



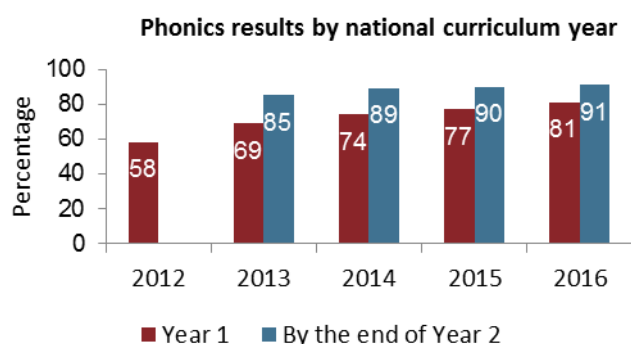
Department
for Education

Phonics screening check and Key stage 1 assessments in England, 2016



SFR 42/2016, 29 September 2016

Continued increase in pupils achieving the phonics standard



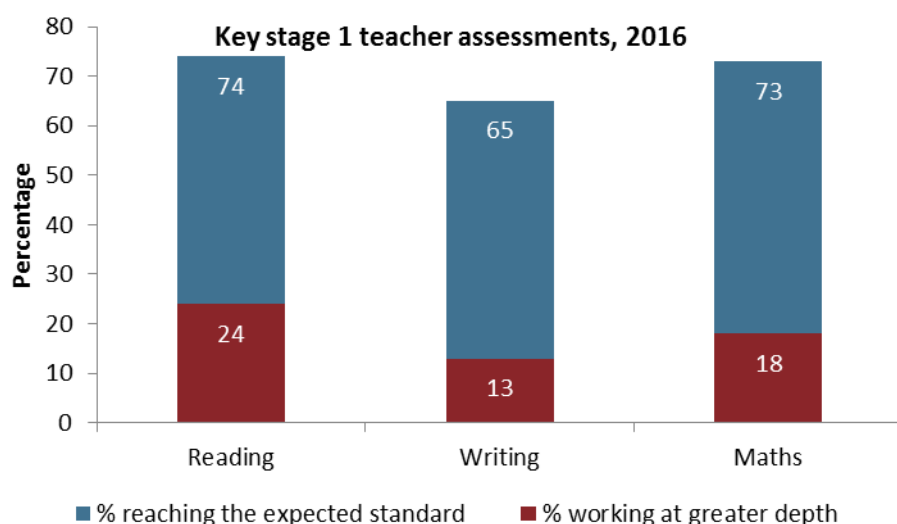
More than 4 in 5 (81%) pupils met the expected phonics standard in year 1 (6 year olds) in 2016, a 4 percentage point increase from 2015 when 77% of pupils achieved the expected standard.

By the end of year 2 (age 7), more than 9 in 10 pupils (91%) met the standard in 2016, a 1 percentage point increase from 2015.

New key stage 1 assessments in 2016

Pupils were assessed against the new more challenging curriculum, which was introduced in 2014, for the first time this year. Results are no longer reported as levels, the interim frameworks for teacher assessment have been used by teachers to assess if a pupil has met the new, higher expected standard. This release presents attainment based on teacher assessments. Because of these assessment changes, figures for 2016 are not comparable to those for earlier years. The expectations for pupils at the end of key stage 1 have been raised. The department does not however collect or report test results.

At the end of key stage 1, fewer pupils reach the expected standard in writing than in other subjects.



Nearly 3 in 4 pupils achieved the new expected standard in reading (74%) and mathematics (73%), and nearly 2 in 3 (65%) pupils in writing. Within the expected standard, nearly a quarter (24%) of pupils are working at greater depth in reading, but fewer are in writing (13%) or maths (18%).

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About this release

This statistical first release (SFR) provides 2016 phonics screening check and key stage 1 national curriculum teacher assessment results for pupils in schools in England at national, regional and local authority level based on provisional data.

In this publication

The following tables are included in the SFR:

- Phonics tables (Excel .xls)
- KS1 national tables (Excel .xls)
- KS1 local authority tables (Excel .xls)
- Underlying data (open format .csv and metadata .txt)

The accompanying quality and methodology information document, provides information on the data sources, their coverage and quality and explains the methodology used in producing the data.

Feedback

We are changing how our releases look and welcome feedback on any aspect of this document at Primary.attainment@education.gsi.gov.uk

1. Phonics results (Tables 1 and 7)

81% of pupils met the expected standard of phonic decoding at the end of year 1. An increase of 23 percentage points¹ since the introduction of the assessment in 2012. The proportion of year 1 pupils achieving the phonics standard has increased year on year since 2012.

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard by the end of year 2 has risen to 91% in 2016 continuing the steady increase from the 85% of pupils achieving the standard when the year 2 assessment was introduced in 2013.






Table A shows the proportion of pupils meeting the phonics standard by the end of year 2, comparing that with the proportion of pupils in their year group who had met the standard while in year 1.

School level figures are not published for phonics, but 1138 schools² have at least 95% of the pupils achieving the phonics standard in year 1 in 2016 compared with 753 schools in 2015 and 611 in 2014.

Phonics screening check

This is a statutory assessment for all pupils in year 1 (typically aged 6) to check whether they have reached the expected standard in phonic decoding. All state-funded schools with a year 1 cohort must administer the check. Those pupils who did not meet the standard in year 1 or who were not tested, must be re-checked at the end of year 2 (typically aged 7).

