



Department
for Education

Attainment in primary schools in England:

Quality and methodology information

13 December 2019

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1. Introduction

This document provides a comprehensive guide to the key stage 2 assessment statistics published at national, regional, local authority, local authority district and parliamentary constituency level by the Department for Education¹.

The key areas covered in this guide are:

- Background to published statistics
- Data collection
- Data processing
- Methodology
- Quality

This document is based on the Government Statistical Service's [guidelines on measuring and reporting statistical quality](#).

2. Background to published statistics

2.1 Key Stage 2 statistical publications²

National information on attainment of key stage 2 pupils in England is published in the following statistical publication:

- National curriculum assessments at key stage 2 in England (interim)

National, regional, local authority (LA), local authority district (LAD) and parliamentary constituency information on attainment of key stage 2 pupils in England is published in the following statistical publications:

- National curriculum assessments at key stage 2 in England (provisional)
- National curriculum assessments at key stage 2 in England (revised)

The interim publication provides national results to help teachers and parents put school and pupil-level results into context.

The provisional publication provides additional analysis to the interim statistical release, reporting on results at national, regional, local authority and other geographic levels, as well as by pupil characteristics and school characteristics. It includes pupil and school characteristics breakdowns at national level only. It does not contain any characteristics breakdowns (other than gender) at LA level.

The revised publication updates the provisional statistical release, adds characteristics breakdowns at LA and LAD level, and includes new information on pupil progress from

¹ Information about the key stage 2 statistics included in the school performance tables published by the Department is available from the Find and Compare Schools [website](#).

² School level information about attainment at key stage 2 is published in the [primary school performance tables](#).

key stage 1 (KS1) to KS2.

2.2 National Statistics designation

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority designated primary statistics publications as National Statistics in July 2010, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics. Further information on the report is available at the following [link](#).

Since designation, changes have been made to the content of the primary statistical publications which cover phonics, key stage 1 and key stage 2. These changes as they apply to key stage 2 statistical publications are summarised below.

Key stage 2 statistical publications no longer report:

- Key stage 3 attainment statistics
- Three-year averages for the percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard
- Percentages of pupils achieving the expected standard in combinations of subjects other than reading, writing and maths
- Attainment levels at key stage 2 by attainment levels at key stage 1
- Levels of progress

Key stage 2 statistical publications now additionally report:

- National test and teacher assessment results in July in the interim publication
- Key stage 2 reading attainment by phonics prior attainment (in the provisional and revised publications)
- Attainment by pupil characteristics in addition to gender: disadvantage and the disadvantage gap index, eligibility for free school meals, special education needs provision, English as an additional language, ethnicity (provisional and revised).
- Attainment by school characteristics: school type, cohort size, phase, religious character (provisional and revised)
- Progress scores (revised)
- Disadvantage gap index (provisional and revised)
- Attainment and progress by ethnicity and eligibility for free school meals (revised)
- Attainment in academies by length of time open (provisional)
- Attainment and progress in academies by length of time open (provisional and revised)
- Attainment by school type and pupil characteristics (revised)
- Attainment at parliamentary constituency level (provisional)
- Attainment and progress at parliamentary constituency level (provisional and revised)

2.3 Key stages and assessment

Primary school education is split into key stages as shown in figure 1.

Figure 1: Age of child related to year group and key stage

Key stage	1			2			
Year group	R	1	2	3	4	5	6
Age of child at end of year	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

At the end of each key stage, pupils' attainment is measured by statutory assessments against the standards set out in the [national curriculum](#).

Statutory assessment for pupils in primary schools is the responsibility of the Standards and Testing Agency (STA), an executive agency of the department.

At key stage 2, pupils working at the level of the national curriculum sit tests in maths, reading and grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS), and receive teacher assessments in writing and science. Pupils working below the level of the national curriculum but engaged in subject-specific study will receive teacher assessments against the [pre-key stage 2 standards](#). Pupils working below the level of the national curriculum and not engaged in subject-specific study will receive teacher assessments against [P scales](#) 1 to 4.

National attainment standards in [science](#) are measured using a statutory externally marked science test in a sample of schools every two years. National outcomes are typically published the following year.

Key stage 2 tests and teacher assessments must be administered by state-funded schools, including alternative provision academies. Pupils studying at a pupil referral unit (PRU) but who are on the register of a maintained school or academy are expected to take part in the KS2 assessments. Pupils not on the register of a maintained school or academy who attend a PRU are not expected to take part in the tests. Independent schools and non-maintained special schools may take part in the KS2 assessments if they wish to do so.

2.4 Uses and users

The main intended uses of the test and teacher assessment outcomes as set out in the [Bew Report](#) and the Government's consultation [document](#) on primary assessment and accountability are to:

- hold schools accountable for the attainment and progress made by their pupils
- inform parents and schools about the performance of individual pupils
- enable benchmarking between schools, as well as monitoring performance locally and nationally

There is increasing use and demand for primary attainment data. The data is used in

many sectors: notably schools, Ofsted, Ofqual, central government, local authorities, Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs), and businesses providing data analysis services. The department receives regular data requests from parents, school governors, researchers, university students and others from within the UK and abroad.

A full list of key users and uses is available in annex D.

3. Data collection and matching

3.1 The data collection process

Statutory assessment for pupils in primary schools is the responsibility of the Standards and Testing Agency (STA). Once pupils have sat the KS2 tests, schools are required to send test materials and attendance registers to STA for external marking and data capture. Teacher assessments (TA) must also be submitted by schools to STA. Further information about the administration of KS2 tests and teacher administration is provided in STA's [Assessment and reporting arrangements and Key stage 2 teacher assessment guidance](#),

A variety of checks are conducted on the test and TA results by STA before the data is transferred to an external contractor for matching to pupil records in the National Pupil Database and then returned to the School Performance Data Unit (SPDU) for statistical analysis and publication.

