



Standards  
& Testing  
Agency

# Key stage 1 access arrangements guidance

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# 1 Introduction

This guidance details the access arrangements available for pupils participating in the key stage 1 (KS1) national curriculum tests.

Pupils with specific needs may require additional arrangements so they can take part in the KS1 tests. Access arrangements are adjustments that can be put in place to support those pupils. Headteachers and teachers must decide whether any of their pupils will need access arrangements before they administer the tests.

## 1.1 Overview of access arrangements

Access arrangements must never advantage the pupil. Any support should be based primarily on normal classroom practice. Support must not change the test questions and the pupil's answers must be their own.

It may be helpful to use KS1 [practice materials](#)<sup>1</sup> with pupils before administering the tests. This will enable schools to identify whether pupils need additional support, or adaptations, either to the test materials or to their administration.

Access arrangements might be used to support pupils who have:

- difficulty reading
- difficulty writing
- difficulty concentrating
- processing difficulties
- a hearing impairment
- a visual impairment
- English as an additional language

Due to the diversity of pupils' needs, this guidance does not list every circumstance where it may be appropriate to use access arrangements.

Pupils should only take tests if they are in a fit physical and mental state. Some pupils may not be able to access the tests, despite the provision of additional arrangements.

Schools can contact the Standards and Testing Agency (STA) using 'Message us – access arrangements' on the [Primary Assessment Gateway \(PAG\)](#)<sup>2</sup> if further advice is required.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-practice-materials](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-practice-materials)

<sup>2</sup> [www.primaryassessmentgateway.education.gov.uk](http://www.primaryassessmentgateway.education.gov.uk)

## 1.2 Evidence

During a teacher assessment moderation visit, local authorities (LAs) must be satisfied that pupils' work is independent by using the criteria in the [teacher assessment guidance](#)<sup>3</sup>. If a pupil has received additional support, this should be clarified by the teacher.

Where a school has used a test as evidence, they must ensure they have documentation to show that a pupil is eligible for access arrangements, if they have been used. When undertaking moderation of a pupil's work, LAs may ask to see evidence that any support given to the pupil in the tests is regularly provided as part of normal classroom practice. This will vary according to the type of support and may be recorded in:

- notes in teaching plans
- individual pupil support plans
- a pupil's classwork

## 1.3 Maladministration

Schools could be subject to a [maladministration investigation](#)<sup>4</sup> if they fail to use access arrangements appropriately.

This includes:

- opening test materials before the KS1 test period
- inaccurate transcription of pupil's work
- not having evidence that access arrangements used in the tests reflect normal classroom practice

A maladministration investigation may lead to the pupil's teacher assessment judgement being amended or annulled.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-1-teacher-assessment-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-1-teacher-assessment-guidance)

<sup>4</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stages-1-and-2-investigating-allegations-of-maladministration](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stages-1-and-2-investigating-allegations-of-maladministration)

## 2 Access arrangements available

Schools do not need to make applications or notifications for access arrangements in the KS1 tests, but their use must reflect normal classroom practice.

If any of the access arrangements are likely to disturb or aid others in the cohort, schools should consider making arrangements for pupils to complete the test separately.

### 2.1 Additional time

The tests are not strictly timed, so schools can give pupils the amount of time they feel is appropriate to enable them to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. Approximate timings for each test are given as guidance only, based on the outcome of trials.

Schools should consider each pupil's needs to decide whether they may need longer than the suggested timings.

Pupils using the modified large print (MLP) and braille versions of the tests should be given more time to complete the tests than pupils using the standard versions. Schools should consider exactly how much additional time these pupils will need before administering the tests.

Rest breaks (section 2.9) can be used together with additional time to prevent pupils suffering from fatigue.

### 2.2 Adaptations to test papers

STA produces modified versions of the tests. They are primarily designed for pupils with visual impairments, although they may be suitable for pupils with other needs.