Table A: Percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard of phonic decoding by national curriculum years 1 and 2:
England, 2012-2016

	Year 1		Year 2	Improvement from Year 1 to Year 2 (Percentage points)
2016	81%		91%	14
2015	77%		90%	16
2014	74%		89%	20
2013	69%		85%	27
2012	58%		Not applicable	

Source: National Pupil Database

2. Phonics check mark distribution (Table 4)

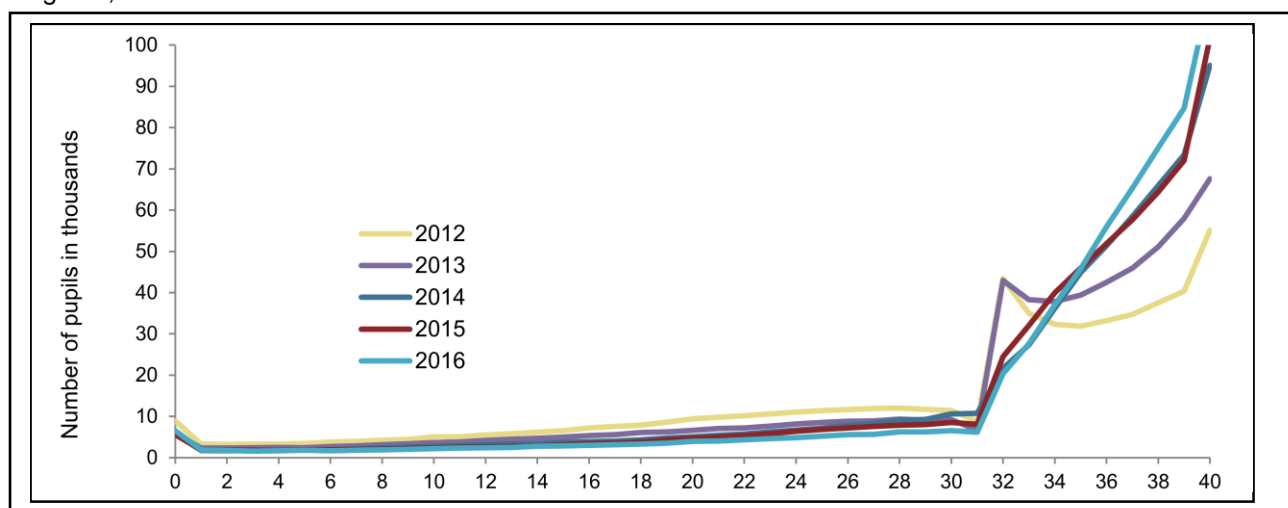
Teachers administer the screening check one-on-one with each pupil and record whether their response to each of the 40 words is correct. This results in each pupil being awarded a mark between 0 and 40 and for 2016, as in previous years, the threshold to determine whether a pupil had reached the expected standard was 32. Since 2014, this threshold mark has not been communicated to schools until after the screening check has been completed, however its year-on-year stability means it is predictable.

In 2016, the highest ever percentage of year 1 pupils who took the test achieved full marks (18%), compared with 16% in 2015 and 9% in 2012.

¹ All gaps are based on unrounded data

² These figures exclude schools with fewer than 11 pupils

Figure 1: Year 1 phonics screening check mark distribution:
England, 2012 to 2016



Source: National Pupil Database

3. Key stage 1 teacher assessments (Tables 11, 12 and 13)

74% of pupils reached the new expected standard in reading, 65% in writing and 73% in mathematics.

The 2016 key stage 1 assessments are the first which assess the new, more challenging national curriculum. The expected standard has also been raised to be higher than the old level 2. As a result, figures for 2016 are not comparable to those for earlier years.

For context only, table B shows the 2013 to 2015 figures for the number of pupils achieving level 2b or above, for each of reading, writing and mathematics. The new expected standards were designed to be broadly similar but are not equivalent to an old level 2b. The performance descriptors, used by teachers in the standard setting process, were developed with an understanding of the performance of pupils working at level 2b. However, given the curricula differences, there is not a direct equivalence between the new expected standard and level 2b in previous years.

Table B: Attainment in KS1 assessments by subject
England, 2013 to 2016

	Achieved level 2b or above in reading	Reached the expected standard in reading	Achieved level 2b or above in writing	Reached the expected standard in writing	Achieved level 2b or above in mathematics	Reached the expected standard in mathematics
2013	79%	-	67%	-	78%	-
2014	81%	-	70%	-	80%	-
2015	82%	-	72%	-	82%	-
2016	-	74%	-	65%	-	73%

Source: National Pupil Database

Attainment by school type

Attainment levels in local authority maintained mainstream schools, and academies and free schools are very similar. But this masks variation between the different types of schools within the academies and free schools group.

There are differences in attainment in the individual subjects – in every subject attainment is highest in free schools, then converter academies and lowest in sponsored academies. This reflects that many sponsored academies were low performing schools before becoming an academy and converter academies were usually high performing schools before becoming an academy. Despite the change in the expected standard, the different school types have maintained similar relative positions.

Number of primary schools³:

There were 15,677 state-funded mainstream with key stage 1 assessments in 2016.

