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[Standards
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Guidance

2026 optional key stage 1 test administration guidance

Updated 9 March 2026

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End of key stage 1 (KS1) national curriculum tests have been non-statutory since the 2023 to 2024 academic year. The Standards and Testing Agency (STA) continues to develop and supply guidance and materials for the optional end of KS1 tests. This includes optional test papers in:

- English grammar, punctuation and spelling
- English reading
- mathematics

STA designs and develops the tests using [test frameworks](#), to ensure their validity when they are administered under test conditions. As the end of KS1 tests are optional, schools can choose to administer them how they see fit, or not at all. However, if schools choose to administer the optional tests under test conditions, we recommend they follow this guidance to ensure pupils can access the tests as intended, without advantaging or disadvantaging any pupils.

This guidance provides information for schools administering the optional KS1 national curriculum tests in 2026 under test conditions. The following instructions assume this approach. This information expands on the 'Test administration' section of the [2026 optional KS1 tests guidance](#).

This guidance ensures schools can:

- understand the requirements for the optional KS1 tests
- plan for the tests
- receive and securely store modified test materials
- administer the tests under test conditions
- mark the tests
- convert raw scores into scaled scores
- use the results of the English reading and mathematics tests to inform teacher assessment judgements

Test administration instructions will be available to download from the 'Activities' tab on the [National Curriculum Assessments Portal \(NCA Portal\)](#) from Friday 1 May.

[Modified test administration guidance \(MTAG\)](#) is also available, and printed modified test administration instructions will be included with schools' orders of modified test materials.

Schools can also use [past test materials](#) to help pupils prepare for the tests, and prepare families by sharing the [information for parents](#).

As these assessments are optional, and they will not be used for reporting purposes, we will not investigate any allegations of maladministration.

1. Changes for 2026

National Curriculum Assessments Portal

The Primary Assessment Gateway has been replaced by the [NCA Portal](#). This has been developed by Pearson.

The [NCA Portal](#) uses multifactor authentication (MFA) to help protect pupil data and ensure secure access. On the first sign in of each day, users will need to enter a unique 6-digit verification code, which will be sent to their registered email address.

Schools can use the [NCA Portal](#) to:

- order modified versions of the optional KS1 test materials
- download standard and modified large print (MLP) versions of the optional KS1 test materials, including mark schemes (but not braille versions)
- download raw score to scaled score conversion tables and compensatory marks for spelling

For full instructions and support on how to access the system and manage user accounts, please refer to the guidance on [how to access the NCA Portal](#).

2. 2026 optional key stage 1 tests

The optional KS1 tests consist of:

- English grammar, punctuation and spelling Paper 1: spelling
- English grammar, punctuation and spelling Paper 2: questions
- English reading Paper 1: combined reading prompt and answer booklet
- English reading Paper 2: reading booklet and reading answer booklet

- mathematics Paper 1: arithmetic
- mathematics Paper 2: reasoning

Schools will receive modified test orders in the week beginning Monday 27 April.

Optional KS1 test materials, including standard and MLP versions of the test papers and mark schemes, will be available for schools to download from the 'Download KS1 test materials' from within the 'Activities' tab on the [NCA Portal](#) from Friday 1 May.

Raw score to scaled score conversion tables will be available to download from the results screen within the [NCA Portal](#). Compensatory marks for spelling will also be available within the 'Test administration' tab under 'Access Arrangements' on the [NCA Portal](#) from Friday 1 May.

Schools that require modified versions of the tests and did not place a test order by Friday 14 November 2025 should contact the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013.

2.1 Test administration period

The tests are designed to be taken at the end of the KS1 programme of study. We suggest that schools administer the tests during May, to help inform the support schools can give to pupils on their transition to key stage 2 ahead of time.

Schools may choose to administer the tests on specific days, or to smaller groups of pupils, or on an individual basis, over different days. If administering under test conditions, pupils should complete each test paper on the day they start it and only be allowed to take each test once.

Important dates for the optional KS1 tests are outlined in section 3 of the [2026 optional KS1 tests guidance](#). Schools can also download these dates from the [KS1 assessments calendar 2025 to 2026](#) (110 KB).

3. Preparing test administrators

If schools choose to administer the optional KS1 tests under test conditions, headteachers should consider the staff resource required to administer them.

