



Department  
for Education

# **Key stage 2: progress measure bandings**

**A guide for primary performance tables**

**December 2016**

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## New progress measures

The new progress measures, introduced in 2016, are a type of value added measure, which means that pupils' results are compared to the actual achievements of other pupils nationally with similar prior attainment.

These types of progress measure reward schools for making progress with all of their pupils, whether they are low, middle or high attainers. Any increase in attainment achieved by each pupil will be reflected in the school's progress scores. They are fairer to schools in challenging circumstances, as they recognise a school that is doing a good job with an intake with low prior attainment.

This measure is a school-level accountability measure. Progress is calculated for individual pupils solely in order to calculate the school's overall progress scores. There is no need for schools to share individual pupil progress scores with their pupils or parents.

Read more about how [primary progress measures](#) are calculated.

## Interpreting progress scores

By definition, the average progress score, for all mainstream pupils nationally, is zero.

A school's progress scores, for each of English reading, English writing and mathematics are the average of each of its pupils' progress score in that subject. School level progress scores will be presented as positive and negative numbers either side of zero.

- a score of 0 means pupils in this school, on average, do about as well as those with similar prior attainment nationally
- a positive score means pupils in this school, on average, do better than those with similar prior attainment nationally
- a negative score means pupils in this school, on average, do worse than those with similar prior attainment nationally. A negative score does not necessarily mean a school is below the floor

A negative score does not mean that pupils did not make any progress, rather it means they made less progress than other pupils nationally with similar starting points. For example, if a school has a maths score of -4 this would mean that on average pupils in this school achieved 4 scaled scores less than other pupils nationally with similar starting points. School progress scores should be interpreted alongside their associated confidence intervals.

## Confidence intervals

Progress results are calculated for a school based on a specific cohort of pupils. A school may have been just as effective, but have performed differently with a different set of pupils.

Similarly some pupils may be more likely to achieve high or low results independently of which school they attend. To account for this natural uncertainty 95% confidence intervals around progress scores are provided as a proxy for the range of scores within which each school's underlying performance can be confidently said to lie.

School scores should be interpreted alongside their associated confidence intervals.

If the lower bound of the school's confidence interval is greater than zero it can be interpreted as meaning that the school has achieved greater than average progress compared to pupils with similar starting points nationally.

Similarly, if the upper bound is below zero, then the school has made less than average progress. Where a confidence interval overlaps zero, this means that the school's progress score is not significantly different from the national average.

The results of schools with small cohorts tend to have wider confidence intervals. This reflects the fact that performance of a small number of pupils taking key stage 2 tests can have a disproportionate effect on the school's overall results. Both the progress score and the confidence interval for a school should be taken into account when comparing with other schools or pupil groups.

## How we calculate the progress descriptions ('bandings'):

| Progress Description     | School is given the description if...  |  |  |
|--------------------------|--|--|--|
|                          | Reading  | Writing  | Maths  |
| Well above average       | Score is 3.4 or higher, and lower confidence interval is 0 or higher.                      | Score is 3.4 or higher, and lower confidence interval is 0 or higher.                      | Score is 3.1 or higher, and lower confidence interval is 0 or higher.                      |
| Above average            | Score is higher than 0 but lower than 3.4, and lower confidence interval is higher than 0. | Score is higher than 0 but lower than 3.4, and lower confidence interval is higher than 0. | Score is higher than 0 but lower than 3.1, and lower confidence interval is higher than 0. |
| Close to England average | Lower confidence interval is 0 or lower, and the upper confidence interval is 0 or higher. | Lower confidence interval is 0 or lower, and the upper confidence interval is 0 or higher. | Lower confidence interval is 0 or lower, and the upper confidence interval is 0 or higher. |
| Below average            | Score is -3.0 or higher but less than 0, and upper confidence interval is lower than 0.    | Score is -3.5 or higher but less than 0, and upper confidence interval is lower than 0.    | Score is -3.1 or higher but less than 0, and upper confidence interval is lower than 0.    |
| Well below average       | Score is lower than -3.0 and upper confidence interval is lower than 0.                    | Score is lower than -3.5 and upper confidence interval is lower than 0.                    | Score is lower than -3.1 and upper confidence interval is lower than 0.                    |

Additional information regarding school accountability and progress measures can be found in the [Primary School Accountability 2016 technical guide](#).

Further information about how the department collects, processes and quality assures the attainment and progress data published in performance tables is available [here](#).



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