12,980 (83%) were LA maintained schools

1,755 (11%) were converter academies

839 (5%) were sponsored academies.

103 were free schools.

See the methodology and quality information for information on types of schools

Table C: Attainment in key stage 1 assessments at the expected standard or above by type of school England, 2016 (mainstream schools)

	Reading	Writing	Maths	Science
LA maintained schools	75%	66%	73%	83%
Academies and free schools	74%	66%	74%	81%
of which:				
Sponsored academies	70%	62%	70%	76%
Converter academies	76%	68%	75%	84%
Free schools	79%	73%	79%	86%

Attainment by school cohort size

Table D indicates there is little difference in the percentages of pupils achieving the expected standard between cohort sizes. The largest proportion of pupils are in schools with a key stage 1 cohort size between 31 and 60 pupils, and their percentage of pupils attaining the expected standard is just 1-2 percentage points behind those with smaller cohorts. In attainment at the higher standard, the gap is slightly wider. Cohorts of 31 to 60 pupils attainment is 3 percentage points behind those with the smallest cohort size of 1 to 15 pupils in reading and by 1 percentage point in writing and mathematics. At the higher standard, attainment is highest in schools with bigger cohorts in mathematics, however, they have a smaller proportion of pupils.

Table D: Attainment in key stage 1 assessments by school cohort size England, 2016 (mainstream schools)

School cohort size	Number of schools	Number of eligible pupils	Reading		Writing		Maths	
			Reaching the expected standard	Reaching a higher standard	Reaching the expected standard	Reaching a higher standard	Reaching the expected standard	Reaching a higher standard
1 to 15 pupils	2,284	23,628	75%	26%	64%	14%	73%	18%
16 to 30 pupils	5,476	143,036	76%	24%	67%	14%	74%	18%
31 to 60 pupils	5,806	290,030	74%	23%	66%	13%	73%	17%
61 to 90 pupils	1,740	137,426	74%	24%	66%	14%	73%	19%
91 or more pupils	371	42,229	74%	24%	66%	14%	73%	19%

Source: National pupil database

³ Where schools have changed type during the academic year, they are shown under their type as on 11 September 2015.

4. Pupil characteristics

Phonics by pupil characteristics (Table 2):

A higher proportion of girls than boys continue to meet the phonics standard – there is a gap of 7 percentage points, a decrease of 1 percentage point from 2015. The gap was steady at 8 percentage points between 2012 and 2015.

The biggest attainment gap is between pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and those with no identified SEN. Both groups have improved their attainment in phonics by 3 percentage points in 2016, meaning the gap between these groups is stable, with SEN pupils attainment at 42% compared to 86% for pupils with no SEN.

The attainment gap between pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) and all other pupils narrowed again by 1 percentage point to 14 percentage points, with a similar decrease having occurred in 2015. Attainment improved for both groups by 4 percentage points since last year.

There is no noticeable difference between performance of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) and others. 80% of pupils with EAL achieved the phonics standard, compared to 81% of all other pupils. The attainment gap was similar in 2015 with 76% of EAL pupils achieving the standard compared to 77% of all other pupils

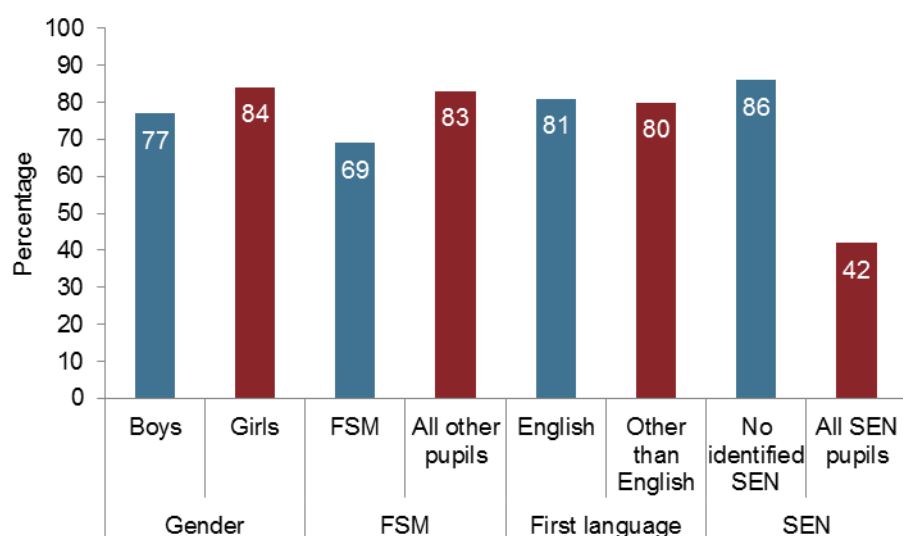
Characteristics definitions

There were no changes to characteristics definitions in 2016, but there were a few changes to some definitions in previous years.

See the pupil characteristics information for the definitions used

Data on disadvantaged pupils will be added in the Excel tables in December 2016 when this data becomes available.

