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## Guidance

# How to keep test materials secure

Updated 14 March 2022

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Headteachers are responsible for keeping key stage 1 (KS1) and key stage 2 (KS2) national curriculum tests and phonics screening check materials secure.

Materials must be kept secure and treated as confidential from the point they arrive in school until the end of the test and check administration periods, including timetable variation periods. This includes electronic versions of the KS1 tests and phonics check downloaded from the [Primary Assessment Gateway](#), and any materials subsequently printed in hard copy.

Headteachers should ensure teachers and all other staff who may handle the materials understand their sensitivity. This will help maintain the integrity, security and confidentiality of the tests.

Test and check administrators must not discuss the content of the tests or check with anyone and not use the content to prepare pupils.

KS1 and KS2 test materials include:

- test papers
- reading booklets
- answer booklets
- mark schemes (KS1 only)
- stationery items, including attendance registers, test administration instructions, script return bags and labels (KS2 only)

Phonics screening check materials include:

- pupils' materials
- scoring guidance
- answer sheets

## **Practical advice for keeping materials secure**

For all tests:

- two members of staff should be involved when checking the delivery
- check your delivery promptly against the enclosed delivery note to ensure it contains the correct subject and number of test or check packs—packs must remain unopened
- put the unopened materials back into the original delivery box • store test or check materials in a room where there is no Information Technology equipment kept, as this equipment is often targeted during burglaries
- do not store in a room that is prone to flooding
- store the boxes in a secure, locked cupboard
- limit access to the location of the materials
- a nominated member of staff should be responsible for the cupboard keys and ensure they are kept secure at all times
- check the boxes regularly to ensure they have not been tampered with
- keep a record to document instances of access to the materials and to log regular security checks \*plan a reporting procedure in the event of a problem, such as if keys are lost or stolen

For KS1 tests:

- check individual test packs have not been opened before the test administration window begins on Tuesday 3 May
- keep test materials secure and treat them as confidential until Wednesday 1 June—this includes electronic versions of the tests downloaded from the Primary Assessment Gateway, and any materials subsequently printed in hard copy

For KS2 tests:

- check individual test packs have not been opened before the test date (unless the school has an approved early opening application)
- where an early opening application is approved to allow a school to make modifications to test materials, the original test pack must be resealed, and all test materials kept securely
- where test materials have been modified using an approved early opening application, the modified test materials must be returned to the test pack and resealed, ensuring all test materials are kept securely
- keep test materials secure and treat them as confidential until Friday 20 May

For the phonics screening check:

- check the packs have not been opened before Monday 6 June
- keep check materials secure and treat them as confidential until Monday 20 June—this includes electronic versions downloaded from the Primary Assessment Gateway, and any materials subsequently printed in hard copy

If you suspect or experience a breach of security, you must report the incident immediately to the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013. If you do not follow the correct procedures, your school may be subject to a [maladministration investigation](#).

## Split site schools and administering a test at an alternative location

If test or check materials need to be sent to a location away from the main school site prior to administration, the headteacher must ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to maintain the integrity, security and confidentiality of the tests or check contents.

Materials should be kept securely at the main school site and taken to the other location just prior to administration.

## Schools used as a polling station or to host public events

If your school is used as a polling station you should:

- ensure test or phonics screening check materials are secure and kept away from the polling station area and visitors
- check the materials before the opening and after the closing of the polling station

## Getting help

If you have not received your test materials by Friday 29 April, if a delivery is incomplete or if test packs are unsealed or damaged on arrival, you should contact the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013. You may be asked to send a photograph of any damaged packages

For general enquiries about national curriculum tests, contact the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 or email [assessments@education.gov.uk](mailto:assessments@education.gov.uk).

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