

Ph

KEY STAGE

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YEAR

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National Curriculum assessments

Check administrators' guide

Year 1 phonics screening check

2012

**Standards and
Testing Agency**

An executive agency of the
Department for Education

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2012 Year 1 phonics screening *Check administrators' guide*

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This publication is also available for download at www.education.gov.uk/ks1.

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About this guide

This guide has been produced by the Standards and Testing Agency (STA), an executive agency of the Department for Education. It should be read by anyone who is involved in the administration and scoring of the Year 1 phonics screening check, referred to in this document as 'the check'. It contains important information about what to do before, during and after the check. A copy of the *Check administrators' guide* (CAG) should be taken into the room where the check will be administered as it provides advice on what to do if the check does not run to plan.

This guide must be followed to ensure the administration of the check is consistent for all schools. Schools which do not comply with the guidance in this document could be subject to investigation of maladministration. A full guide to the statutory requirements is available in the 2012 Year 1 phonics screening check *Assessment and reporting arrangements* (ARA).

Other guidance materials

The following materials provide further support to help teachers administer and score the check:

- *2012 Scoring guidance* – this provides the threshold mark that children need to achieve in order to be considered to be working at the standard of the check. It also provides guidance to teachers scoring the screening check on acceptable pronunciations of the pseudo-words in the check. The scoring guidance provides two explanations of how words are pronounced. For example:

blan This uses the 'bl' from 'black' and rhymes with 'pan' /blæn/

A copy of the phonetic alphabet can be found online at www.education.gov.uk/ks1. The scoring guidance will be provided with the check materials when they are sent to schools and must not be opened before the check week.

- *Scoring the Year 1 phonics screening check training video* – this includes examples of children attempting the check and provides guidance on how to score responses. It is important that teachers watch the video before administering the check so that they fully understand the scoring rules. The video will be available on the Department for Education's website at www.education.gov.uk/ks1 and in the phonics section of the NCA tools website¹ from Friday 13 April 2012.
- *Year 1 phonics screening check Sample materials* – this document explains how the check is constructed and what the materials will look like. The document is available on the Department's website at www.education.gov.uk/ks1. A printed copy was sent to schools in January 2012.
- *Guidance for schools on monitoring visits* – this factsheet outlines what schools should expect during a local authority monitoring visit during the check period. It will be made available in March on the Department's website at www.education.gov.uk/ks1.

Further information and guidance

For further help, contact the National Curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 or email assessments@education.gov.uk.

¹ NCA tools is a secure website used for National Curriculum assessments administration. If teachers do not have access to NCA tools, they should ask their headteacher to provide them with access. NCA tools can be accessed from this website: www.ncatools.education.gov.uk.

What to do before the check

Who should administer the check

Where possible the check should be administered by a teacher who is known to the child. It should not be administered by a teaching assistant because the role requires a teacher's professional judgement about which responses are correct. The teacher must not be a relative or parent of the child taking the check.

Ensuring check administrators are prepared

Teachers administering the check should familiarise themselves with the relevant sections of the 2012 Year 1 phonics screening check ARA, in particular pages 8–11 which cover 'Getting ready for the phonics screening check', 'Access arrangements for the phonics screening check' and 'Administering the phonics screening check'.

Teachers should also view the *Scoring the Year 1 phonics screening check training video*. This video will be available online from the Department's website at www.education.gov.uk/ks1 and in the phonics section of the NCA tools website from Friday 13 April 2012.

STA encourages schools to hold training sessions for those involved in administering the check to ensure they are all fully prepared.

Deliveries of the check materials

Check materials will be delivered to schools by Friday 1 June 2012. Schools should open the outer packaging to check the number of packs contained within against the delivery note. The inner packs must be left unopened and stored securely until Monday 18 June 2012.

If a school has not received its check materials by 5pm on 1 June 2012, it should contact the National Curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013.