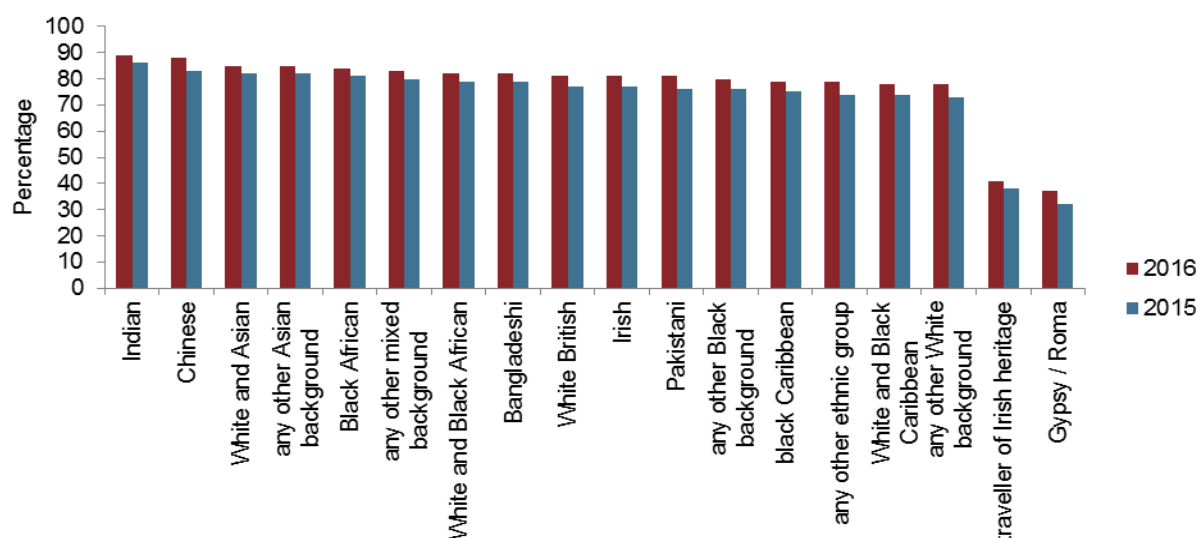
Figure 2: Phonics year 1 results by characteristics:
England, 2016



Source: National Pupil Database

All ethnic groups have improved in phonics attainment compared to last year. Indian and Chinese pupils continue to outperform the other ethnic groups, with Irish traveller and Gypsy/Roma pupils the lowest attaining groups.

Figure 3: Phonics year 1 results by ethnicity:
England

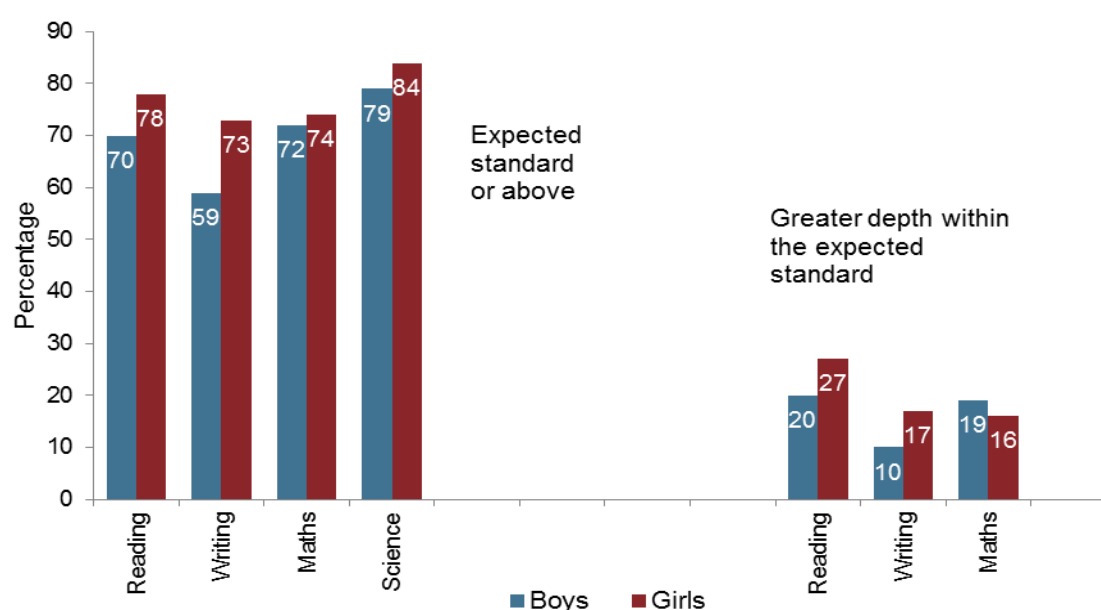


Source: National Pupil Database

Key stage 1 by pupil characteristics (Table 15):

At key stage 1 (KS1) girls out perform boys in all subjects. Against the new expected standard the largest difference in attainment by gender continues to be in writing with a gap of 14 percentage points, between girls (73%) and boys (59%). The attainment gap for reading is 9 percentage points. It is narrowest for mathematics at 2 percentage points. In 2015, the largest gap was for writing with 8 percentage points, followed by reading with 5 percentage points and mathematics with 3 percentage points. At the old level 2b or above, the largest gap again was for writing (14 percentage points), followed by reading (8 percentage points and mathematics (3 percentage points)

Figure 4: Key stage 1 teacher assessments by gender:
England, 2016



Source: National Pupil Database

Table E shows the attainment gaps between FSM pupils and all other pupils. In 2016, the attainment gap is 17 percentage points in reading and 18 percentage points in writing and mathematics. For context, table E also shows attainment gaps for previous years for results at level 2 or above based on the old teacher assessments. In 2015, the gap in attainment was 10 percentage points for reading, 13 percentage points for writing and 8 percentage points for mathematics.