Schools can also make their own adaptations or preparations, where necessary, such as:

- photocopying test papers onto coloured paper
- enhancing diagrams
- enlarging text
- preparing a translator or signer
- preparing equipment

### Early opening to adapt a test paper

Schools can make adaptations as appropriate throughout the testing period when they are intending to administer the test to a pupil or groups of pupils, however they must not open the test materials before the KS1 test period.

Schools should consider administering the tests to pupils who need specific access arrangements after the first administration of the tests. Alternatively, schools can modify the downloadable versions, which will be available on the [PAG](#)<sup>5</sup> during the KS1 test period.

## 2.3 Compensatory marks for spelling

Pupils with a profound hearing impairment and who do not lip read or use a signing system, may not be able to access the spelling paper of the optional English grammar, punctuation and spelling test. Raw scores from both English grammar, punctuation and spelling papers are needed to give an overall scaled score. Awarding compensatory marks allows pupils who cannot access the spelling paper to receive an overall test outcome for the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test.

Schools can request a compensatory mark for the spelling paper from the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 from the beginning of June. Schools should 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.

## 2.4 Scribes

A scribe is a writing assistant who writes out answers dictated by the pupil during the test. Schools can provide a scribe if other options to enable the pupil to work independently are not appropriate and the use of a scribe reflects normal classroom practice.

A scribe can be used when a pupil is:

- unable to use a word processor
- unable to write or has difficulty writing
- known to experience fatigue

The scribe must:

- work at the pupil's pace and not hurry them if they need time for reflection, rest or reading
- have a working knowledge of the subject
- follow the pupil's instructions precisely to draw or add to diagrams, charts and graphs in the mathematics tests

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<sup>5</sup> [www.primaryassessmentgateway.education.gov.uk](http://www.primaryassessmentgateway.education.gov.uk)

- only make a correction on a test script if asked to do so by the pupil

## **English grammar, punctuation and spelling**

In Paper 1: spelling, the scribe must pause for the pupil to dictate each spelling.

In Paper 2: questions, the scribe must pause for the pupil to dictate their answers where correct spelling is required. This includes questions assessing:

- contracted forms
- verb forms
- plurals
- prefixes and suffixes

## **English reading and mathematics**

The scribe should not pause for the pupil to dictate spellings of words in the English reading and mathematics tests unless the pupil usually works in this way.

### **2.5 Transcripts**

If it will be difficult to read a pupil's writing when marking their test script, or using it as evidence for teacher assessment, schools should consider making a transcript of the pupil's answers. This should be done:

- with the pupil present at the end of the test
- alongside the pupil's work, not on it
- under test conditions
- using a different coloured pen from that used by the pupil

Pupils who cannot read their own writing could use a word processor or scribe if this reflects normal classroom practice.

### **2.6 Word processors or other technical or electronic aids**

Pupils must use equipment, for example a screen reader, independently.

Schools must test the functionality of the equipment by using the KS1 practice materials. If equipment has functionality that would provide the pupil with an advantage and this cannot be turned off, the pupil must not use the equipment in the test. Schools may arrange for the test to be read to the pupil or for a scribe to record the pupil's answers instead.

Schools should ensure that pupils regularly save their work. After the test, the pupil's work should be printed for marking and any test content should be removed from the equipment.

## **English grammar, punctuation and spelling and mathematics**

The equipment must not:

- read mathematical symbols in the mathematics test
- read punctuation in the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test
- have any spell-check, grammar check or predictive text functionality turned on

## **English reading**

Word processors or other technical or electronic aids may be used to record pupils' answers in the English reading test. They must not be used to provide reading support, for example, a screen reader should not be used in a reading test.

## **2.7 Written or oral translations**

STA does not provide translations of the tests, but schools can provide written or oral translations of the mathematics test to meet an individual pupil's needs.

## **Mathematics**

Translators should take care to ensure that any translation does not provide additional support or explanation of mathematical terms.

