes each to complete.

The KS2 science sampling tests are not subject to local authority monitoring visits, however the Standards and Testing Agency (STA) may choose to observe the test administration.

## **Statutory duty**

Participation in the science sampling tests is statutory and all schools selected are required to take part.

Headteachers of schools selected to participate in the science sampling tests have a statutory duty to ensure that selected pupils take part.

They must ensure that:

- teachers and other staff comply with the arrangements for the sampling tests
- all selected pupils take the tests if they are working at the expected standard in science at the end of the KS2 programme of study

## **Test administration**

For 2020, STA has commissioned the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) to conduct the statutory science sampling tests and technical pre-tests in schools. The tests will be administered in schools by NFER test administrators. A member of school staff should be present at all times during the tests to assist with any issues.

NFER will send selection letters and detailed information about the administration process to selected schools.

They will then contact schools in May to agree which day they will visit the school to administer the tests. Consideration will be given to schools' existing commitments. NFER will also contact the school to confirm which pupils have been selected to take part.

Schools do not need to place test orders for these tests. The NFER test

administrator will bring all necessary test materials and will take away pupils' completed test scripts for marking.

## Test results

Test results will be reported as national data only. No individual school or pupil will be identified within the published data.

Individual pupil and school test results will not be:

- used for school accountability or performance tables
- shared with Ofsted, Regional Schools Commissioners or any other third party
- returned to schools or pupils

We will publish a report summarising the outcomes of the 2020 KS2 science sampling tests in the summer of 2021.

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