Guidance

How to keep test materials secure

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This publication is available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-1-and-2-tests-and-phonics-screening-check-security-advice/how-to-keep-test-materials-secure

Headteachers are responsible for keeping key stage 1 (KS1), key stage 2 (KS2) national curriculum tests and phonics screening check materials secure.

Materials must be kept secure until the end of the test and check administration periods, including timetable variation periods. This includes electronic versions of the KS1 tests and phonics check downloaded from the Primary Assessment Gateway (https://www.primaryassessmentgateway.education.gov.uk/publicaccessproduction/selfservice/citizenportal/login.htm), and any materials subsequently printed in hard copy.

Headteachers should ensure teachers and all other staff who may handle the materials, understand their sensitivity. This will help to maintain the security and confidentiality of the tests.

Test and check administrators must not discuss the content of the tests or check with anyone and not use the content to prepare pupils.

KS1 and KS2 test materials include:

- test papers
- reading booklets
- answer booklets
- mark schemes (KS1 only)
- stationery items, including attendance registers, script return bags and labels (KS2 only)

Phonics screening check materials include:

- pupils' materials
- scoring guidance
- answer sheets

Practical advice for keeping materials secure

For all tests:

- two members of staff should be involved when checking the delivery
- check your delivery promptly against the enclosed delivery note to ensure it contains the correct subject and number of test or check packs – do not open the packs
- put the unopened materials back into the original delivery box
- store the boxes in a secure, locked cupboard
- do not store test or check materials in a room where IT equipment is also kept, as this equipment is often targeted during burglaries
- limit access to the location of the materials
- allocate responsibility for the cupboard key to a nominated member of staff and ensure keys are kept secure at all times
- check the boxes regularly to ensure they have not been tampered with
- keep a record on the door of the storeroom or cupboard to record instances of access to the materials and to record regular security checks
- plan a reporting procedure in the event of a problem, such as if keys are lost or stolen

For KS1 tests:

- check individual test packs have not been opened before the test administration window begins on Friday 1 May
- keep test materials secure and treat them as confidential until Monday 1 June – this includes electronic versions of the tests downloaded from the Primary Assessment Gateway, and any materials subsequently printed in hard copy

For KS2 tests:

- check individual test packs have not been opened before the test date (unless the school has an approved early opening application)
- where an early opening application is approved to allow a school to make modifications to test materials, the original test pack must be resealed, and all test materials kept securely
- keep test materials secure and treat them as confidential until Friday 22 May

For the phonics screening check:

- check the packs have not been opened before Monday 8 June
- keep check materials secure and treat them as confidential until Monday 22 June – this includes electronic versions downloaded from the Primary Assessment Gateway, and any materials subsequently printed in hard copy

If you suspect or experience a breach of security, you must report the incident immediately to the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013. If you do not follow the correct procedures, your school may be subject to a maladministration investigation (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stages-1-and-2-investigating-allegations-of-maladministration).

Schools used as a polling station

If your school is used as a polling station you should:

- ensure test or phonics screening check materials are secure and kept away from the polling station area and visitors
- check the materials before the opening and after the closing of the polling station

Getting help

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