Pupils may write their responses in English or in their own language. If a pupil's answers are not in English, the translator should make a transcript of the pupil's answers into English after the test before the pupil leaves the test room. Alternatively, pupils may answer orally, and the translator can scribe the answers in English.

Written translations of the mathematics tests can be made in advance, but schools must not open test materials before the KS1 test period to prepare translations. Schools should consider one of the following:

- administering the mathematics test to any pupils who need translations after the first administration of the tests

- making translations using downloadable versions, which will be available on the [PAG](#)<sup>6</sup> during the KS1 test period

Oral translations may be given by a translator at the time of the test. Translators may want to review the test papers before the test is administered to check for any unfamiliar vocabulary.

## **English grammar, punctuation and spelling and English reading**

Translations can only be made to directions or instructions that are not part of the test questions. No help may be given with reading or understanding the questions or passages of text.

### **2.8 Readers**

Pupils who have difficulty reading may be supported in the English grammar, punctuation and spelling and mathematics tests, by having the text read to them by a reading assistant. In most cases, these pupils will have a reading age that is considerably lower than their actual age. Readers must not be used by pupils who are capable of reading the test materials themselves.

Although it is preferable for readers to be provided on a one-to-one basis, KS1 test administrators may choose to read the English grammar, punctuation and spelling or mathematics questions aloud to a group of pupils. Test administrators must consider the individual needs of the pupils to ensure they are not disadvantaged by the pace at which any text is read. If a pupil requests it, the reader may also read back any part of a pupil's written response to a question.

Readers:

- do not need to be specialists in the subject being tested
- must understand the test format
- must know what may or may not be read to a pupil in particular tests
- must understand any subject-specific issues that might occur
- may also act as a scribe if the pupil is not writing for themselves (section 2.4)

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<sup>6</sup> [www.primaryassessmentgateway.education.gov.uk](http://www.primaryassessmentgateway.education.gov.uk)

## English grammar, punctuation and spelling

The [notes for readers in the English grammar, punctuation and spelling tests](#)<sup>7</sup> gives examples of how to read particular types of questions aloud to a pupil. Readers should ensure they understand the guidance so that they read each question type correctly, particularly for questions with multiple choice answers. This is so they do not give pupils an advantage by reading questions in a particular way.

## English reading

As the English reading test is designed to allow pupils to demonstrate reading skills and comprehension, readers may only help pupils to read the general instructions.

This includes information on the front cover of the test paper and any directions that are not part of the test questions. Specific instructions are included in the test pack.

## Mathematics

A reader may help a pupil to read the mathematics tests. They may:

- clarify instructions, as long as no additional information is given that could give the pupil an advantage
- read, but not clarify, subject-specific vocabulary

If a mathematics question is read to a pupil, the reader may read words and numbers, but not mathematical symbols. This is so that the function of a mathematical symbol is not inadvertently explained by reading its name.

Further instructions will be given in the test administration instructions, as appropriate, if there are certain questions that need specific guidance in terms of what can and cannot be read.

## 2.9 Rest breaks

The majority of pupils should be able to complete the tests without a break. However, rest breaks could be appropriate for pupils who find it difficult to concentrate or experience fatigue. Rest breaks may also be beneficial to pupils who use modified versions of the tests.

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<sup>7</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/notes-for-readers-in-the-english-grammar-punctuation-and-spelling-test-short-answer-questions](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/notes-for-readers-in-the-english-grammar-punctuation-and-spelling-test-short-answer-questions)

Pupils using rest breaks should be given the same overall time as the rest of the cohort. Schools may want to split a test into sections for pupils who are known to need a rest break.

In exceptional situations, schools may consider splitting a KS1 test over more than one day. Schools must ensure the test paper is split so the pupil does not have access to any questions that may be administered on a subsequent day. Schools do not need permission from STA to do this.