Internal arrangements should also be in place in case a pupil needs to leave the test room – for example, if they are disruptive or begin to feel unwell.

Test administrators will usually be headteachers, teachers or teaching assistants. They should be trained in how the tests will be administered. This will help avoid misunderstandings about test administration and misinterpretation of valid access arrangements or assistance.

We encourage schools to hold training sessions for those involved in administering the optional KS1 tests. Before administering the tests, test administrators should familiarise themselves with this guidance and with:

- the ‘Test administration’ section of the [2026 optional KS1 tests guidance](#)
- past test papers, available in the collection of [past test materials](#)
- which test is administered on each day, as detailed in the school’s preferred test timetable
- the [optional KS1 tests: access arrangements guidance](#) and those pupils needing arrangements
- test administration instructions available from the ‘Activities’ tab on the [NCA Portal](#), and modified test administration instructions delivered with modified test materials, including:
 - what equipment is required for a particular test
 - the length of the test
 - what assistance is allowed for each test
- [notes for readers in the English grammar, punctuation and spelling tests](#), which provides guidance on how particular question types should be read

4. Receiving modified test materials

We will deliver modified test materials in the week beginning Monday 27 April, to school addresses taken from [Get Information about Schools \(GIAS\)](#). Please ensure your school's details are up to date by signing into GIAS via [DfE Sign-in](#).

Please contact the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 if:

- you have not received your modified test materials by Friday 1 May
- a delivery is incomplete
- test packs are unsealed or damaged on arrival

We may ask you to send a photograph of any damaged packages.

If you require additional braille materials, you should contact the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 or by email MTH@iwanttoconnect.co.uk.

5. Downloading test materials

Schools will be able to access and download standard and MLP versions of the optional KS1 test papers and mark schemes from the 'Download KS1 test materials' form within the 'Activities' tab on the [NCA Portal](#) from Friday 1 May.

6. Security of test materials

To help maintain the integrity, security and confidentiality of the tests for those schools administering under test conditions, we ask that all schools treat all optional KS1 test materials as confidential from the point they arrive in school, or are downloaded, until Monday 1 June. Please avoid discussing specific content that could compromise a test, including sharing with colleagues, online, via internal digital channels or on social media. This includes unused modified test papers and versions downloaded from the [NCA Portal](#).

7. Preparing to administer the tests

7.1 Access arrangements

If administering under test conditions, test administrators should have a list of pupils requiring access arrangements and follow the [optional KS1 tests: access arrangements guidance](#).

Schools do not need to request permission to use access arrangements in the optional KS1 tests, but if administering under test conditions you should ensure that any arrangements used do not advantage or disadvantage pupils and the support provided should be primarily based on normal classroom practice.

We encourage you to explain to parents and pupils what support is allowed in the tests.

7.2 School-based adaptations

Optional KS1 test materials will be available to download from the [NCA Portal](#) from Friday 1 May. Schools can adapt the printed test papers in order to:

- provide pupils with test materials on coloured paper
- make enlarged copies of the tests – for mathematics test papers, the test administration instructions will provide guidance if there are questions unsuitable for enlargement
- prepare translations – for the mathematics tests only

7.3 Preparing test rooms

If administering under test conditions, we suggest schools prepare the test rooms to provide a quiet space for pupils. If you support a pupil with an access arrangement that may disturb or aid other pupils, we suggest administering the tests to them in a separate room.

To prepare any rooms where tests will take place, we encourage:

- removing or covering any displays or materials that could help pupils, including

items that could help in the spelling test

- ensuring seating arrangements allow all pupils to work quietly and independently
- ensuring pupils will not be able to view each other's test papers

8. Administering the tests under test conditions

8.1 At the start of a test

Headteachers and test administrators can agree their own timetable for the optional KS1 tests, considering any pupils requiring access arrangements.

It is at your discretion to choose when, or if, a pupil requires a break during the test. You also have the discretion to decide whether it is appropriate to stop the test early. If a pupil is not in a fit physical or mental state to take the test, we encourage you to administer it to them on a different day.

You should download and print the amount of test papers required for each test on the day you are administering it.

You should open any modified test papers you have ordered in the room where you are administering the test, in front of the pupils who are taking the test in the first sitting.

