



Guidance

Key stage 2 tests: special consideration guidance

Updated 18 March 2019

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Overview

If a pupil is affected by extremely distressing circumstances in test week, or the weeks immediately before, the school can apply for special consideration of the pupil's results. Where the Standards and Testing Agency (STA) approves an application for special consideration, an adjustment will be made to the school's performance measures. The pupil's test result is not amended.

An incident occurring prior to this may qualify for special consideration if the school can demonstrate that it had an impact on a pupil's performance in a test.

STA also accepts whole cohort applications for special consideration. However, if the reason for an application is an incident at the school, only those pupils most closely involved will usually be eligible.

Circumstances eligible for special consideration

Special consideration applies where there is evidence that any of the following situations affected the pupil's performance at the time of the test:

- reason 1 – bereavement of a family member or close friend within 12 months of the tests

- reason 2 – the pupil, or a close family member, has a diagnosed terminal illness at the time of the tests
- reason 3 – the pupil or a close family member has suffered a severe or permanent injury or illness, or has undergone major surgery, in the 6 months prior to the tests
- reason 4 – a serious domestic incident occurred within 2 weeks of the start of the tests
- reason 5 – a longer term major incident that occurred in the 6 months before the tests is still having an impact on the pupil at the time of the test

Circumstances not eligible for special consideration

Special consideration does not apply when the pupil:

- is ill on a scheduled test day and not in a fit state to take the test – in these circumstances, schools should consider making an application for a [timetable variation](#)
- has a sudden, temporary illness – in these circumstances, the school should consider allowing the pupil a rest break or administering the test later the same day, or making an application for a timetable variation
- has a minor injury, the effects of which could be dealt with by [access arrangements](#)
- is affected by a long term circumstance or illness which has prevented them from being taught the full KS2 national curriculum programme of study, or affected their preparation for the tests
- is working below the standard of the test
- has previously been educated at home, or excluded from school, and needs time to adjust to the national curriculum
- has recently arrived from a different education jurisdiction and needs time to adjust to the national curriculum for England
- has a sensory or physical disability or condition which prevents them from accessing the tests, even with access arrangements or modified test materials
- has experienced the bereavement of a close family member, or close friend, more than 12 months before the tests, unless there are ongoing proceedings such as an inquest or court case at the time of the tests
- is affected by the consequences of committing a crime or being the subject of a criminal investigation
- has experienced the death of a pet – schools should consider making an application for a timetable variation

Schools should prepare for the tests using the [KS2 test administration guidance](#). Special consideration does not apply where incidents affect the preparation or

administration of the test, for example:

- a disturbance during a test, such as a fire alarm going off or a pupil causing a disturbance
- the incorrect administration of a test, such as incorrect allocation of time, or errors made by the school when modifying or photocopying test papers
- any failure of the school to implement previously agreed access arrangements
- any failure of the school to apply for access arrangements by the relevant deadline
- the school not returning test scripts before the deadline
- difficulties during the school year that may have affected preparations for the tests, such as disturbances caused by building work

Making an application

Schools can submit applications for special consideration in the 'Access arrangements' section of [NCA tools](#) from Thursday 16 May until Friday 24 May.

This short video demonstrates how to make an application.



You must only make an application for a pupil who has taken all test papers for the subject. On the application form, you must confirm that the pupil has taken the test. You must select one of the eligible reasons and provide details of when the circumstances occurred and how they affected the pupil.

When circumstances involve a close family member, you must provide details of their relationship to the pupil. If STA asks for further information about an application, the information must be provided through the application form. Do not respond by other means of correspondence.

Security of sensitive information

Only authorised STA staff will have access to the information provided in an application. STA will respond to all applications through NCA tools, which is a secure website. Local authorities do not have access to these applications.

Receiving the outcome of your application

STA will confirm the outcome of completed applications by Friday 28 June.

[NCA tools](#) generates an automated email when an application is submitted. You can check the status of an application in the 'Decisions' tab of 'My applications', under the 'Access arrangements' section.

Where an application meets the criteria for approval, it will be approved automatically. STA may, however, still contact you to request evidence to support the information you have provided.

If your application status is 'Awaiting decision', you will receive an automated email when your application has been reviewed. You should regularly check 'My applications' in the 'Access arrangements' section of NCA tools as STA may ask you to provide additional information via the application form.

If STA awards special consideration, it may not apply for all subjects.

Pupils' results

Schools will receive their pupils' KS2 test results in NCA tools on Tuesday 9 July. Results include the total raw score achieved for each pupil, in each subject, and the corresponding scaled score.

Where special consideration is awarded, the pupil's scaled score or scores will not be adjusted, but there will be a '+' sign on the 'Pupil results' page to show that special consideration has been granted.

The page will show what the pupil actually achieved in the test and will state whether the pupil met or did not meet the expected standard. The outcome field will show 'AS' (achieved the expected standard) or 'NS' (not achieved the expected standard) based on the scaled score achieved by the pupil before special consideration has been applied.

School accountability

While STA does not change a pupil's scaled score, the Department for Education (DfE) will take into account the fact that special consideration has been granted when calculating primary school performance measures.

When calculating school performance measures, DfE will add 3 points to a pupil's scaled score for each subject where special consideration is granted. The adjusted scaled scores are used to calculate the school's performance measures. This will apply to both attainment and progress measures. You can find more information about how results are reported in the performance tables in the [accountability technical guide](#), or by [contacting the performance tables team](#).

DfE will cap adjusted scaled scores at the maximum score available for a test. For example, if a pupil's scaled score from the test is 118 then a scaled score of 120, the maximum scaled score on the tests, will be used for calculations in the performance tables.

If a pupil does not achieve the minimum number of raw score marks needed to be awarded a scaled score, their adjusted scaled score will be set to 80, the minimum scaled score available for the test.

Reporting to parents

As STA does not report adjusted scaled scores for pupils who received special consideration, schools should consider how best to report test results to their parents at the end of the summer term.

Schools should consider how representative the test results are of the pupil's abilities, as well as the circumstances which led to the application for special consideration. They should also use their observations of the pupil's work and any in-school assessments over the academic year to report the pupil's achievements to parents.

Getting help

Standards and Testing Agency

Email

assessments@education.gov.uk

National curriculum assessments helpline

0300 303 3013

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