

National Curriculum assessments

KEY STAGE
2

YEARS
3–6

Monitoring visits guidance for local authorities

Key Stage 2 tests

2013



Standards
& Testing
Agency

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2013 Key Stage 2 *Monitoring visits guidance for local authorities*
Key Stage 2 tests

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This publication is available for download at www.education.gov.uk/ks2.

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Background

Local authorities have a statutory responsibility to monitor the administration of the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests. The Standards and Testing Agency (STA) may also make monitoring visits to maintained schools.

Academies have been asked to choose whether to be monitored by their current local authority, another local authority, or STA. References to academies in this document include Free Schools, as in law they are academies. If an academy has not nominated an alternative provider of monitoring visits it will be included in its local authority's arrangements.

This guidance explains how local authorities should carry out monitoring visits to schools administering the tests.

The purpose of monitoring visits

Monitoring visits help 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 published guidance. They also give headteachers a formal opportunity to demonstrate how the tests are administered in their schools.

Guidance for delivering monitoring visits

Local authorities 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 ten 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 local authority.

Local authorities should not make more than one visit to an individual school unless there are concerns that have already been discussed with the local authority monitoring visit coordinator and STA.

In exceptional circumstances STA may ask the local authority to visit a particular school in their authority. STA will provide local authorities with the details of these schools in early April.

STA recommends each local authority identifies a person to act as monitoring visits coordinator. The monitoring visits coordinator 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 timetable variations;
- emailing any monitoring visit forms where an 'X' or 'N' has been entered in any box to STA's maladministration team at testadmin.sta@education.gsi.gov.uk; and

- forwarding all completed monitoring visit forms, including those already emailed to STA's maladministration team, to STA's monitoring visits agency.

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 and who are familiar with the published guidance on test administration. 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.

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

Identification required for monitoring visitors

All monitoring visitors must carry identification that should be shown on arrival at the school. Schools may contact their local authority to confirm the identity of local authority visitors, or the National Curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 for STA 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.

Providing information to schools

Before undertaking any monitoring visits, local authorities may want to contact schools within their authority to explain the purpose of the visits. Local authorities 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 on the Monitoring visits page of the Department for Education's website at www.education.gov.uk/ks2.

Visits before the test period

STA recommends that approximately ten per cent of monitoring visits take place during the week leading up to Monday 13 May when the test period begins. The purpose of these visits is to check that the sealed test packs are unopened and stored securely. Monitoring visitors should ask to view the school's annotated delivery note(s) to confirm the quantities of test materials that have been received.

Visits during the test period

The majority, approximately 80 per cent, of monitoring visits should be made during the test period described in the *Key Stage 2 Assessment and reporting arrangements*. The monitoring visitor should arrive at the school in time to:

- observe the complete test administration process, including the opening of the test packs and the completion of the test; and
- oversee the packaging and the secure storage of the test scripts (the test papers containing the children's answers).

Where a school has more than one class taking the tests, or tests are administered in more than one room, the monitoring visitor should monitor the test administration in each room. They should make sure they oversee the packaging and the secure storage of the test scripts for the whole cohort.

The monitoring visitor should also check the security of test packs for any tests that have not yet been administered.

The monitoring visitor should visit one school participating in the levels 3-5 tests in the morning, and one school participating in the level 6 tests in the afternoon.

Visits after the test period

Up to 10 per cent of the total number of monitoring visits made should be immediately after the test period.

Monitoring visitors should check that test scripts are stored securely. If test scripts have already been sent to the marker, 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.

Preparing for monitoring visits

All local authority staff undertaking monitoring visits need to be familiar with the following guidance, which is published on the Department's website at www.education.gov.uk/ks2.

- 2013 Key Stage 2 *Assessment and reporting arrangements* (ARA)
- 2013 Key Stage 2 *Test administrators' guide*
- 2013 Key Stage 2 modified test administrators' guides
- Keeping Key Stage 2 test materials secure web page

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 local authorities in early April.
- Details of any additional time, early opening or timetable variation applications. These can be viewed on the NCA tools website at www.education.gov.uk/ncatools.

Please note: the local authority monitoring visits coordinator will need their registered email address and password to access NCA tools. Information about how to log into NCA tools is available on the Department's website at www.education.gov.uk/assessment.

What to look for during monitoring visits

Visits before the test period

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.

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 local authorities in early April. Schools should be able to present 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.

Opening materials early

Test packs can 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 from STA or their local authority for early opening.

It is not necessary to open the test packs early so that test administrators can familiarise themselves with the test content. This can lead to allegations of maladministration.

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 directly 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 either the local authority or 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 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.

Visits during the test period

Monitoring visitors should arrive before the start of the administration of a test. 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;
- 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 spell checkers are not used during any of the English grammar, punctuation and spelling tests;
- calculators are not used during the levels 3-5 mathematics Test A, the mental mathematics test, 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 the access arrangements are used in accordance with normal classroom practice.