Any unused test papers that you ordered or printed may then be used for subsequent administrations – for example, if a group of pupils takes the test and another group is going to take it at a different time or on a different day.

Each subject has 2 papers. We suggest administering them in order, but they do not need to be administered on the same day. If both papers are administered on the same day, pupils may benefit from a break between papers. If administering under test conditions, pupils should complete each test paper on the day they start it and only be allowed to take each test once.

From the moment the test pack has been opened, or the test materials have been downloaded, and until Monday 1 June, we ask that teachers and test administrators

do not:

- discuss the content of the test papers with anyone
- publish or discuss specific content that could compromise the test online, via internal digital channels or on social media
- use question-specific information to prepare pupils for the tests
- leave unused test papers unsecured

This will help maintain the integrity, security and confidentiality of the tests for those schools administering the optional tests until the end of the recommended assessment period, and so that no pupil has an advantage over another.

If administering under test conditions, to ensure the most valid results, you should not say or do anything during the tests which could be interpreted as giving pupils an advantage – for example, indicating that an answer is correct or incorrect, or suggesting the pupil look at an answer again.

9. Administering the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test under test conditions

9.1 English grammar, punctuation and spelling Paper 1: spelling

Format

‘Paper 1: spelling’ consists of an answer booklet for pupils to complete and a test transcript for the test administrator to read. The transcript is included in the test pack. The test should take approximately 15 minutes to complete, but it is not strictly timed.

Equipment

Each pupil will need a pencil or a blue or black pen.

Rubbers are allowed, but you may wish to encourage pupils to cross out answers

they wish to change instead of rubbing them out.

Pupils may use highlighter pens if this is normal classroom practice.

Pupils are not allowed:

- a dictionary or thesaurus
- electronic spell checkers
- bilingual word lists or electronic translators

Assistance

There is no specific hearing impairment guidance for this test but, if signing, be careful to ensure you do not convey information that could give pupils an advantage. If you present this paper through sign language, you should not use fingerspelling.

Guidance for administering the test to pupils with a visual impairment is included in the modified test packs.

You should take care not to overemphasise spelling when reading out the words that pupils need to spell.

9.2 English grammar, punctuation and spelling Paper 2: questions

Format

'Paper 2: questions' consists of a single test paper. The test should take approximately 20 minutes to complete, but it is not strictly timed.

Equipment

Each pupil will need a pencil or a blue or black pen.

Rubbers are allowed, but you may wish to encourage pupils to cross out answers they wish to change instead of rubbing them out.

Pupils may use highlighter pens if this is normal classroom practice.

Pupils are not allowed:

- a dictionary or thesaurus
- electronic spell checkers

- bilingual word lists or electronic translators

Assistance

There is no specific hearing impairment guidance for this test but, if signing, be careful to ensure you do not convey information that could give pupils an advantage.

Guidance for administering the test to pupils with a visual impairment is included in the modified test packs.

If a pupil requests it, you may read a question to them on a one-to-one basis.

You should not explain subject-specific terminology, as an understanding of this is part of the assessment. If any other word in a question is unfamiliar to pupils, you may explain it or show them objects or pictures to help them understand. You should not give alternative explanations – for example, you should not explain ‘commands’ as ‘instructions’ or name punctuation.

The following example is taken from the 2016 sample KS1 English grammar, punctuation and spelling ‘Paper 2: questions’:

Question 3: Tick one box to show where a comma should go in the sentence below.

Aisha found some red blue and purple beads in the box.

You can explain words to help the pupil understand the context and instructions, such as ‘tick,’ ‘beads,’ ‘box,’ or clarify that ‘Aisha’ is a child’s name. You should not explain any subject-specific vocabulary that might give the pupil an advantage, such as ‘comma’. You should not identify people’s names in questions by asking which word requires a capital letter or why a capital letter is needed.

You can also refer to [notes for readers in the English grammar, punctuation and spelling tests](#), which gives examples of how to read particular types of questions in Paper 2.

The following examples illustrate how to deal with some common situations:

Question: “I do not understand the question.”

Answer: “Read the question again and pay attention to words that tell you what to do.”

Question: “What does ‘adverb’ mean?”