## 2.10 Keeping pupils focussed

A pupil who is unable to focus independently, or who loses concentration easily, may be supported by someone known to them who can keep them on task. They will keep the pupil's attention on the test paper but not help them answer any questions. They may tap on the desk or say the pupil's name, depending on what is normal classroom practice, to remind the pupil to focus on the question they are working on.

To enable pupils to keep focussed you should:

- agree the best way to focus the pupil before the test begins (this includes ways to draw the pupil's attention back to the task)
- be known to the pupil
- support the pupil on a one-to-one basis

You must not:

- do anything that could be interpreted as over-aiding the pupil
- advise the pupil which questions to answer or when to move on to the next question
- advise or guide the pupil about the order in which they should attempt the questions

If a pupil finds it difficult to focus on individual questions, schools could use adhesive notes or stickers to cover other questions on the page. In these circumstances, the whole question the pupil is working on should remain uncovered until the pupil indicates when they want to move on.

## 2.11 Accessibility objects in the mathematics tests

If a pupil is known to have difficulty accessing 2-dimensional diagrams, schools may show them real objects that look like those illustrated in the mathematics tests, so they understand the context of the question.

Number apparatus, counters or number squares must not be used.

Schools must not explain any subject-specific terminology. 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. Test administrators may indicate on the test papers where real objects are available for pupils to look at.

The arrangement must reflect normal classroom practice. Schools may consider administering the mathematics tests to these pupils after they have been administered to other pupils. Schools can review the downloadable versions of the tests on the [PAG](#)<sup>8</sup> so they know which questions may require support.

## 2.12 Highlighter pens

Pupils may highlight passages of text, in any of the tests, provided this reflects normal classroom practice. Test administrators should not highlight text, unless instructed by the pupil.

## 2.13 Administering the tests at an alternative location

Schools can administer the tests at an alternative location to the rest of the cohort away from the school. This may include administering at a pupil referral unit or at the pupil's home, as long as the pupil is in a fit state.

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the security and confidentiality of the tests is maintained and the tests are administered according to the [test administration guidance](#)<sup>9</sup>.

If schools need specific advice or additional information on administering the tests at an alternative location, they should contact STA using 'Message us – access arrangements' form on the [PAG](#)<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> [www.primaryassessmentgateway.education.gov.uk](http://www.primaryassessmentgateway.education.gov.uk)

<sup>9</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-key-stage-1-tests](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-key-stage-1-tests)

<sup>10</sup> [www.primaryassessmentgateway.education.gov.uk](http://www.primaryassessmentgateway.education.gov.uk)

### **3 Illness or injury at the time of the tests**

Schools should not administer a test to a pupil who is ill. If a pupil is not fit to take the test, the school should consider administering the test later in the day or on another day.

If a pupil becomes ill during a test, the school should stop the test and make a note of the time. The pupil can be given a supervised rest break in school and can continue the test with the remaining amount of time when they are feeling better. The test should be completed on the same day. If the pupil is too ill to continue and they have not seen the questions later in the paper, you may consider completing the test with them on another day.

If the pupil sustains an injury to their hand or wrist, that impacts their ability to take the tests, they may use a scribe. If the injury occurred within one week of the tests, the school may also allow additional time because the pupil is unfamiliar working with a scribe. If the pupil is already familiar working with a scribe, additional time must not be given. The scribe must follow the guidance in section 2.4.

## 4 Further information

### 4.1 Modified tests

Full details about which modified tests are available are included in the [KS1 assessment and reporting arrangements](#)<sup>11</sup>.

### 4.2 Help and support

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

For enquiries relating to KS1 access arrangements to meet a pupil's specific needs, schools can use the 'Message us – access arrangements' form which can be found on the [PAG](#)<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-key-stage-1-tests](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-key-stage-1-tests)

<sup>12</sup> [www.primaryassessmentgateway.education.gov.uk](http://www.primaryassessmentgateway.education.gov.uk)



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