Where a school has more than one class taking the tests, or 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.

Visits after the test period

The monitoring visitor should ask to be shown where the test scripts are stored and check that they are secure. The table below gives the dates when test scripts will be collected.

School DfE number	Test script collection dates
Schools with a DfE number that ends with an even digit (including 0)	Between 9am and 4pm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thursday 16 May Monday 20 May
Schools with a DfE number that ends with an odd digit	Between 9am and 4pm <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wednesday 15 May Friday 17 May

Schools that have test scripts remaining after Friday 17 May will receive an additional collection on Monday 20 May.

The monitoring visitor should ask to see the proof of posting receipt for any test scripts that have already been sent for marking.

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 monitoring visits form is available to download from the Department's website at www.education.gov.uk/ks2.

Reporting issues to STA

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 local authority and/or STA is required to be identified.

If the monitoring visitor observes any irregularities, the local authority monitoring visits coordinator must scan the monitoring visit form, together with any annotated delivery notes (if applicable), and email it to STA's maladministration team at testadmin.sta@education.gsi.gov.uk as soon as possible after the visit.

All instances where schools have an 'X', 'N' or 'P' on their monitoring visit form will be followed up by STA's maladministration team.

2013 Key Stage 2 monitoring visit form

Section A: General administration

Section B: Test specific information

Section C: Additional information

Completing Section A

Completing Section B

Completing Section C

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.

After the visit

If the monitoring visitor has placed an 'X' or 'N' in any box on the monitoring visit form, the issue should be discussed immediately with the local authority monitoring visits coordinator. 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.

If no irregularities were identified during the visit, the completed monitoring visit form must be sent to the local authority monitoring visits coordinator immediately after each visit. The deadline for returning the completed monitoring visit forms to local authorities is Friday 24 May.

The local authority monitoring visits coordinator must send all completed forms, including those already emailed to STA's maladministration team, to STA's monitoring visits agency, c/o Customer Intentions, Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA), Stag Hill House, Guildford, Surrey GU2 7XJ.

STA's monitoring visits agency will contact all local authorities that have not sent in copies of their completed monitoring visit forms by Tuesday 28 May.

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

Follow up

STA's maladministration team will work with local authorities to investigate any irregularities reported on the monitoring visit form. The local authority may be asked to interview test administrators and provide recommendations to STA.

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. STA will inform local authorities of the outcome of each investigation.

Checklists

Organising your monitoring visits

- Have you identified a person to be responsible for ensuring the programme of monitoring visits is organised and reported?
- Have you identified local authority 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 local authority that are participating in Key Stage 2 tests about the purpose of the monitoring visits before any visits are made? This can include giving the names of those undertaking the monitoring visits and a local authority 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 pupil referral units, special schools, and academies that have chosen to be monitored by your local authority? You should include visits before, during and immediately after the test period.
- Have you put together a briefing session or pack for local authority 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?

What to take on a monitoring visit

- Do you know how many children are participating in the tests at the school?
- 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 local authorities.
- Do you have details of any additional time, early opening or 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.

Monitoring visits before the test period

- Have you checked that the storage of unopened test packs is secure?
- 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?

Monitoring visits during the test period

- Have you checked that packs for tests that are yet to be administered are 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?
- If a school has chosen to administer a level 6 test, make sure they will administer the corresponding levels 3-5 test 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?
 - no calculators are used during the levels 3-5 mathematics Test A, the mental mathematics test or the level 6 mathematics Paper 1?
 - 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 2013 Key Stage 2 ARA?
 - there is evidence to show the access arrangements are used in accordance with normal classroom practice?

Monitoring visits after the test period

- Have you viewed the storage of test scripts and checked that they are securely packed and stored in a locked cupboard?
- Have you asked to see the proof of posting receipt for any sets of test scripts that have already been collected for marking?

Completing the monitoring visit form at the end of the visit

- 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?

Submitting monitoring visit forms and follow-up

- Have you forwarded the monitoring visit form and annotated delivery note(s) to your local authority monitoring visits coordinator by Friday 24 May?
- Has the local authority monitoring visits coordinator emailed any monitoring visit forms with an 'X' or 'N' entered in any box on the form to STA at testadmin.sta@education.gsi.gov.uk?
- Has the local authority monitoring visits coordinator sent all monitoring visit forms to STA's monitoring visits agency by Tuesday 28 May?



About this publication

Who is it for?

This guidance is for local authorities that have a statutory responsibility to monitor the administration of the Key Stage 2 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 booklet explains how local authorities should carry out monitoring visits to schools that are administering the tests.

Related information

Visit the Department for Education's website at www.education.gov.uk/ks2 for all related information.

Statutory instruments

Key Stage 2: Statutory Instrument 2003 No. 1038

For more copies

Printed copies of this guidance are not available. It can be downloaded from the Department's website at www.education.gov.uk/ks2.