**Table E: Attainment between FSM and non-FSM pupils
England, (mainstream schools)**

Reading							
FSM	Other pupils		All pupils		Attainment gap (percentage points)		
Achieved level 2 or above	Reached the expected standard	Achieved level 2 or above	Reached the expected standard	Achieved level 2 or above		Reached the expected standard	
2013	79%		91%		89%	12	
2014	80%		92%		90%	11	
2015	82%		92%		90%	10	
2016	-	60%	-	77%	-	74%	17

Writing							
	FSM		Other pupils		All pupils		Attainment gap (percentage points)
	Achieved level 2 or above	Reached the expected standard	Achieved level 2 or above	Reached the expected standard	Achieved level 2 or above	Reached the expected standard	
2013	73%		88%		85%		15
2014	75%		89%		86%		14
2015	77%		90%		88%		13
2016	-	50%	-	68%	-	65%	18

Maths							
	FSM		Other pupils		All pupils		Attainment gap (percentage points)
	Achieved level 2 or above	Reached the expected standard	Achieved level 2 or above	Reached the expected standard	Achieved level 2 or above	Reached the expected standard	
2013	84%		93%		91%		9
2014	85%		94%		92%		9
2015	86%		94%		93%		8
2016	-	58%	-	75%	-	73%	18

Source: National pupil database

Table F shows attainment gaps at the new expected standard between EAL and other pupils and also between SEN and non-SEN pupils for 2016. For context, the table also shows the attainment gaps at the old level 2 or above which was the expected standard for previous years.

**Table F: Attainment gaps in KS1 subjects between pupil characteristics groups
England, 2016 (mainstream schools)**

Attainment gap between EAL and other pupils	2013	2014	2015	2016
Reading	4	4	4	5
Writing	3	4	3	2
Mathematics	3	3	2	1
Attainment gap between SEN and non-SEN pupils	2013	2014	2015	2016
Reading	38	37	37	52
Writing	45	44	44	54
Mathematics	31	30	30	50

source: National pupil database

5. Local authority results (SFR tables 6,9 and 18)

Table G shows the minimum and maximum percentages for attainment of the phonics expected standard in national curriculum years 1 and 2 by local authority. Table G also shows the minimum and maximum percentages achieving the expected standard in each key stage 1 subjects (excluding the City of London and Isles of Scilly which only have 1 school each). At key stage 1, reading has the least variation, followed by science. Writing has the most variation, followed by mathematics. In 2015, at the old expected standard, level 2 or above, mathematics had the lowest variation with a range of 7 percentage points, followed by reading with a range of 10 percentage points. Writing and science had similar variations with a range of 11 percentage points. At the higher level 2b or above, the range was 16 percentage points for reading and writing and 14 percentage points in mathematics. In 2014, at level 2b or above, the range was similar to 2015 for reading, but was higher in writing (18 percentage points) and mathematics (15 percentage points)

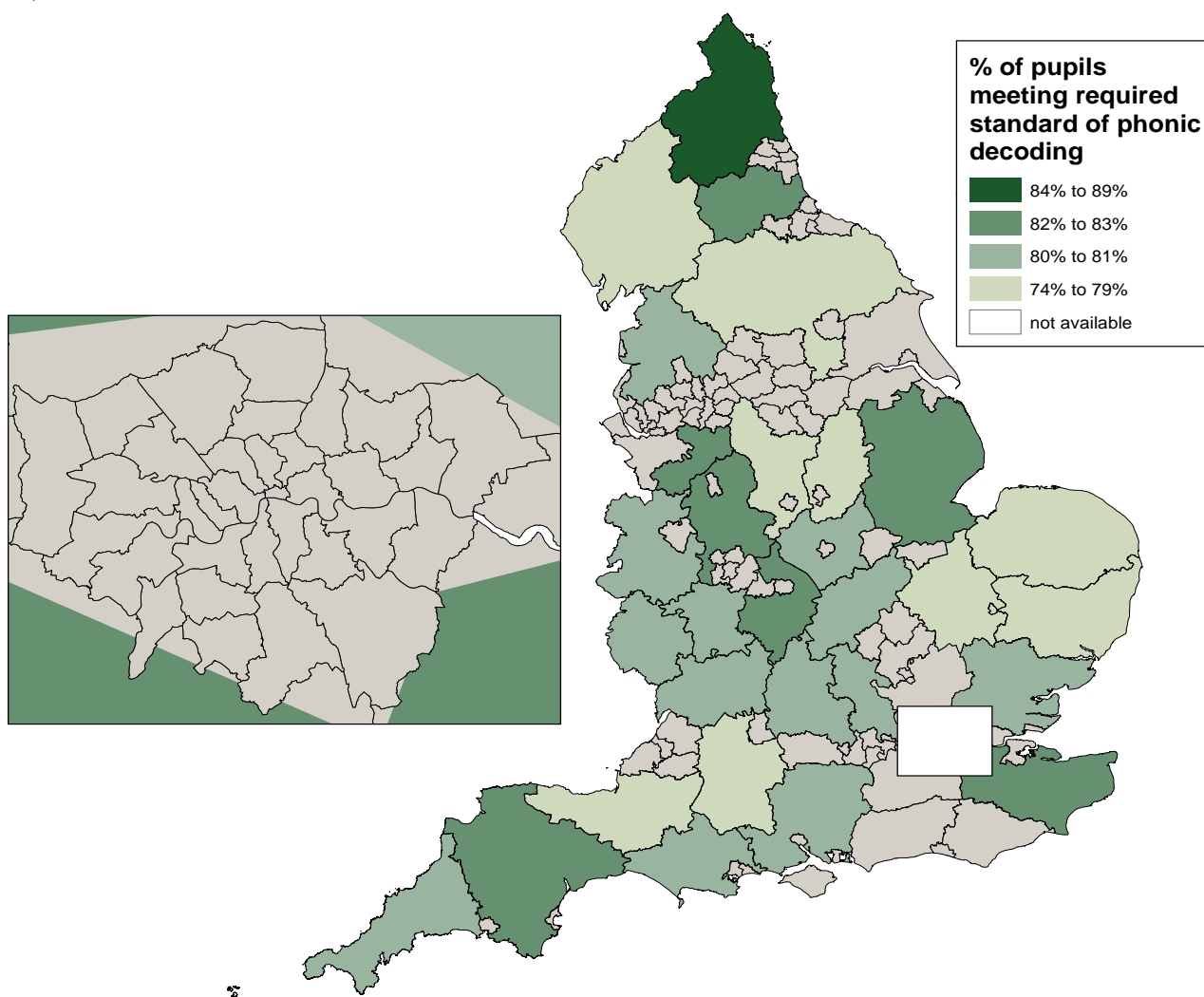
**Table G: Minimum and maximum local authority percentages
England, 2016 (mainstream schools)**