Answer: “I cannot tell you, but think hard and try to remember. We can talk about it after the test.”

10. Administering the English reading test under test conditions

10.1 Paper 1: combined reading prompt and answer booklet

Format

Paper 1 consists of a combined reading prompt and answer booklet. The test should take approximately 30 minutes to complete, but it is not strictly timed.

The paper includes some practice questions for you to use to introduce the contexts and question types to pupils. We suggest test administrators allow approximately 15 minutes before the test begins to go through the practice questions with pupils.

Equipment

Each pupil will need a pencil or a blue or black pen.

Rubbers are allowed, but you may wish to encourage pupils to cross out answers they wish to change instead of rubbing them out.

If it is normal classroom practice, pupils may use:

- monolingual English electronic spell checkers, provided they do not give definitions of words
- highlighter pens

Pupils are not allowed to use a dictionary or thesaurus.

Assistance

There is no specific hearing impairment guidance for this test but, if signing, be careful to ensure you do not convey information that would give pupils an advantage.

Guidance for administering the test to pupils with a visual impairment is included in the modified test packs.

As the English reading tests are assessing reading skills, they should not be read to individuals or to a group, except for the practice page and practice questions.

If a pupil asks a question about test content, you should not explain any words or expressions.

The following example illustrates how to deal with a common situation:

Question: "I do not understand the question."

Answer: "Read the question again and pay attention to words that tell you what to do."

10.2 Paper 2: reading booklet and reading answer booklet

Format

Paper 2 consists of a reading booklet and a separate reading answer booklet. All pupils should receive an unused reading booklet. Do not reuse reading booklets if you administer the test to groups of pupils at different times. The test should take approximately 40 minutes to complete, but it is not strictly timed.

There are no practice questions or lists of useful words provided in this paper.

In Paper 2 only, each question has a page number above it in brackets. This is the page in the reading prompt where the pupil can find the information they need to answer the question.

Equipment

Each pupil will need a pencil or a blue or black pen.

Rubbers are allowed, but you may wish to encourage pupils to cross out answers they wish to change instead of rubbing them out.

If it is normal classroom practice, pupils may use:

- monolingual English electronic spell checkers, provided they do not give definitions of words
- highlighter pens

Pupils are not allowed to use a dictionary or thesaurus.

Assistance

There is no specific hearing impairment guidance for this test but, if signing, be careful to ensure you do not convey information that would give pupils an advantage.

Guidance for administering the test to pupils with a visual impairment is included in the modified test packs.

As the English reading tests are assessing reading skills, they should not be read to individuals or to a group, except for the general instructions.

If a pupil asks a question about test content, you should not explain any words or expressions.

The following example illustrates how to deal with a common situation:

Question: "I do not understand the question."

Answer: "Read the question again and pay attention to words that tell you what to do."

11. Administering the mathematics test under test conditions

11.1 Mathematics Paper 1: arithmetic

Format

'Paper 1: arithmetic' consists of a single test paper. The test should take approximately 20 minutes to complete, but it is not strictly timed.

Equipment

Each pupil will need:

- a pencil or a blue or black pen
- a ruler

Rubbers are allowed, but you may wish to encourage pupils to cross out answers they wish to change instead of rubbing them out.

Pupils may use highlighter pens if this is normal classroom practice.

Pupils are not allowed:

- calculators
- number apparatus – for example, base ten materials or number squares

Assistance

There is no specific hearing impairment guidance for this test, but be careful if signing numbers, mathematical symbols and words. We recommend you do not convey information that would give pupils an advantage.

Guidance for administering the test to pupils with a visual impairment is included in the modified test packs.

If a pupil requests it, you may read a question to them on a one-to-one basis.

If reading to a pupil, you can read words and numbers, but not mathematical symbols. This ensures pupils are not given an advantage by having the function inadvertently explained by reading its name.

The following examples illustrate how to deal with some common situations:

Question: "What does this sign here mean?"

Answer: “I cannot tell you, but think hard and try to remember. We can talk about it after the test.”

Question: “Does this mean ‘take away’?”

Answer: “I cannot tell you, but think hard and try to remember. We can talk about it after the test.”

Question: “What does ‘of’ mean?” (If the question asks about an everyday word that has a mathematical meaning within the question – for example, ‘What is half of 8?’)