The attainment data is combined with other data about pupils and schools to produce the statistical publications. To produce the Provisional and Revised publications, results data are combined with:

- pupil characteristics data taken from the [school census](#)
- school characteristics data taken from [Get information about schools](#)
- geography data taken from the [National Statistics Postcode Lookup](#)³
- [phonics results taken from the National Pupil Database](#)

To produce the Revised publication, results data are further combined with:

- data about looked after children supplied by local authorities (see [A guide to looked after children statistics in England](#))

3.2 Data cycle

STA deliver data in a number of feeds to SPDU throughout the year. These data feeds reflect increased volumes and accuracy of test and teacher assessment data. Different data feeds are used to produce the interim, provisional and revised publications.

³ Note, however, that regional and local authority figures are calculated using the pupil data taken from the National Pupil Database

The **interim** publication is released in the first week of July to coincide with the return of results to schools. It is based on test and teacher assessment data provided to the department by STA in early July. It contains all available test data with a minimum acceptable volume of 99% and all available teacher assessment data. This data feed does not include the outcome of any marking reviews (see annex A).

The **provisional** publication is released in early September. It is based on test and teacher assessment data provided to the department by STA in early July. It contains all available test data with a minimum acceptable volume of 100% and all available (approximately 99%) teacher assessment data. This data feed does not include the outcome of any marking reviews (see annex A).

The **revised** publication is released in mid-December alongside the [Primary school performance tables](#). It is based on test and teacher assessment data provided to the department by STA in October. It contains all available test data with an expected volume of 99% and all available (approximately 99%) teacher assessment data. The data includes changes requested by schools during the checking exercise, changes resulting from any successful marking reviews, any changes resulting from the completion of maladministration investigations and any late or changed teacher assessments.

Final data is provided by STA early in the following year. Following publication of the primary school performance tables, there is a short errata process in which schools can inform the department's data matching and processing contractor of any additional changes that should be made to the data. These changes and updates to suppressed results where maladministration cases have been closed form the final data feed of the assessment cycle. The final data is not published separately but is used to update time series in the following year's statistical publications.

3.3 Data coverage

Key stage 2 assessments must be administered by state-funded schools, including alternative provision academies and free schools. Pupils studying at a pupil referral unit (PRU) but who are on the register of a maintained school or academy are expected to take part in the KS2 assessments. Pupils not on the register of a maintained school or academy who attend a PRU are not expected to take part in the assessments.

Independent schools and non-maintained special schools are not required to take part in the assessments but may do so if they wish (see also section 5.1). Pupils who are home-schooled are not required to take part in the assessments.

Results for state-funded schools (excluding alternative provision) and all schools (including independents and alternative provision) are reported separately in the KS2 publications.

Only results for pupils who have reached the end of key stage 2 are reported. Some pupils may take assessments in one subject early. The published KS2 figures are calculated on a cumulative basis - pupils will only be included once they have taken

assessments in all subjects. The published figures will include their result in the subject(s) they took early. If they take all subjects early, then they will be included in the year in which they took the last subject.

4. Methodology

This section outlines the methodology used to calculate the standard published key stage 2 measures. Across a range of outcomes for each test or teacher assessment or combination of test and TA subjects, we report the:

- number of eligible pupils
- number of pupils achieving a specific outcome or combination of outcomes
- percentage of pupils achieving a specific outcome or combination of outcomes
- average scaled score for each test
- progress scores with lower and upper confidence intervals

4.1 Eligible pupils

The number of eligible pupils for a given test or teacher assessment is simply a count of all pupils at the end of the key stage with a valid result in that subject. Valid results for each subject are listed below. Any pupils who do not have a valid result for a subject are excluded from the calculations for that subject and do not appear in the number of eligible pupils or in the outcome percentages for that subject.

Valid results differ with respect to the calculation of national LA, LAD and parliamentary constituency figures. Pupils with results flagged as 'pending maladministration' (S), 'missing' (M) or 'pupil took the test/was assessed in a previous year' (P) are excluded from national figures but included in LA, LAD and parliamentary constituency figures.

Schools can apply for pupils to be discounted from their figures if they have recently arrived from overseas and their first language is not English. Although these pupils will be removed from the revised local authority, local authority district and parliamentary constituency figures, they remain included in the national figures so that these reflect the attainment of all pupils.

More details of the codes used for teacher assessment can be found in [STA's guidance](#) for submitting KS2 teacher assessment data.

National figures

Test/teacher assessment	Result
Reading, maths and grammar, punctuation and spelling tests	Achieved the expected standard (AS), not achieved the expected standard (NS), working below the standard of the test (B), absent (A), maladministration (Q), paper annulled (H), unable to access the test (U), just arrived (J)
Writing teacher assessment	Working at greater depth (GDS), working at the expected standard (EXS), working towards the expected standard (WTS), pre-key stage standards (PK1-6), below the pre-key stage standards (BLW), absent (A), disapplied (D), maladministration (Q).
Science teacher assessment	Working at the expected standard (EXS), has not met the expected standard (HNM), absent (A), disapplied (D), maladministration (Q).

Local authority, local authority district and parliamentary constituency figures

Test/teacher assessment	Result
Reading, maths and grammar, punctuation and spelling tests	Achieved the expected standard (AS), not achieved the expected standard (NS), working below the standard of the test (B), absent (A), maladministration (Q), paper annulled (H), unable to access the test (U), just arrived (J), missing (M), mark suppressed pending maladministration investigation (S), has taken test in the past (P)

Writing teacher assessment	Working at greater depth (GDS), working at the expected standard (EXS), working towards the expected standard (WTS), pre-key stage standards (PK1-6), below the pre-key stage standards (BLW), absent (A), disapplied (D), maladministration (Q), missing (M), has taken test in previous year (P)
Science teacher assessment	Working at the expected standard (EXS), has not met the standard (HNM), absent (A), disapplied (D), maladministration (Q), missing (M), has taken test in previous year (P)

4.2 Reaching the expected standard

For each test or teacher assessment, the number of pupils reaching the expected standard is the sum of all pupils with the following results:

Test/teacher assessment	Expected standard
Reading, maths and grammar, punctuation and spelling tests	Achieved the expected standard (AS)
Writing teacher assessment	Working at the expected standard (EXS), working at greater depth within the expected standard (GDS)
Science teacher assessment	Working at the expected standard (EXS)

The percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in each test is calculated as follows:

$$\% \text{ reaching expected standard} = \frac{\text{number of pupils reaching expected standard}}{\text{number of eligible pupils}} \times 100$$

4.3 Achieving the higher standard

For each test or teacher assessment, the number of pupils achieving the higher standard is the sum of all pupils with the following results:

Test/teacher assessment	Higher standard
Reading, maths and grammar, punctuation and spelling tests	A scaled score of 110 or more
Writing teacher assessment	Working at greater depth within the expected standard (GDS)
Science teacher assessment	Not applicable

Note that there is no higher standard for science teacher assessment.