	National average	Minimum	Maximum	Range (percentage points)
Year 1 phonics	81%	74%	89%	15
Year 2 phonics	91%	87%	95%	8
Reading	74%	64%	81%	17
Writing	65%	53%	78%	25
Mathematics	73%	62%	82%	20
Science	82%	71%	90%	19

Source: National pupil database

Figure 5 shows that there is considerable variation between local authorities in year 1 phonics results.

Figure 5: Phonics attainment of year 1 pupils by local authority:
England, 2016

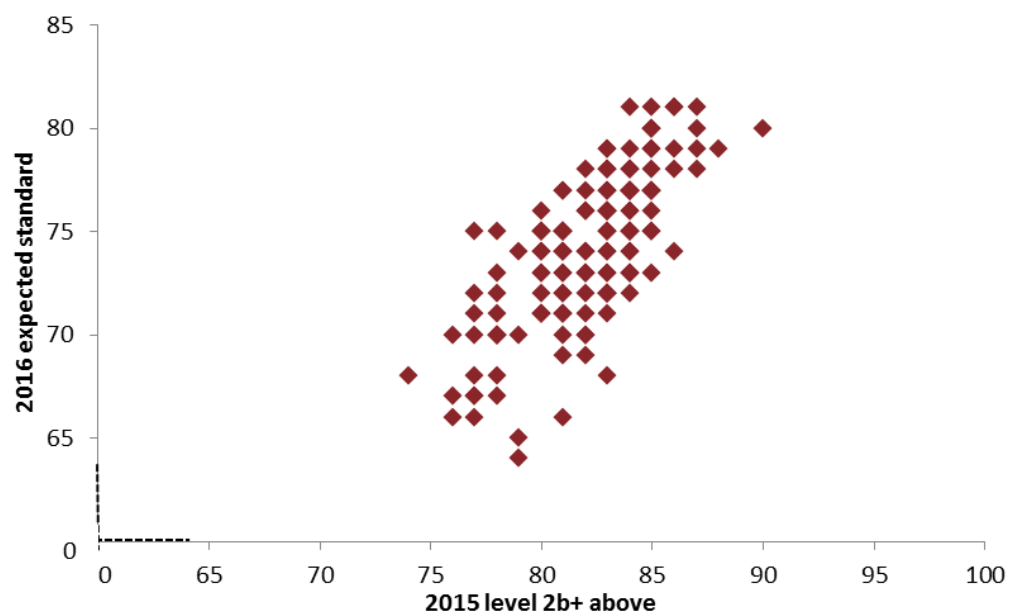


Source: National pupil database

At key stage 1, figures 6 to 8 show the correlation between the percentage of pupils achieving level 2b or above in 2015 and the percentage reaching the expected standard in 2016 at local authority level for each of the key stage subjects reading, writing and mathematics. These show that the majority of areas which were high performing in 2015 remain high performing in 2016. Similarly the majority of areas which were low performing in 2015 remain low performing in 2016.