Answer: “I cannot tell you, but think hard and try to remember. We can talk about it after the test.”

Guidance for specific questions

There are 2 different types of working space in the paper for the pupils to use. Sometimes there is a blank working space and other times there is a grid. Pupils can use these spaces to show any working. A grid is included for questions where pupils are more likely to use a written method.

11.2 Mathematics Paper 2: reasoning

Format

‘Paper 2: reasoning’ consists of a single test paper. The test should take approximately 35 minutes to complete, but it is not strictly timed.

This paper has 2 sections:

- an aural section, starting with a practice question followed by 5 aural questions, which should take approximately 5 minutes
- a written section, where pupils are presented with written questions, which should take approximately 30 minutes

Equipment

Each pupil will need:

- a pencil or a blue or black pen
- a sharp, dark pencil for mathematical drawing

- a ruler, showing centimetres and millimetres
- a mirror

Rubbers are allowed, but you may wish to encourage pupils to cross out answers they wish to change instead of rubbing them out.

Pupils may use the following equipment, if this is normal classroom practice, provided they only give word-for-word translations:

- bilingual dictionaries or electronic translators
- bilingual word lists
- monolingual English electronic spell checkers

Pupils may use highlighter pens if this is normal classroom practice.

Pupils are not allowed:

- calculators
- tracing paper
- number apparatus – for example, base ten materials or number squares

Assistance

For pupils with a hearing impairment, be careful if signing numbers, mathematical symbols and words. Guidance on any specific words that should be signed in a particular way are included in the test administration instructions.

Guidance for administering the test to pupils with a visual impairment is included in the modified test packs.

If a pupil requests it, you may read a question to them on a one-to-one basis.

You can also read from question 6 onwards in the written section if a pupil has difficulty in reading the questions for themselves.

If reading to a pupil, you can read words and numbers, but not mathematical symbols. You may point to parts of the test paper such as charts, diagrams, statements and equations, but we recommend you do not explain the information or help the pupil by interpreting it. This ensures pupils are not given an advantage by having the function inadvertently explained by reading its name.

The following example is taken from the 2016 sample KS1 mathematics 'Paper 2: reasoning':

Question 16: Sita cuts a pizza into four equal slices. She eats one slice. What fraction of the pizza does she eat?

You may explain words to help the pupil understand the context, such as 'pizza', 'cuts', 'slices', 'eats', or clarify that 'Sita' is a child's name. You should not explain any subject-specific vocabulary that might give the pupil an advantage, such as 'four', 'one', 'equal' or 'fraction'.

For Paper 2, there is an optional pupil aural script that you may provide to pupils to access this part of the test. We suggest you only use this if pupils need extra visual support to access the aural questions and you are confident it will not confuse them. We recommend that pupils use the script when listening to the aural questions read by the administrator. If you need to use this with any pupils, you can open the test administration instructions early to photocopy the transcript. Guidance on how to use this document is included in the test administration instructions.

You should not explain subject-specific terminology, as an understanding of this is part of the assessment. If any context or words related to a question are unfamiliar to a pupil, you may show them related objects or pictures or describe the context.

The following examples illustrate how to deal with some common situations:

Question: "What does 'fraction' mean?"

Answer: "I cannot tell you, but think hard and try to remember. We can talk about it after the test."

Question: "What does '>' or '<' mean?"

Answer: "I cannot tell you, but think hard and try to remember. We can talk about it after the test."

12. Problems or queries during test administration

12.1 Dealing with issues during the tests

This section provides guidance on what to do in certain situations under test conditions. It is impossible to plan for every scenario. Whatever action you take, pupil safety and wellbeing should always be your first consideration. If any unexpected situations occur during a test, we suggest you brief your headteacher once the test is over on how the incident was dealt with.

If a fire alarm goes off

Stop the test and note the time. Evacuate the room following school procedures. We suggest pupils are supervised at all times to ensure they do not have opportunity to discuss test content. The test papers should be left in the test room.

Once safe, pupils may continue with the test using an appropriate amount of time.

If a pupil is unwell

If you have reason to believe a pupil is feeling unwell or is not in a fit state to take a test, we suggest you do not administer the test to that pupil. The school could administer the test later in the day, when the pupil is feeling better, or on a different day.

