



Transparency data

2025 maladministration report

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1. Introduction

The Standards and Testing Agency (STA) has a statutory duty to investigate any allegation concerning the accuracy of results, relating to the:

- reception baseline assessment (RBA)
- key stage 1 (KS1) phonics screening check
- key stage 2 (KS2) national curriculum tests, multiplication tables check (MTC) and

teacher assessment

We investigate any concerns, alongside local authorities, in accordance with the [maladministration investigation procedures](#).

Maladministration refers to any act that could affect the integrity, security or confidentiality of the national curriculum assessments. This could refer to a range of actions, including:

- changes made to a pupil's test script by someone other than the pupil
- over-aiding of pupils by test or check administrators
- inflation or deflation of teacher assessment judgements
- pupils cheating
- incorrectly opened test or check packs

This report:

- details the numbers, sources and types of allegations of maladministration reported to STA during the academic year 2024 to 2025
- presents the numbers of amendments and annulments to results made in the academic year 2024 to 2025
- provides comparisons with the maladministration data from the academic year 2023 to 2024

2. Numbers of schools participating in assessments

In the academic year 2024 to 2025, there were:

- 16,588 primary schools eligible to administer the RBA
- 16,522 state-funded mainstream primary schools with year 1 phonics screening check results
- 16,417 primary schools that signed in to the MTC service
- 16,421 state-funded mainstream primary schools with KS2 results

Establishments that make up primary schools with results are state schools,

academies, free schools, independent schools that opt in, secure units, special schools, Ministry of Defence (MOD) schools, and alternative provision (AP), including pupil referral units (PRUs), AP academies and AP free schools.

3. Changes to maladministration procedures

In the academic year 2024 to 2025, STA did not require local authorities to undertake RBA monitoring visits. This decision was taken for several reasons. Firstly, in the previous test cycle, STA received 22 concerns arising from RBA monitoring visits and one concern submitted directly by a school. All these cases were fully investigated and no maladministration was identified. Secondly, monitoring visits place additional burden on both local authorities and schools, particularly in relation to scheduling and resourcing. In considering the balance between assurance and proportionality, STA determined that the level of risk evidenced through previous test cycles did not justify continuing the requirement for monitoring visits in the academic year 2024 to 2025.

STA did not receive any allegations relating to RBA maladministration from the public or from any other sources.

We will continue to review our processes and make amendments where appropriate. Our aim remains to maintain confidence in the integrity of assessment outcomes while recognising the operational demands placed on schools and local authorities.

4. Breakdown of maladministration cases

The table below details the number of maladministration cases STA investigated.

Table 1: Number of cases investigated (% against schools participating)

Year	RBA	Phonics	MTC	KS2*	Total number
2024	23 (0.1%)	26 (0.2%)	14 (0.1%)	609 (3.7%)	672
2025	0 (0%)	43 (0.3%)	30 (0.2%)	624 (3.8%)	697

*includes teacher assessment

As indicated in the section above, STA did not receive any maladministration allegations relating to RBA in 2025.

5. Sources of reported maladministration cases

Cases of alleged maladministration are reported to STA from several different sources. Table 2 details these sources and the percentages of these against the total number of cases received.

Table 2: Sources of reported cases (% against schools participating)

Assessment	Anonymous	School*	Marker	Teacher	Local authority	Parent
Phonics	5 (0.03%)	22 (0.13%)	N/A	1 (0.01%)	14 (0.08%)	1 (0.01%)
MTC	0 (0%)	29 (0.18%)	N/A	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.01%)
KS2**	51 (0.31%)	192 (1.17%)	237 (1.44%)	32 (0.19%)	57 (0.35%)	34 (0.21%)

*School's senior leadership team

**includes teacher assessment

Other sources include:

- governing body
- parent of another pupil
- secondary school
- Ofqual
- Ofsted

- family member of pupil

6. Breakdown of allegation types

The table below gives a breakdown of allegations by type and the percentage of these against the total number of cases.

Table 3: Allegation types (% against schools participating)

Allegation	Phonics	MTC	KS2 tests	KS2 teacher assessment
Incorrect completion of transcripts by school*	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	232 (1.41%)	0 (0%)
Test administrator over-aiding pupils	15 (0.09%)	3 (0.02%)	174 (1.06%)	0 (0%)
Unauthorised timetable variation	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	61 (0.37%)	0 (0%)
Incorrect administration	10 (0.06%)	26 (0.16%)	22 (0.13%)	0 (0%)
Wrongly opened test or check packs	2 (0.01%)	0 (0%)	45 (0.27%)	0 (0%)
Test or check security breach	7 (0.04%)	0 (0%)	4 (0.02%)	0 (0%)
Unauthorised additional time	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	20 (0.12%)	0 (0%)
Displays not covered	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	11 (0.07%)	0 (0%)
No notification of scribe	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10 (0.06%)	0 (0%)
Other	9 (0.05%)	1 (0.01%)	41 (0.25%)	4 (0.02%)

*For further information on the correct use of transcription, please refer to STA's [access arrangements guidance](#) which sets out the requirements and procedures.

Other allegation types include:

- inappropriate storage of scripts
- incorrect time allocation
- early opening of test materials without permission

7. Annulments and amendments to results

Following an investigation, if STA finds that the accuracy of a pupil's results is in doubt, we give the school the opportunity to provide further relevant information or representations to help us better understand the situation. Following this, STA may decide to annul or amend results and will communicate this decision to the school.

If a school believes a pupil gained an advantage because they have cheated, the headteacher notifies STA of the incident on the website provided by [STA's Test Operations Service provider](#) – this was the 'Primary Assessment Gateway' until the end of the academic year 2024 to 2025, and is the 'National Curriculum Assessments Portal (NCA Portal)' from September 2025 onwards. In doing this, the school agrees to either the removal of marks for the specific questions where the pupil has gained an advantage or the annulment of the pupil's paper.

The table below gives a breakdown of annulments by type and the percentage of these against the total number of cases. Pupils who gained an advantage because of cheating are not included in this table.

In some cases, STA may have residual concerns – for example, findings may suggest potential inappropriate assistance. In these situations, STA will work with local authorities and schools to help improve test administration processes for the next academic year.

Table 4: Annulments in at least one subject (% against schools participating)

Annulments	Phonics 2024	Phonics 2025	MTC 2024	MTC 2025	KS2 tests	KS2 tests	KS2 teache
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					2024	2025	assess 2024
Whole cohort	2 (0.01%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (0.02%)	2 (0.01%)	0 (0%)
Partial cohort	1 (0.01%)	1 (0.01%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.01%)	4 (0.02%)	5 (0.03%)	0 (0%)
Individual pupil	3 (0.02%)	1 (0.01%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	39 (0.24%)	39 (0.24%)	0 (0%)
Total annulments	6 (0.04%)	2 (0.01%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.01%)	46 (0.28%)	46 (0.28%)	0 (0%)

Pupils who gained an advantage because of cheating are not included in the table above. There were 24 pupils with annulments due to notifications of cheating:

- 2 whole test annulments in mathematics
- 22 part test annulments, including 14 in mathematics and 8 in English grammar, punctuation and spelling

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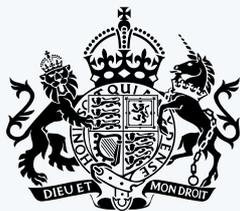
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