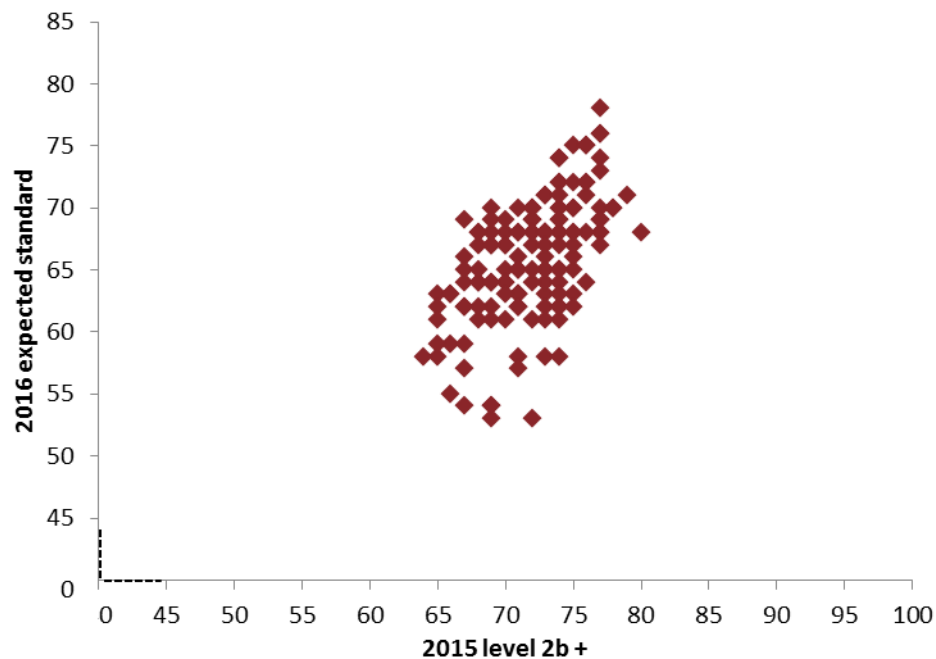
The variation in attainment may be due to the new teacher assessment framework in 2016. Teachers may need more time to become fully confident in using it.

Figure 6: Key stage 1 reading attainment by local authority:
England, 2016



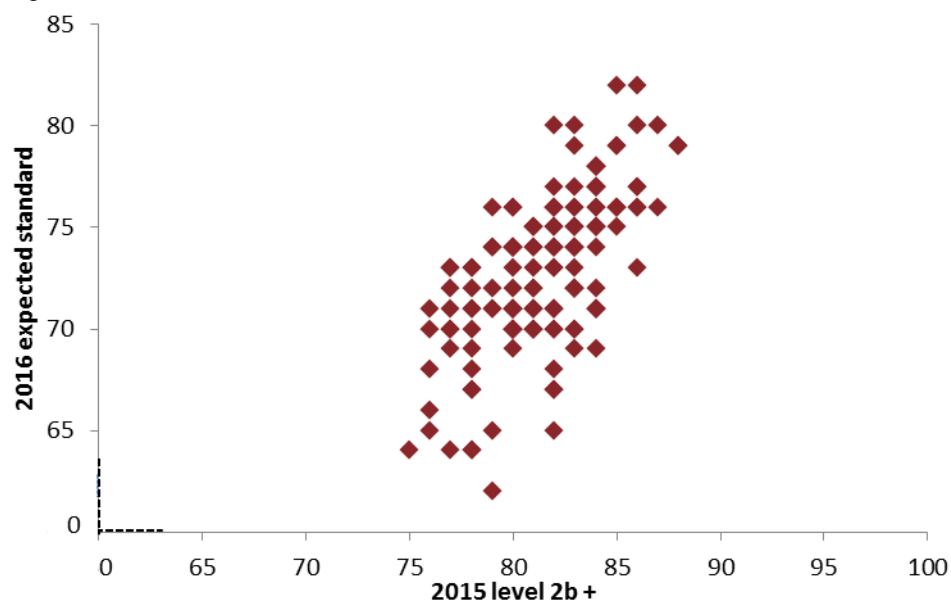
Source: National pupil database

Figure 7: Key stage 1 writing attainment by local authority:
England, 2016



Source: National pupil database

Figure 8: Key stage 1 mathematics attainment by local authority:
England, 2016



Source: National pupil database

6. Advice on comparability over time

In 2016, children were assessed under the new national curriculum, where the expected standard has been raised. These changes mean that the expected standard this year is higher and not comparable with the expected standard used in previous year's statistics. It would therefore be incorrect and misleading to make direct comparisons showing changes over time.

For example, it is wrong to say that 'the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading fell from 82% in 2015 to 74% in 2016'.

The attainment gaps between groups of pupils are also not comparable to previous years, as the gaps used in previous years were based on the old expected standard. It would be incorrect to say the gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils has increased from 10 percentage points in reading to 17 percentage points.

Section 3 of this SFR provides some discussion of the differences between this year's figures and those for previous years. It is likely that we will be able to provide further advice once we have more than one year's data under the reformed system.

Analysis and comparisons between groups of pupils, types of schools and pupil characteristics are more likely to provide more meaningful information than comparisons over time.