The percentage of pupils achieving the higher standard in each test or teacher assessment is calculated as follows:

$$\% \text{ achieving higher standard} = \frac{\text{number of pupils achieving higher standard}}{\text{number of eligible pupils}} \times 100$$

4.4 Average scaled scores

Scaled scores are used to report the results of the KS2 tests to ensure accurate comparisons of performance can be made over time.

A pupil's scaled score is based on their raw score. The raw score is the total number of marks a pupil scores in a test, based on the number of questions answered correctly. The pupil's raw test scores are converted into a scaled score using a [conversion table](#). The scale score runs from 80 to 120 and a scaled score of 100 and above represents the expected standard. Further information on scaled scores is available [here](#)

The average scaled score is calculated as the mean scaled score of all pupils awarded a scaled score. Pupils who did not take the test or took the test but did not receive a scaled score are excluded.

$$\text{average scaled score} = \frac{\text{sum of scaled scores for pupils with a scaled score}}{\text{number of pupils with a scaled score}}$$

4.5 Progress measures

The progress measures aim to capture the progress that pupils make from the end of Key Stage 1 to the end of primary school. They 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.

Progress scores are calculated for individual pupils for the sole purpose of constructing a school progress score. Pupil scores are calculated separately for English reading, English writing and mathematics. Pupils who do not have Key Stage 1 data for all of English reading, English writing and mathematics (for example, those who entered a school from another jurisdiction, or who were absent at the time of the Key Stage 1 assessments), cannot be included in the progress measures.

The first step is to assign pupils into groups with other pupils nationally who had similar starting points (Key Stage 1 achievement, see pages 14-15). The second step is to work out the average Key Stage 2 score for each prior attainment group. This is worked out as the mean average of the actual Key Stage 2 scores of all the pupils in the prior attainment group. Finally, a pupil's progress score is calculated. This is done by working out the difference between their actual Key Stage 2 outcome and the average Key Stage 2 outcome for the other pupils nationally, who are in the same prior attainment group. Further detail about how to calculate progress scores is available in the technical guide to [primary school accountability in 2019](#).

4.6 Attainment and progress by pupil and school characteristics

Attainment and progress measures are calculated for sub-populations defined by pupil characteristics and school characteristics.

Pupil characteristics are obtained from the school census (and from local authorities for looked-after children). They include disadvantage, eligibility for free school meals, special education needs provision, English as an additional language, and ethnicity.

School characteristics are obtained from Get Information About Schools. They include school type, cohort size, phase, and religious character. School types are then grouped together to create umbrella categories as follows:

Category	School type/s
Local authority maintained mainstream schools	Community schools, voluntary aided schools, voluntary controlled schools and foundation schools
Academies and free schools (mainstream)	Sponsored academies (mainstream), converter academies (mainstream) and free schools (mainstream)
All state-funded mainstream schools	Community schools, voluntary aided schools, voluntary controlled schools, foundation schools, sponsored academies (mainstream), converter academies (mainstream) and free schools (mainstream)
State-funded special schools	Community special schools, foundation special schools, special sponsor-led academies, special converter academies and special free schools
All state-funded schools	Community schools, voluntary aided schools, voluntary controlled schools, foundation schools, sponsored academies (mainstream), converter academies (mainstream), free schools (mainstream), community special schools, foundation special schools, special sponsor-led academies, special converter academies and special free schools
Alternative provision	Pupil referral units, academy alternative provision, community hospital schools*, and free school alternative provision
All state-funded schools and alternative provision	Community schools, voluntary aided schools, voluntary controlled schools, foundation schools, sponsored academies (mainstream), converter academies (mainstream), free schools (mainstream), community special schools, foundation special schools, special sponsor-led academies, special converter academies, special free schools, pupil referral units, academy alternative provision and free school alternative provision

All schools	Community schools, voluntary aided schools, voluntary controlled schools, foundation schools, sponsored academies (mainstream), converter academies (mainstream), free schools (mainstream), community special schools, foundation special schools, special sponsor-led academies, special converter academies, special free schools, pupil referral units, academy alternative provision, free school alternative provision and those independent schools which choose to submit data
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*Note that some schools providing hospital education are recorded as special schools rather than as hospital schools on GIAS. The category of 'all state-funded schools' will therefore include a number of hospital schools.

Note also that although the school types categorised as 'alternative provision' receive government funding they are not included in the 'all state-funded schools' category for the KS2 statistical publications.

Further detail about school types is provided in annex B.

4.7 Percentage point differences

All percentage point differences are calculated using unrounded figures.

5. Quality

5.1 Accuracy

Accuracy describes the closeness between an estimated result and the (unknown) true value.

The target population for the key stage 2 data collection is all pupils who are at the end of key stage 2 in England. However, key stage 2 assessments are only mandatory for state-funded schools. In 2019, 224 independent schools (out of approximately 1400 independent schools with the appropriate age range) took part in the assessments. Therefore, we provide a national figure for state funded schools only and a national figure for all schools that participated in the assessments. Pupils who are home-schooled are not required to take part in the assessments.

The provisional KS2 data is based on test and teacher assessment data provided to the department by STA in early July. It contains test results for all pupils who took the KS2 tests (although some of these may subsequently be updated following a successful marking review or the completion of a maladministration investigation).