If a pupil becomes unwell during a test, stop the test for the individual pupil and note the time. After a rest break, if the pupil is well enough, allow them an appropriate amount of time to continue the test. The test should be completed on the same day. However, if the pupil is too ill to continue and they have not seen the questions later in the paper, you may consider completing the remainder of the test with them on another day. We recommend storing the incomplete test paper securely until the pupil is well enough to complete it.

If the test script is spoiled, give the pupil a new one to continue. A member of staff should make a transcript by copying the answers from the spoiled test script onto the new test paper. You should do this once the pupil has completed the test and is still under test conditions. If the test script is unreadable, ask the pupil for their

answers at the end of the test and record them in a different colour on the new test paper.

If other pupils have been disturbed, you may stop the test for all the pupils in the room. Make a note of the time to ensure pupils receive an appropriate amount of time to complete the test. If necessary, move the pupils to another room.

In the case of pupils who live in the same household, if one pupil is absent on the day of a test but other pupils from the same household are in school (and the school intends to administer the test to those pupils), we suggest the school consider delaying the test for all the pupils in the household. This ensures the integrity, security and confidentiality of the test are maintained. We recommend that the school ensure the pupils do not have any opportunity to discuss test content with pupils who have already taken the test.

If a pupil needs to leave the test room

We recommend that pupils taking the tests be supervised at all times. If a pupil needs to leave the test room, we suggest a test administrator accompany them.

When deciding on the number of test administrators needed to maintain adequate supervision during a test, you may wish to consider the possibility that at least one test administrator might need to leave the room with a pupil.

If a pupil is cheating

If you identify that a pupil has cheated, we recommend you record the details, including:

- the pupil's name
- the name of the test
- any specific questions in which the pupil was advantaged by cheating

When marking the tests, you should make appropriate adjustments to the pupil's raw score.

If a pupil is disruptive

If a pupil's behaviour is disturbing other pupils:

- stop the test
- note the time
- remove the pupil
- decide whether to continue the test with the disruptive pupil later

For the disrupted pupils:

- give them a few moments to refocus
- continue the test with the appropriate amount of time remaining

If test papers are incorrectly collated or the print is illegible

To ensure fairness and minimise disruption, you should:

- stop the test immediately for the affected pupils
- note the exact time the test was stopped for each pupil
- tell the pupils that replacement papers will be arranged – pupils should not discuss the test content while the replacement papers are being arranged
- once replacement papers are available, provide the affected pupils with an appropriate amount of time to complete the remainder of the test
- not allow the pupils to restart the entire test from the beginning

Schools can access and download test materials, including standard and MLP versions of the tests and mark schemes, from the 'Download KS1 test materials' from within the 'Activities' tab on the [NCA Portal](#) from Friday 1 May.

If you require additional braille materials, you should contact the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013.

Where schools download or receive additional test materials, we encourage them to follow the same security steps for keeping test materials secure – see [Security of test materials](#).

If a pupil asks for additional paper

The test papers and answer booklets have been designed so that most pupils will have enough room to record their answers. You can give pupils additional paper if they need more space for their answers.

Transcribing test scripts

If it is difficult to read a pupil's writing when marking their test script, or to use it as evidence for teacher assessment, schools could consider making a transcript of the pupil's answers – see the 'Transcribes' section of the [optional KS1 tests: access arrangements guidance](#).

13. After the tests

Mark schemes will be available from the 'Download KS1 test materials' from within the 'Activities' tab on the [NCA Portal](#) from Friday 1 May. We recommend keeping downloaded or printed copies of the mark schemes secure, along with all other test materials, including completed test scripts, until Monday 1 June.

We recommend waiting to print mark schemes until after all pupils have taken the tests. If you download mark schemes before all pupils have taken the tests – for example, in a large school where tests have been administered to one class under test conditions but not another – you should not discuss their content or use them to prepare pupils who have not taken the tests.

13.1 Marking

We recommend that the optional KS1 tests are marked by a member of staff familiar with the pupil, as marking requires professional judgement about which responses are correct.

We suggest test administrators ensure no changes are made to pupils' answers following the test. Pupils' completed scripts can be marked away from school, but we recommend appropriate security arrangements are in place to maintain the integrity, security and confidentiality of the test content and pupil data.