7. Accompanying tables

The following tables are available in Excel format on the department's statistics [Statistics: key stage 1 - GOV.UK](#):

Phonics national and local authority tables

- 1 Summary with percentages achieving by school type, 2016
- 2 Year 1 pupils achievements by pupil characteristics, 2012 to 2016
- 3 Year 1 pupils achievements by ethnicity, free school meal eligibility and gender, 2016

- 4 Year 1 pupils achievements by each phonic mark, 2012 to 2016
- 5 Year 1 pupils achievements by month of birth, 2016
- 6 Year 1 pupils achievements by local authority, 2016
- 6a Year 1 pupils achievements by local authority and ethnicity, 2016
- 6b Year 1 pupils achievements by local authority and first language, 2016
- 6c Year 1 pupils achievements by local authority and free school meal eligibility, 2016
- 6d Year 1 pupils achievements by local authority and SEN provision, 2016
- 7 Phonics achievements by the end of Year 2 by school type, 2016
- 8 Phonics achievements by the end of Year 2 by pupil characteristics, 2013 to 2016
- 9 Phonics achievements by the end of Year 2 by pupil characteristics, 2013 to 2016 by local authority, 2016

Key stage 1 national tables

- 10 Summary table with attainment in key stage 1 assessments by pupil characteristics, 2016
- 11 Attainment in key stage 1 teacher assessments by subject and gender, 2016
- 12 Attainment in key stage 1 teacher assessments by school type, 2016
- 13 Attainment in key stage 1 teacher assessments by school size and school cohort size, 2016
- 14 Attainment in key stage 1 reading by phonics prior attainment, 2016
- 15 Attainment in key stage 1 teacher assessments by pupil characteristics, 2016
- 16 Attainment in key stage 1 teacher assessments by ethnicity, free school meal eligibility and gender, 2016
- 17 Attainment in key stage 1 teacher assessments by month of birth, 2016

Key stage 1 local authority tables

- 18 Attainment in key stage 1 teacher assessments by region, local authority and gender, 2016
- 19 Attainment in key stage 1 teacher assessments by local authority and ethnicity, 2016
- 20 Attainment in key stage 1 teacher assessments by local authority and first language, 2016
- 21 Attainment in key stage 1 teacher assessments by local authority and free school meal eligibility, 2016
- 22 Attainment in key stage 1 teacher assessments by local authority and SEN provision, 2016

Key stage 1 pupil residency tables

- A1 Attainment in key stage 1 teacher assessments by degree of rurality of pupil residence, 2016
- A2 Attainment in key stage 1 teacher assessments by local authority district and region of pupil residence, 2016

When reviewing the tables, please note that:

We preserve confidentiality	The Code of Practice for Official Statistics requires us to take reasonable steps to ensure that our published or disseminated statistics protect confidentiality.
we suppress some figures	<p>Values of 1 or 2, or a percentage based on 1 or 2 pupils who achieved; or 0, 1 or 2 pupils who did not achieve a particular level are suppressed. Some additional figures have been suppressed to prevent the possibility of a suppressed figure being revealed.</p> <p>This suppression is consistent with our Statistical policy statement on</p>

[confidentiality.](#)

we adopt symbols to help identify this

Symbols are used in the tables as follows:

- . not applicable
 - * LA level data based on a single school
-

Percentages in this SFR are given to the nearest whole number but all gaps and differences have been calculated on unrounded data. Therefore some figures may not match those produced from the rounded figures shown in the tables.

All pupil numbers at regional level are rounded to the nearest 10. This is so that it is not possible to deduce the figures for LAs which have been suppressed. However percentages have been calculated from unrounded data.

There have been significant changes this year

See [Advice on comparability over time](#) and the accompanying methodology document for more information.

This is provisional data

Figures are based on provisional data. There is no plan to reissue the publication considering the negligible changes, if any, at national level. However, we will consider whether to revise the 2016 figures in next year's release, if any, in the national figures between the provisional and final figures.

We provide underlying data

The SFR is accompanied by national and local authority underlying data and metadata describing this data. This data is provided in csv format so that it can be loaded into the software of your choice.

8. Further information is available

School level figures

School level data is not published for the phonics screening check or key stage 1 teacher assessments.

Previously published figures

SFR32/2015: [Phonics screening check and key stage 1 assessments: England 2015 - Publications - GOV.UK](#)

Attainment for other key stages

[Statistics: early years foundation stage profile - GOV.UK](#)
[Statistics: GCSEs \(key stage 4\) - GOV.UK](#)
[Statistics: 16 to 19 attainment - GOV.UK](#)
[School Performance Tables](#)

Pupil numbers

[Statistics: school and pupil numbers - GOV.UK](#)

Lower level geographical data

Pupil residency tables showing 2014 small area attainment data by pupil characteristics at key stage 1 (KS1) were published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on the neighbourhood statistics service (NeSS) in June 2015 [website](#)

The ONS neighbourhood statistics data was accompanied by the Department for Education publication:

SEN attainment

[Statistics: special educational needs \(SEN\) - GOV.UK](#)

Attainment in Wales,
Scotland and Northern
Ireland

See the quality and methodology information which accompanies this release for details of similar data available for other areas.

International comparisons.

There are no international comparisons of attainment for pupils at this age.

Pupils in England take part in international surveys such as Trends in [International Mathematics and Science Study](#) (TIMSS). This is a comparative international survey of mathematics and science achievement of 9-10 year olds and 13-14 year olds, carried out on pupils from a sample of schools.

9. National Statistics

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods, and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

The Department has a set of [statistical policies](#) in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

10. Technical information

A quality and methodology information document accompanies this SFR. This provides further information on the data sources, their coverage and quality and explains the methodology used in producing the data, including how it is validated and processed.

11. Get in touch

Media enquiries

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Department
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download [Statistics: key stage 1 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/statistics/key-stage-1)
Reference: [SFR 42/2016]



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