In the provisional 2019 data, 1,496 (less than 0.001%) test results were suppressed due to maladministration investigations. 132 results had been annulled due to confirmed maladministration and 97 were not available for reasons beyond the

schools' control. Two test results were annulled due to pupils cheating. Teacher assessments had been submitted for 99.8% of pupils. They can therefore be considered representative of all schools that took part in the assessments.

In the revised 2019 data, 503 test results were annulled and 785 results were suppressed pending maladministration investigations. 19 test results were annulled due to pupils cheating. Teacher assessments had been submitted for 99.9% of pupils. They can therefore be considered representative of all schools that took part in the assessments.

5.1.1 Guidance & monitoring & marking

Clear [guidance](#) is provided to schools regarding the administration of the key stage 2 tests, including instructions for keeping the test materials secure prior to the tests and storage of completed scripts until they are collected for marking.

LAs [monitor](#) the administration of the tests in the schools they are responsible for and make unannounced visits to at least 10 per cent of those schools, before, during and after the test period. STA representatives may also make monitoring visits.

The tests are externally marked by STA to ensure that marking is consistent between schools. Once the tests have been marked the expected standard is set. Pupils who achieve exactly the expected standard will have a scaled score of 100. After the expected standard has been set, a statistical technique called 'scaling' is used to transform the raw score into a [scaled score](#). The scaled score runs from 80 to 120.

There is also [guidance](#) to explain how key stage 2 teacher assessments in English reading, English writing, mathematics and science, should be produced and submitted to STA. As the writing teacher assessment is used in the headline attainment measures, this is also subject to [moderation](#) by LAs.

The key stage 2 teacher assessment collection remains open for three months after the initial collection deadline so that revised data can be submitted to correct any errors identified by schools or LAs after submission of data.

STA operates a helpline to assist LAs and schools that are having difficulty submitting data. The helpline will also contact any LAs and schools who they believe may be having problems submitting their data. The STA monitors the level of returns and the helpdesk contacts LAs and schools with outstanding data as the submission deadline approaches.

5.1.2 Dry run

The production process is subject to a 'dry run' during the summer. This involves producing a dummy dataset from the previous year's dataset which conforms to how the current year's data will be supplied. This dummy dataset is used to test the data matching and processing conducted by the contractor used as part of the statistics production process. The dummy dataset is also used to test the department's checking processes. This allows potential problems to be resolved prior to the receipt of the live data.

5.1.3 Checks applied by STA

Test scripts

Every result is passed through a result validation engine to identify errors. Validation is data driven using the values as listed in the national curriculum outcome codes set out in section 4.1. In addition to basic field validation of permitted values, more complex results have specific cross-field validation to ensure multiple field consistency.

Checks are also carried out to make sure that where a script exists in one component of a test, the other components of the test are consistent (a script also exists or an absent code is present). For example, a child cannot have sat one component of the test and be recorded as 'B' (below the standard) in another component. In these cases, the inconsistent codes will be changed to absent and an absent overall code will be applied to that subject.

Teacher assessment

Teacher assessment data is collected from schools (and LAs that have chosen to submit on behalf of their schools) via the Primary Assessment Gateway (a system used by STA to manage and collect information from schools about KS2 tests and teacher assessment). Schools and LAs can upload their data using a CTF extract from their MIS provider or input the data into a spreadsheet template, which includes the details of the children we are expecting data for.

The MIS will include a number of validation rules which check that the data entered is valid and alert the school to correct the data if not. The Primary Assessment Gateway will validate this data on upload and provide schools and LAs with warning and error messages where appropriate to allow them to correct any identified issues.

Once the data has been validated, it is automatically matched to children using a matching algorithm. A single match (and no more) must exist in order for teacher assessment results to be linked to a child. If no match exists then the record is manually reviewed by STA.

Occasionally a school may contact STA if they have provided teacher assessment data for a child that was not recorded at that school for the tests and the teacher assessment will only be included if they provide a valid reason as to why the child did not sit the test (usually because they were below the standard or absent on the day of the test).

5.1.4 Checks applied by DfE

At every stage in the data cycle, the department checks selected calculations used in the production of the figures. The department carries out checks on the data to ensure that the files produced by the contractor comply with the specified format and contain the correct information. Selected indicators at school level, LA and national level are re-derived to ensure the contractor's systems are programmed correctly.

All data in the publication tables are produced by one person and quality checked by another. Key tables are dual run by two people independently. Any discrepancies in

the data produced are discussed and more experienced staff involved as required to agree the correct figures. Additional checks are also carried out on the data produced.

5.1.5 Dual registered pupils

Occasionally, more than one school may register the same pupil for the test (for example, if pupils change school or are dually registered). The vast majority of these cases are resolved when test scripts and attendance registers are received. However, in a small number of cases this is not possible, normally where a pupil is working below the level of the tests. In these cases, STA contact the schools involved to establish which school the pupil was attending during test week and where the results should be assigned.

5.1.6 The review process

After marking, schools can view scanned images of their pupil's tests scripts and request a review of the marking if they believe that there is a discrepancy between how questions have been marked and the published mark scheme. Schools are only encouraged to apply for a review if they thought it would result in a change leading to a pupil reaching or not reaching the expected standard or a change of 3 or more marks to the raw score. Outcomes of reviews are not reflected in the provisional data but are included in the revised data. Annex A provides detailed information about the reviews conducted in 2019.

5.1.7 The performance tables checking exercise

As a further check of the accuracy of the underlying data, the key stage 2 data is also collated into school level information and shown to schools, together with the underlying pupil data during the performance tables checking exercise. Schools are required to check the data and notify the department of any pupils that are included in their school in error, or of any missing pupils. Schools can also notify us of any other errors in the data such as errors in matching prior attainment results. Any changes requested are validated to ensure that they comply with the rules before being accepted. Schools are also able to apply for pupils to be discounted from their figures, if they have recently arrived from overseas and their first language is not English. We allow the removal of these pupils from the regional, LA, LAD, parliamentary constituency and school figures. However, we continue to include these pupils in the national figures so that they reflect the attainment of all pupils.