If the delivery is found to be incomplete, or contains more packs than shown on the delivery note, schools must report this immediately to the National Curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013.

If any of the packs are unsealed or damaged on arrival, the school must report this immediately to STA. Schools may be asked to send a photograph of the damaged packages to STA.

What the materials will include

Schools will receive one set of materials per 30 children in Year 1. Each set of materials will contain one copy of the check booklet, 30 mark sheets, a copy of the practice sheet, and one copy of the 2012 *Scoring guidance*, which includes the threshold mark.

Teachers should use the mark sheets to record each child's responses. They can also use them to record their own comments which may help them when planning future phonics teaching. If there are not enough mark sheets teachers should photocopy one or download and print copies from the phonics section of NCA tools.

Storing the materials securely

The materials, including any downloaded from NCA tools, must be securely stored for the duration of the check week and until the last check has been administered in the school. This may be up until Friday 29 June. It is important to maintain the security of the check materials to ensure that no child has an unfair advantage over another.

Schools should take the following steps to keep the materials secure:

- After checking the materials against the delivery note, reseal them and store them in a secure, locked location.
- Keep the annotated copy of the delivery note in an accessible place in case the school receives a monitoring visit.
- Conduct daily checks of the materials to ensure they have not been tampered with.
- Ensure individual packs of check materials have not been opened before the check week, the week commencing Monday 18 June 2012.
- Ensure those who handle the check materials understand their sensitivity.

If the school suspects that there might have been a breach of security regarding the check materials, the incident must be reported immediately to the National Curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013. STA will then investigate the incident and take action where appropriate.

What the check will look like

An example of the check can be found in the sample materials available online at www.education.gov.uk/ks1.

The check materials will include a ten page booklet with four words on each page. The check contains 40 words divided into two sections of 20 words. Each page will contain either four pseudo-words or four real words. All letters will be lower case.

Each pseudo-word will be accompanied by a picture of an imaginary creature. This picture is used to provide children with a context for the word they are being asked to decode (naming the type of imaginary creature). This is to ensure that they are not trying to match the pseudo-word to a word in their vocabulary. An example of what the teacher could say to introduce the check is available on page ten.

Preparing the room

Any rooms where the check will take place must be prepared before children are admitted. The check should be administered in a room which is quiet and provides a comfortable, well lit space for the child. Any displays or materials that could help children in the check must be removed or covered for the duration of the check.

Access arrangements

Teachers may need to adapt the check arrangements for some children. Access arrangements should neither advantage nor disadvantage individual children. Schools should refer to section 3 of the 2012 Year 1 phonics screening check ARA for more information.

Children with selective mutism

Children with selective mutism will be unable to complete the check because they cannot give verbal responses in the school. They may be able to identify the words in the check but will not be able to demonstrate that knowledge by speaking the answers out loud. Children with selective mutism should be provided with an alternative experience to the check. They may demonstrate their knowledge at home with a family member who can discuss the outcome with the teacher. This arrangement will ensure the child has had a similar experience to their peers and provide an opportunity for them to show their knowledge.

For data collection purposes, the child should be recorded as being disapplied from participating in the check, as the results cannot be validated. At-home administration should only take place after 29 June, when all children, including any who were absent during the check week, have had the check administered to them and the data has been submitted. This avoids any potential security issues regarding the check materials.

Modified versions of the check

The words in the standard version of the screening check will be printed on white paper and written in the font 'Sassoon Infant™', font size 60. Schools will be able to access an electronic version of the check from NCA tools to enable them to modify the check to suit the needs of specific children. A number of different electronic versions will be available for modification:

- A PDF of the standard materials for printing onto different coloured paper.
- Word versions of the standard materials with colour pictures, black and white pictures and no pictures.
- A PDF of the practice materials.
- Word versions of the practice sheet with colour pictures, black and white pictures and no pictures.
- A PDF of the mark sheet.
- A PDF of the 2012 *Scoring guidance*.