We recommend markers familiarise themselves with the mark schemes, which explain how to mark the tests. We encourage markers to apply mark schemes accurately and consistently. If a pupil's response does not match the mark scheme, we suggest markers use their professional judgement.

We recommend that the marks awarded for each question are noted in the mark box provided on the test papers. The total mark for each paper should be calculated and recorded on the front of the test paper, in the box provided. This is the raw score for the paper.

The total raw score for each subject should be calculated by adding together the raw scores for the 2 papers per subject. This total raw score can then be converted to a scaled score using the raw score to scaled score conversion tables. They will be

available for schools to download from the results screen within the [NCA Portal](#) from Friday 1 May, and published within the collection of [past test materials](#) on Monday 1 June.

Moderation of marking

We recommend that schools undertake internal moderation to ensure the marking of the optional KS1 tests is accurate and consistent. Where there is more than one year 2 class in a school, colleagues should check each other's marking. If schools are in a federation, an academy chain, a multi-academy trust or have relationships with other schools, they may consider organising moderation of test marking across schools.

We recommend that appropriate security arrangements be in place during the entire test administration window, including when transporting test materials to and from another location for moderation of marking.

13.2 Compensatory marks for spelling

Compensatory marks are available for the spelling paper of the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test.

They are intended to be awarded to pupils who have a profound hearing impairment and who do not lipread or use a signing system, or can only use fingerspelling signing.

Raw scores from both English grammar, punctuation and spelling papers are needed to give an overall scaled score for the test. Compensatory marks allow pupils who cannot access the spelling paper to receive an overall test outcome for the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test.

Schools need to add the compensatory mark for 'Paper 1: spelling' to the raw score from 'Paper 2: questions' before converting the overall raw score to a scaled score.

The compensatory mark for the 2026 spelling test will be available for schools to download from the 'Test administration' tab under 'Access Arrangements' within the [NCA Portal](#) from Friday 1 May.

13.3 Special consideration

A pupil's performance may be affected by extremely distressing circumstances at the time of the test. We recommend headteachers ensure that pupils are in a fit physical and mental state to take the test. Where appropriate and necessary, they can arrange for the pupil to take the test on another day in May.

When the optional KS1 tests are administered, they should be marked in accordance with the mark schemes. However, when making overall teacher assessment judgements, the circumstances and context surrounding the test outcomes should also be considered.

13.4 Using the raw score to scaled score conversion tables

Raw score to scaled score conversion tables will be available to download from the results screen within the [NCA Portal](#) from Friday 1 May. We will also publish them in the collection of [past test materials](#) on Monday 1 June. Teachers can use these tables to convert the total raw scores to scaled scores. The scaled scores will show whether pupils have met the expected standard in the tests.

13.5 Using scaled scores to inform teacher assessment

Teachers may use the results from the optional KS1 tests alongside any other evidence they have gathered throughout the year, when making teacher assessment judgements. Schools will need to judge how a pupil's scaled score influences their final teacher assessment judgement.

A scaled score of 100 will always represent the expected standard of the test, but schools should ensure pupils can meet the 'pupil can' statements in the [teacher assessment frameworks](#) before awarding the relevant standard. We will not provide scores for 'working towards the expected standard' or 'working at greater depth'.

For more information about scaled scores and the expected standard, please also refer to our guidance on [understanding scaled scores at KS1](#).

14. Help and support

General enquiries

For general enquiries about test administration at KS1, you can contact the national curriculum assessments helpline:

National curriculum assessments helpline

Call: 0300 303 3013

Email: assessments@education.gov.uk

Online: [NCA Portal](#) 'Support'

For queries relating to access arrangements to meet a pupil's specific needs, schools can use the 'Message us - access arrangements' form within the 'Test administration' tab on the [NCA Portal](#).

Modified tests

Schools can discuss the suitability of braille or MLP versions of the optional KS1 tests and order requirements, by contacting the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 or emailing MTH@iwanttoconnect.co.uk.

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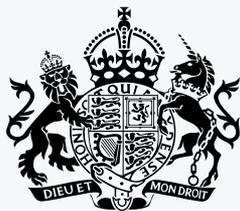
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