5.1.8 Maladministration

STA may investigate any matter brought to its attention where there is doubt over the accuracy or correctness of a child's results in the tests. Results for schools under investigation may be withheld until the investigation is complete. Each year, a few schools have their results amended or annulled because they do not comply with the statutory arrangements. [Maladministration](#) can lead to changes to, or annulment of, results. It can apply to whole cohorts, groups of children, individual children or individual tests.

5.1.9 Disclosure control

The Code of Practice for Official Statistics requires us to take reasonable steps to ensure that our published or disseminated statistics protect confidentiality.

.Figures for the Isles of Scilly and City of London are suppressed in the provisional key stage 2 publication as these LAs have a single school. They are unsuppressed in the revised key stage 2 publication when the school performance tables are released. Regional eligible pupil figures are rounded to the nearest 10 so that it is not possible to derive figures for these LAs by summing the figures for the other LAs in the region.

5.1.10 Other

Following publication of the performance tables, some schools notify us of further changes required in the data. These changes are validated in the same way as those that are received during the checking exercise and final data is produced.

5.2 Reliability

Reliability is the extent to which an estimate changes over different versions of the same data.

The key stage 2 data is subject to greater change between provisional and revised data as the revised data contains:

- outcomes of the appeals process where schools ask for reviews for one or more of their pupils in the belief that a clerical error has been made or the mark scheme has not been correctly applied;
- changes resulting from the completion of maladministration investigations;
- changes resulting from requests from schools to remove pupils who have recently arrived from overseas.
- any additional or revised teacher assessments.

However, the national figures typically show no change between provisional, revised and final data, although occasionally there may be a change of +/- 1 percentage point. Table 1 shows the change in the headline measure over the last four years.

Table 1: Change in key stage 2 headline measure 2016 to 2019

% of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics	2016	2017	2018	2019
Provisional	53%	61%	64%	65%
Revised	53%	61%	64%	65%
Final	53%	61%		

Again, changes in the LA figures can be slightly larger, largely due to the removal of pupils recently arrived from overseas with English as an additional language. In 2019, 82 of the 149 LAs (excluding City of London and Isles of Scilly) had a change in the percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics between provisional and revised data. However, the majority of these changes were changes of 1 or 2 percentage points. The largest change was 3 percentage points, affecting just three LA.

5.3 Accessibility and clarity

Accessibility is the ease with which users are able to access the data. It also relates to the format(s) in which the data are available and the availability of supporting information.

Clarity is the extent to which easily comprehensible metadata are available, where these metadata are necessary to give a full understanding of the statistical data.

The publication text is published in pdf format so that data is presented consistently to users irrespective of their choice of software. Care is also taken to ensure that the document meets accessibility guidelines. Key figures are highlighted in the text that draw out the key messages such as changes over time and differences between groups of pupils. Small tables or charts illustrating key figures are also included in the text.

Each publication is accompanied by formatted excel tables with clear titles which allow general users to find more detail than can be provided in the publication text. Any important limitations or inconsistencies in the data are mentioned in footnotes so that users do not have to refer to the text or this document. Where there are large numbers of tables, these are split into manageable sections (for example, national tables in one file, LA tables in a separate file) so that users do not need to download larger files than necessary for their needs.

Underlying data for all the tables and metadata describing that data is also provided in csv format so that users can load this into an analysis package of their choice.

The performance tables website provides a number of ways of searching for schools of interest (for example, by name of school, by town, by distance from town/postcode or all schools within a LA) and presents the data in a series of web pages showing different aspects of the data. The selected schools can be sorted by measure if the user requires ranked data. Hover text and modals are used on the website to provide fuller descriptions of the column headings and any abbreviations used.

Users can also download the data for all schools in either excel or csv format. Comprehensive metadata is provided for these files.

Any user wishing to conduct more detailed research or analysis may request an anonymised pupil level extract of the [national pupil database](#).

5.4 Coherence

Coherence is the degree to which the statistical processes, by which two or more outputs are generated, use the same concepts and harmonised methods.

We use the same methodology to produce the data within our publications and the performance tables. We also use a dataset produced at the same time for the performance tables and the revised publication. As a result, the national and LA figures included in both the revised publication and the performance tables will match.

5.5 Comparability

Comparability is the degree to which data can be compared over time, region or other domain.

Over time

There have been a number of changes to primary school assessment over time which can make comparisons over time difficult. These changes are listed in annex C.

The expected standard in 2019 can be compared to 2018, 2017 and 2016 - the first year that the new assessments were introduced – for the test subjects (reading, maths and GPS). In writing and science TA there have been changes since 2017 and 2018. For more information see the [TA frameworks](#).

Differences between national, local authority, local authority district and parliamentary constituency figures

The figures published in the national key stage 2 tables include any results from independent schools but results from these schools are excluded from the local authority (LA) figures. There are also some differences in the pupils included in the national and school level figures. Pupils with 'pending maladministration' (S), 'missing' (M) and 'pupil took the test/was assessed in a previous year' (P⁴) are normally included in the LA, LAD and parliamentary constituency level figures but are not included in the national figures. Similarly, where schools ask for overseas pupils to be discounted, these pupils will be removed from the LA figures but remain included in the national figures so that these reflect the attainment of all pupils. A national figure calculated on the same basis as the LA figures is included in the LA tables for comparison purposes.

Across different types of school

Care needs to be taken when making comparisons across school types as schools can change type over time. For example, a simple comparison of the published figures for converter academies over time may be misleading because the number of converter academies has increased over this period so the same schools are not included each time. Any changes seen could be because the schools added into this category have different attainment to those which were already there, rather than that the results for these schools have improved or declined.

Even when we restrict our comparisons to the same group of schools over time (for example, academies that have been open for 3 years), we need to be aware that different types of schools will have had different starting points and this may affect their ability to improve. For example, sponsored academies generally start with lower attainment so have lots of potential to improve, however, converter academies generally have higher levels of attainment so have much less room for improvement.