Braille versions of the check are available on request. They will be provided in grade 1 Braille without pictures of imaginary creatures. Schools may order a Braille version by contacting the modified test agency on 0300 303 3019. To comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, schools must not send these requests by email.

The deadline for ordering Braille versions is Monday 30 April 2012.

Children who are working below the level of the check

Children who have not shown any understanding of grapheme-phoneme correspondences should not participate in the check and headteachers should consider disapplying them. More information on this can be found on pages 11 and 12 of the 2012 Year 1 phonics screening check ARA.

Teachers may want to provide a similar check experience for children who have been disappplied. They could do so by modifying the practice sheets, which will be made available electronically alongside the live check materials on Monday 18 June 2012. Teachers may include only single letters or simple two letter blends on the sheet so these children can demonstrate the skills they have learnt.

It will not be possible to report the results of this activity. Where a child is unable to access the check it is important that teachers are aware of that child's progress in phonics so they can plan the next steps in their teaching.

Arrangements for children who cannot take the check at the scheduled time

The check can be administered on any day during the week commencing Monday 18 June 2012. If a child is absent during that week, the school can administer the check up until Friday 29 June 2012. Any child who is absent from school for this entire period should be recorded as absent when submitting the data for the check.

If schools are planning to administer the check to a child in the week after the check week, consideration should be given to the security and confidentiality of the check materials to ensure the integrity of the check is maintained.

Administering the check

The check must be administered by a teacher on a one-to-one basis.

At the beginning of the check

Teachers should introduce the check in a consistent way for all children. However, some children may require more explanation in order to understand the task. Teachers may consider using the double-sided practice sheet, containing four pseudo-words and four real words on each side, to familiarise children with the task.

The following text provides an example of how teachers could introduce the check.

- In this activity, I am going to ask you to read some words aloud.
- You may have seen some of the words before and others will be new to you.
- You should try to read each word but don't worry if you can't. If it helps you, you may sound out the letters before trying to say the word.
- This practice sheet shows you what the words will look like.
- Have a go at reading out loud these four words which you should have come across before [at, in, beg and sum].
- The words on this side [turn over practice sheet] are not real words. They are names for types of imaginary creatures. You can see a picture of the creature next to each word.
- Can you read out the words on this page for me [ot, vap, osk and ect]?
- Ok, now we are going to start reading out the words in this booklet and I'm going to write down what you say on my sheet.
- In this booklet, there are four words on each page. I will tell you at the start of each page whether they are real words that you may have seen before or words for imaginary creatures.
- The first page has words for imaginary creatures and you can see their pictures.
- Can you start reading the words to me?

It is important to tell the child whether they are real words or types of imaginary creatures on each page.

Teachers can point to whole words to indicate to a child which word comes next, but must be careful not to point to the words in a way that indicates how to decode them, for example, pointing from left to right, or hovering over letters.

During the practice, teachers can give further guidance to ensure children understand the task. For example, they can remind the child that the word must be blended, which would not be allowed during the check itself.

Scoring the check

The check should be scored by the teacher as the child works through each word in order. For each word, the teacher should record whether the child said the word correctly or not with a cross on the mark sheet considering the following points:

- Children may choose to sound out phonemes before blending. If a child sounds out the phonemes but does not blend the word, they must not be prompted to do so. This must be scored as incorrect.
- Children may elongate phonemes as long as they are blended to form the word. However, if children leave gaps between phonemes and do not blend them, this must be scored as incorrect.
- Alternative pronunciations must be considered when deciding whether a response is correct. For real words, inappropriate grapheme-phoneme correspondences should be marked incorrect (for example, reading 'blow' to rhyme with 'cow' would be incorrect). However, alternative pronunciations of graphemes will be allowed in pseudo-words.
- A child's accent should be taken into account when deciding whether a response is acceptable. There should be no bias in favour of children with a particular accent.
- Any pronunciation difficulties for a child should be taken into account when deciding whether a response is acceptable (for example, a child who is unable to form the 'th' sound and instead usually says 'fw' should have this scored as correct).
- If a child shows their ability to decode by correcting an incorrect attempt, this should be marked as correct. However, children should not be prompted to 'have another go'. If a child makes several attempts at a word, the final attempt should be scored, even if this is incorrect and a previous attempt had been correct.
- Teachers should not indicate whether a child has decoded a word correctly or incorrectly during the administration of the check but they may offer encouragement or support to ensure they remain focussed on the task.
- Children should be given as long as necessary to respond to a word, although in most cases, ten seconds should be sufficient. The teacher should decide when it is appropriate to tell the child to move onto the next word, taking care not to try to move the child on if they are still trying to decode the word.

For more guidance on how to score the check, see the *Scoring the Year 1 phonics screening check training video* available on the Department's website at www.education.gov.uk/ks1 from Thursday 5 April 2012 and in the phonics section of the NCA tools website from Friday 13 April 2012.

Schools will be provided with detailed guidance on acceptable pronunciations of the pseudo-words in the check in the 2012 *Scoring guidance* document. This will be sent to schools with the check materials and will be available in the phonics section of the NCA tools website from Monday 18 June 2012.

Dealing with queries and issues during the check

It is impossible to plan for every scenario. Whatever action the teacher takes when dealing with queries and issues, the child's safety and wellbeing must always be their first consideration. However, teachers must ensure that nothing they say or do during the check could be interpreted as giving children an advantage. For further help and guidance, contact the National Curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013.

Stopping the check before the end

Most children should be able to attempt all words in the check. However, it is important that a child does not have a negative experience. If a child is struggling with the check, the teacher should give careful consideration to stopping it before the end. When making the decision to stop, the teacher should ensure that the child has been given full opportunity to show what they can do.

It is important that children do not become distressed. If a child is showing signs of fatigue, teachers should consider whether to use a rest break or to stop the check altogether.

Completing the mark sheet

Teachers should complete the relevant response column for each child during the check to ensure they have an accurate record of how many words a child read correctly. They may also wish to use the comments column to note down any graphemes a child did not recognise, or when blending was difficult, which may help to inform future teaching.

A sample mark sheet can be found within the sample materials available at www.education.gov.uk/ks1.

Storing the check materials

The materials must be securely stored for the duration of the check week and until the last check has been administered in the school, which may be up until Friday 29 June. This is to maintain the integrity of the check.

After the check

Completing the Headteacher's declaration form (HDF)

It is the headteacher's statutory duty to ensure the implementation of the check in their school, and to adhere to the 2012 Year 1 phonics screening check ARA. Headteachers must ensure that their schools comply with all aspects of the ARA. Completion of the HDF is statutory and must be completed by the headteacher, or another authorised member of staff, after the last check has been administered. Submission of the form confirms the check has been administered in accordance with the statutory requirements set out in the ARA and that the security and confidentiality of the check have been maintained.

The HDF will be available in the phonics section of NCA tools from Monday 18 June 2012 and must be submitted by Friday 29 June 2012.

It is important that the headteacher is fully briefed about any incidents that arise during the check. Any incident that may have affected the integrity, security or confidentiality of the check must be reported to STA.

If, for any reason, the headteacher or other authorised member of staff cannot complete the HDF they should notify the National Curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013.

Establishing results and informing parents

Teachers should check each child's score against the threshold mark on the 2012 *Scoring guidance* and establish whether they have achieved the expected standard. Children will either meet the standard or not meet the standard. The 2012 *Scoring guidance* will be sent with the check materials.

Teachers must report to parents whether or not their child has met the required standard to ensure they are aware of their child's progress in developing phonics skills. This must be done by the end of the summer term at the latest. Schools can choose how to communicate results to parents and may wish to include additional information, for example, about extra support the school is putting in place for their child, and how parents can help their child progress with phonics and reading at home.