With other parts of the UK

The Welsh Government publishes attainment data for schools in Wales. As in England, the national curriculum is divided into key stages and pupils are assessed at the end of

⁴ Pupils with P will normally have the P replaced with their previous result if it could be found. If a previous result cannot be found, the pupils result will be left as P and treated as missing.

key stage 1, 2 and 3 at ages 7, 11, and 14 respectively. Statutory assessment in Wales is by teacher assessments for all key stages. Further information is available on the [Welsh Government website](#).

The Scottish Government measures attainment nationally using the Scottish Survey of Literacy and Numeracy (SSLN), an annual sample survey of pupil attainment in primary and early secondary school. Further information is available on the [Scottish Government website](#).

Information on educational attainment for post-primary schools in Northern Ireland is available from the [Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency](#).

These assessments are not directly comparable with those for England.

International comparisons

Pupils in England also take part in international surveys such as the 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.

Pupils in England also participate in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), organised by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). This assessment aims to compare standards of achievement for 15-year olds in reading, mathematics and science, between participating countries. This study is based on pupils from a sample of schools.

[Results for 2011](#) were published for both of these studies on 11 December 2012. [2015 TIMSS](#) results were published in November 2016.

5.6 Timeliness

Timeliness refers to the lapse of time between the period to which the data refer and the publication of the estimates.

Key stage 2 tests take place in the third week of May and schools are required to submit key stage 2 teacher assessments to STA by the end of June.

Interim key stage 2 national data are published in early July, the same day that assessment results are released to schools. This is 8 working days after the deadline for submission of teacher assessments.

Provisional key stage 2 data are published in early September, 10 weeks after the deadline for submission of teacher assessments. The data contains information about all pupil characteristics including disadvantage and phonics prior attainment.

Revised key stage 2 data including school level data are published in mid-December: At this point, the data contains the outcomes of marking reviews and maladministration investigations.

During this period, the data are quality assured, matched with other data and

processed to produce the statistical publication outputs.

5.7 Punctuality

Punctuality refers to the time lag between the actual and planned dates of publication.

The proposed month of publication is announced on gov.uk at least twelve months in advance and precise dates are announced in the same place six months prior to publication. In the unlikely event of a change to the pre-announced release schedule, the change and the reasons for it would be announced. In 2019 the Revised publication was moved back by a day, in line with ONS guidance, due to a general election.

Prior to 2019, the only occasion when any primary attainment publication had been delayed was in 2008. In 2008, there were problems with delivery of the national curriculum tests at key stage 2. Provisional key stage 2 data was published on schedule in August but publication of the revised data that was due in December 2008 was delayed until 1 April 2009.

6. Got a query? Like to give feedback?

If from the media	Press Office News Desk, Department for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT. 020 7783 8300
If non-media	Simon Dickason, Education Data Division, Department for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT. 020 7783 8761 primary.attainment@education.gov.uk

Annex A: KS2 review outcomes

The main cause of mark changes between the provisional and revised KS2 attainment data is the reviews process. In 2019, review applications were made for 0.8% of total tests taken.

Marking reviews	No. of schools	No. of pupil applications
English reading	4,491	10,295
Mathematics	2,079	3,181
English grammar, spelling and punctuation	1,045	1,486

Clerical reviews	No. of schools	No. of pupil applications
English reading	1	1
Mathematics	1	2
English grammar, spelling and punctuation	0	0

The number of review applications which met the criteria for a successful review were as follows.

Further information on the review process and successful criteria can be found [here](#).

Marking reviews	No. of successful applications	% of successful reviews
English reading	922	9%
Mathematics	466	14.6%
English grammar, spelling and punctuation	216	14.5%

Clerical reviews	No. of successful applications	% of successful reviews
English reading	1	100%
Mathematics	2	100%
English grammar, spelling and punctuation	0	0

The Standards and Testing Agency does not believe that the number of review applications received, or the outcomes of marking reviews, can be used to draw conclusions about the quality of marking in any given year due to the following:

- the changing nature of the reviews services offered
- the population of pupils sitting the tests
- varying factors influencing application decisions made by schools

Reviews data prior to 2019 was published as a separate publication. These can be accessed here: [Key stage 2 national curriculum tests: review outcomes](#)

Annex B: Further detail on school characteristics

This section provides further detail on the school type which is taken from [GIAS](#). School type in the statistical publications and performance tables are shown as at 11 September at the start of the academic year.

Academy Sponsor Led	Sponsored academies are all-ability, state-funded schools established and managed by sponsors from a wide range of backgrounds, including high performing schools and colleges, universities, individual philanthropists, businesses, the voluntary sector, and the faith communities.
Academy Converter	Schools that have chosen through Governing Body Resolution and application to the Secretary of State to become an academy under the Academies Act 2010.
Free School	Free Schools are all-ability state-funded schools set up in response to what local people say they want and need in order to improve education for children in their community. They have the same legal requirements as academies and enjoy the same freedoms and flexibilities.
LA maintained school	Schools fully or partially under LA control that are state-funded, mainly by the Dedicated Schools Grant. These include community schools, foundation schools, voluntary aided school and voluntary controlled schools and also LA maintained special schools.
Registered independent school	Any school which provides full time education for 5 or more pupils of compulsory school age, which is not state-funded or a non-state-funded special school.
Independent special school	Approved by the Secretary of State for Education. They are run on a not-for-profit basis by charitable trusts and normally cater for children with severe and/or low incidence special educational needs. This group includes non-maintained special schools.

State-funded school	Includes LA maintained schools, academies, free schools, City Technology Colleges and state-funded special schools (excluding hospital schools, pupil referral units, alternative provision and independent schools).
State-funded mainstream schools	Includes LA maintained mainstream schools, academies, free schools, City Technology Colleges (excluding all special schools, pupil referral units, alternative provision and independent schools).
State-funded special schools	Includes LA maintained special schools, academy sponsor led special schools, academy special schools and special free schools.
All independent	Includes independent schools, independent special schools and non-maintained special schools.
Alternative provision (AP)	Education arranged by local authorities for pupils who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education; education arranged by schools for pupils on a fixed period exclusion; and pupils being directed by schools to off-site provision to improve their behaviour.
Pupil referral unit (PRU)	A pupil referral unit is a type of alternative provision. They are local authority establishments which provide education for children unable to attend a mainstream school.
Hospital Schools	Education provided at a community special school or a foundation special school established in a hospital, or education provider under any arrangements made by the local authority under section 19 of the Education Act 1996 (exceptional provision of education), where the child is being provided with such education by reason of a decision made by a medical practitioner. Hospital schools are classified as either special schools or alternative provision.

Information on the phase of education covered by the school is derived from the school's statutory lowest and highest age of pupils taken from GIAS. These are shown as at 11 September at the start of the academic year. Only mainstream schools are included in the data broken down by the phase of education since special schools are more likely than mainstream schools to be all-through schools.

For key stage 2, schools are categorised into primary schools (those with lowest statutory age below 7 and highest statutory age of 11), junior schools (those with lowest statutory age of 7 or above and highest statutory age of 11) and other schools (those with highest statutory age greater than 11: this category includes middle and all-through schools).

Information is also broken down by the school cohort size which is based on the number of eligible pupils in the school's end of key stage cohort. Again, only mainstream schools are included in this breakdown since special schools are more likely to have small cohorts.

Annex C: Timeline of changes in primary assessment

1988	National curriculum introduced.
1990	First national curriculum tests for pupils at the end of key stage 1 (7 year olds).
1994	First national curriculum tests for pupils at the end of key stage 2 (11 year olds).
1996	Publication of the first primary school performance tables for pupils. The tables showed the achievement of pupils in English, mathematics and science tests and teacher assessments at the end of key stage 2.
1999	Key stage 2 teacher assessments dropped from performance tables.
2002	Foundation stage profile introduced in schools for pupils aged 3 to 5 years.
2003	Data on KS1-2 value added (VA) was included in the performance tables.
2005	Schools were no longer required to report both test results and teacher assessments for pupils at the end of key stage 1 – they only needed to report teacher assessments.
2007	KS1-2 value added data was replaced with contextualised value added (CVA) in the performance tables.
2008	Removal of the borderlining procedure (the process of checking test scripts that fall just below level thresholds) in the marking process. Delay in the release of results of the key stage 2 test results to schools which led to the Sutherland enquiry.
2009	Last year of key stage 2 science test for all pupils. Introduction of progress measures in mathematics and English to the performance tables.
2010	Mathematics single level tests pilot. Introduction of annual science sample test. Approximately 25% of schools failed to take part in the tests as a result of industrial action. Key stage 2 teacher assessments re-introduced to the performance tables (in addition to test results).
2011	Single level tests dropped. Progress measures methodology revised so that the same methodology was used in both the performance tables and the statistical publications. New value added measures introduced to the performance tables to replace CVA.

2012	<p>Statutory phonics screening check for all year 1 pupils in state-funded schools in England introduced.</p> <p>Externally marked writing tests were statutory in a sample of schools. All other state-funded schools had to administer the writing test to inform their writing teacher assessment but could choose to mark it internally if they wished. Subject levels for English were calculated by combining the reading test mark with the writing teacher assessment.</p> <p>First collection of separate reading and writing teacher assessments.</p> <p>Introduction of optional level 6 tests.</p> <p>Final year of annual science sample test.</p>
2013	<p>Re-take of phonics screening check for pupils in year 2 who failed to achieve the required standard in year 1 introduced.</p> <p>Introduction of grammar, punctuation and spelling test.</p> <p>Reporting of overall English replaced with reading and writing results separately.</p> <p>Introduction of separate reading and writing progress measures.</p>
2014	<p>The phonics threshold mark was not communicated to schools in advance of the phonics screening check as it had been in previous years.</p> <p>Calculators were not allowed in any of the level 3-5 mathematics tests. In previous years, they were allowed for paper 2.</p> <p>Minor changes to the timing of the reading test - instead of being given 15 minutes reading time and 45 minutes to answer the questions, children had a total of one hour to read the texts and complete the questions.</p> <p>Introduction of new science sample test every two years.</p>
2015	<p>Changes to moderation arrangements at KS1 to ensure that 50% of infant schools were moderated each year.</p> <p>All KS2 tests were marked on screen (previously reading and mathematics tests were marked on paper).</p>
2016	<p>Assessments are based on the new national curriculum. National curriculum levels are no longer used.</p> <p>New tests for key stage 1 and key stage 2 introduced using scaled scores.</p> <p>Teacher assessments are based on the interim teacher assessment framework and the interim pre key stage standards. They have moved from a 'best fit' judgement', where pupils could compensate for poor performance in one area of the curriculum by strong performance in another, 'to 'secure fit'', where all statements within the standard need to be achieved.</p> <p>The expectations for pupils at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 were raised to be broadly equivalent to the old level 2b and level 4b respectively.</p>
2018	<p>Changes made within the TA frameworks mean that the writing teacher assessment judgements in 2018 are not directly comparable to those made using the previous interim frameworks in 2016 and 2017.</p>
2019	<p>Schools are no longer required to make statutory TA judgements in English reading and mathematics at KS2. This is to reduce assessment burdens in</p>

schools, as set out in the government response to the consultation on Primary assessment in England.

Changes made within the [TA frameworks](#) mean that the science teacher assessment judgements in 2019 are not directly comparable to those made using the previous frameworks in 2016, 2017 and 2018. The ‘pupil can’ statements have been refined for clarity, based on feedback from teachers and other educational experts.