Providing results data to local authorities or other accredited agencies

Maintained schools must report pupil-level phonics screening check results to their local authority. Academies (including Free Schools) should report pupil-level phonics screening check results to their local authority, other nominated local authority, or other accredited agency.

Local authorities and other accredited agencies will provide details of how schools should provide data to them. Management information system suppliers have been advised of the data requirements for the phonics screening check. Support for these systems is often offered through a local authority or the supplier themselves depending on local arrangements.

If a child moves school after taking the phonics screening check their results should be submitted by the school in which they took the check and passed to their next school for information.

Local authorities and other accredited agencies will submit check results data to the Department between Monday 18 June and Tuesday 31 July 2012. Data received by the Department after 31 July 2012 may not be included in the provisional statistics or initial release of RAISEonline data.

What to do if the child has not met the expected standard

Children who have not reached the expected standard in the check at the end of Year 1 must be considered for a retake in the June of Year 2. Information on the statutory arrangements for administering the check to pupils in Year 2 will be published in next year's *Key Stage 1 Assessment and reporting arrangements*.

How to act on the results

The Department has published guidance on the action schools should take if a child does not meet the expected standard. *Responding to the results: planning what to do next* will be available to download from www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/pedagogy/phonics by May 2012.

Checklists

Deliveries

- Check the contents of packages against the delivery note which can be found in the first box of the delivery. Ensure the correct quantities of check materials are included. If these do not match, contact the National Curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013.
- Check that the sealed packs have not been opened or damaged in transit. If any of the packs are unsealed or damaged, report this immediately to the National Curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013.
- Store the check materials securely in their resealed boxes, in a locked cabinet in a locked room, until the check takes place.
- Check the security of the materials regularly. Ensure that the delivery note received with the check materials is kept in an accessible place as a record of the materials being stored in school, in case the school receives a monitoring visit from the local authority.

Before the check

- Teachers should ensure they can access NCA tools as they will need to use it to download materials from Monday 18 June 2012.
- Order any Braille versions of the screening check.
- Make a note of any individual needs and consider any appropriate access arrangements, for example, modified papers.
- Choose and prepare a room to use for the check, covering all displays that may help children with the check.
- Ensure there is a copy of the 2012 Year 1 phonics screening check ARA in the check room in case any questions arise that are not answered in this guide.

Administering the check

- Teachers should introduce the screening check consistently, ensuring children are clear about what they will be expected to do. An example of how to introduce the check can be found on page 10.
- Teachers should score each child's responses clearly using the mark sheets provided.
- Teachers should make their own judgement if they think the check should be stopped before the end for a particular child.
- Teachers should store all materials securely in between checks.

After the check

- Complete and submit the HDF by Friday 29 June 2012.
- Report pupil-level results to the local authority or accredited agency by the deadline.
- Ensure parents are informed of results.
- Store the materials securely during the check week and until the last check has been administered in the school, which may be up until Friday 29 June.

About this publication

Who is it for?

This guidance is for headteachers and Year 1 teachers who will administer the phonics screening check. It is also sent to local authorities.

What is it for?

This booklet provides guidance on the administration of the Year 1 phonics screening check. Teachers should familiarise themselves with its content before administering the check.

Related materials

2012 Year 1 phonics screening check <i>Assessment and reporting arrangements</i> (ARA)	STA/12/5688
2012 Year 1 phonics screening check <i>Sample materials</i>	STA/12/5736
2012 Year 1 phonics screening check <i>Assessment framework</i>	STA/12/5798
2012 Year 1 phonics screening check <i>Scoring guidance</i>	STA/12/5799
<i>Scoring the Year 1 phonics screening check training video</i>	STA/12/5800

For more copies

Additional printed copies of the CAG are not available. This document can be downloaded from the STA Orderline at <http://orderline.education.gov.uk>. Search using the electronic product code reference STA/12/5789/p.