Annex D: Key users and uses

Department for Education	Used to monitor national standards of literacy and numeracy in primary school children in England. The national figures are used to determine whether standards are improving or declining. Data for sub-groups of the population are also analysed to inform departmental policies aimed at closing gaps in attainment. School level figures are used to identify schools where intervention may be needed.
Ofsted	Used as part of the background information to inform school inspections. For example, it enables inspectors to identify areas of the curriculum or groups of pupils where a school appears to be doing less well that would then form part of the focus during the inspection visit.
Ofqual	Used as part of the evidence it reviews on the setting and maintenance of standards in national assessments.
Local authorities and Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs)	Use the national data and that for other LAs to set the attainment of their area into context. Use the school level information to hold maintained schools to account.
Schools	Used to evaluate their own performance against national standards and other local schools. Used to identify high performing schools with similar circumstances to their own that they can work with to improve their own standards.
School governors	Used to hold schools to account, to identify strengths and weaknesses and support school improvement.

Teachers and head teachers	<p>Used to carry out analysis and self-evaluation, and to aid planning of school improvement strategies.</p> <p>Use the information to inform decisions about whether to apply for vacancies in particular schools and also as background information when preparing for interviews.</p>
Parents	<p>Used to compare their own children's performance to others in their school, LA and nationally.</p> <p>Used to hold their children's schools to account and identify areas where they feel the school needs to improve.</p> <p>Used to inform choice of a primary school for their child.</p> <p>Performance of schools in the local area is also a key consideration for parents and prospective parents when moving house.</p>
Others	<p>Researchers from this country and abroad. Others use the information to identify schools with particular levels of attainment that they may wish to market their services to.</p>

Annex E: Glossary and abbreviations

Average scaled score	<p>The average scaled score is calculated as the mean scaled score of all pupils awarded a scaled score. Pupils who did not take the test or took the test but did not receive a scaled score are excluded.</p>
Checking exercise	<p>In September each year, schools are asked to check the provisional KS2 data that we hold for their school during the performance tables checking exercise. The data is uploaded to a secure website and schools can inform us via this website of any pupils that are included in their school in error, or of any missing pupils. They can also notify us of any other errors in the data such as errors in matching prior attainment results and apply for pupils to be discounted from their figures, if they have recently arrived from overseas and their first language is not English. Any changes requested are validated to ensure that they comply with the rules before being accepted.</p>
COLLECT	<p>Collections On-Line for Learning, Education, Children and Teachers - a system used by the department to collect data from schools, LAs and other organisations.</p>
GIAS	<p>GIAS is a register of educational establishments in England and Wales, maintained by the department. It provides information on establishments providing compulsory, higher and further education. The information included is provided from the establishments themselves and also from LAs and teams within the department.</p>
Expected standard	<p>The expected standard in the tests corresponds to a scaled score of 100.</p>

Final data	Final KS1 and phonics data is available in November. Final KS2 data is available in March following the errata period. The performance tables are updated with this data.
GPS	Grammar, punctuation and spelling. Pupils take a test of grammar, punctuation and spelling at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2.
High score	A high score in the tests is a scaled score of 110 or above.
KS1	Key stage 1. This covers year 1 and year 2 in primary schools. Pupils are normally 6 or 7 years old at the end of key stage 1.
KS2	Key stage 2. This covers years 3 to 6 in primary schools. Pupils are normally 10 or 11 years old at the end of key stage 2.
LA	Local authority
Maladministration	Maladministration refers to any act that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • affects the integrity, security or confidentiality of the national curriculum assessments • could lead to results and/or outcomes that don't reflect pupils' unaided work or actual abilities.
Primary Assessment Gateway	Schools and LAs use the Primary Assessment Gateway website to support administration of the national curriculum tests, including the phonics screening check, and submission of key stage 2 teacher assessments.
National Pupil Database (NPD)	The NPD contains detailed information about pupils in schools and colleges in England. It includes test and exam results, prior attainment and progression at different key stages and also includes information about pupils' characteristics.
Phonics screening check	The phonics screening check is designed to confirm whether pupils have learnt phonic decoding to an appropriate standard. It will identify pupils who need extra help to improve their decoding skills. The check consists of 20 real words and 20 pseudo-words that a pupil reads aloud to the teacher. Pupils in year 1 (age 5 or 6) must take the phonics screening check. Any year 2 pupils who did not meet the standard in year 1 or did not take the check in year 1 must retake the check in year 2.
Performance tables	Primary school performance tables are published in December of each year. Secondary school and post-16 performance tables are published in January. They give information on the achievements of pupils in primary, secondary and 16-18 provision in schools and colleges, and how they compare with other schools and colleges in the Local Authority (LA) area and in England as a whole.

Progress measures	<p>KS1-2 progress measures for 2016 onwards are based on a value added methodology. Pupils are grouped according to their prior attainment at KS1. Their KS2 attainment is compared to the average KS2 attainment for all pupils nationally who are in the same prior attainment group.</p> <p>Pupil progress scores are then averaged to give a figure for the average progress made by pupils within a school. A progress score of zero indicates that the school has made average progress, below zero that they have made less than average progress and above zero that they have made more than average progress.</p> <p>There are separate progress measures in reading, writing and mathematics.</p>
Provisional data	<p>Provisional phonics and KS1 data is published in September of each year and provisional KS2 data is published in August/September each year. The provisional data is subject to change though the impact on national data is usually minimal.</p>
Reviews	<p>If schools believe that the mark scheme has not been correctly applied or a clerical error has been made, they may ask for a paper to be reviewed. This may result in a change to the mark or scaled score awarded.</p>
Revised data	<p>Revised KS2 data is published in December each year. This updates the national and local authority information published in the provisional publication and also includes school level information in the performance tables.</p>
Special consideration	<p>Pupils may be awarded special consideration if their performance in the key stage 2 tests has been affected by extremely distressing circumstances at the time of the tests. If special consideration is awarded, the pupil's scaled score will be increased by 3 for accountability purposes.</p>
STA	Standards and Testing Agency
TA	Teacher Assessment
Threshold measures	<p>'Threshold measures' refer to any figures where we show the percentage of pupils who have achieved a particular standard in a subject or combination of subjects, for example, the percentage achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.</p>

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download www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-key-stage-2

Reference: Key stage 2 provisional publication 2019



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