



Standards
& Testing
Agency

2017 maladministration report

**National curriculum assessments at key
stages 1 and 2**

November 2018

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Introduction

The Standards and Testing Agency (STA) has a statutory duty to investigate any matter brought to its attention concerning the accuracy of results of key stage 1 (KS1) and key stage 2 (KS2) national curriculum tests and assessments, including the phonics screening check. We investigate any concerns in partnership with local authorities (LAs), in accordance with the [‘Maladministration investigation procedures’](#)¹.

The term 'maladministration' refers to any act that could jeopardise the integrity, security or confidentiality of the national curriculum assessments and could lead to results that do not reflect the unaided abilities and achievements of pupils. This could refer to a range of actions, including test papers being incorrectly opened, pupils cheating, over-aiding of pupils by test administrators, changes being made to a pupil's test script by someone other than the pupil or inflation/deflation of teacher assessment (TA) judgements.

Following an investigation, if STA's maladministration team finds that the accuracy or correctness of a pupil's test results is in doubt, a senior manager within STA decides whether to amend or annul results.

This report details the numbers, sources and types of allegations of maladministration reported to STA throughout the 2017 test cycle across KS1 and KS2. It also presents the numbers of amendments and annulments to results made in 2017. In addition, it provides comparisons with the maladministration data from 2015 and 2016.

¹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stages-1-and-2-investigating-allegations-of-maladministration

National curriculum assessments in 2017

Number of schools participating in 2017

16,385 schools participated in end of KS1 assessments.

16,368 schools participated in the phonics screening check.

16,022 schools participated in end of KS2 national curriculum tests.

Changes to statutory assessment in 2017

There were no changes to statutory assessment in 2017.

Maladministration investigation procedures

The '[Maladministration investigation procedures](#)' guidance did not change between 2016 and 2017. As in previous assessment cycles, decisions upon the conclusion of an investigation were made by a senior manager at STA.

Main findings from 2017

- There was an increase in the number of maladministration investigations in 2017 compared to 2016 (see Table 1) from 524 to 599. In 2017, 26.2% of cases were self-reported by schools.
- There was an increase in the number of cases at KS1 and KS2 resulting in amendment or annulment of results from 2016 to 2017. At KS1, there were 19 cases in 2017 (compared to 2 in 2016), and at KS2 there were 78 cases in 2017 (compared to 65 in 2016). See Tables 2 and 3.
- The number of allegations concerning the administration of the KS2 tests and teacher assessment increased (466 allegations in 2017, compared with 430 allegations in 2016). The total number of cases represented 2.9% of the total number of schools that participated. See Table 1.
- The number of allegations concerning the phonics screening check increased (60 allegations in 2017, compared with 17 allegations in 2016). The total number of cases represented 0.4% of the total number of schools that participated in the assessment. See Table 1.
- The number of allegations concerning the administration of KS1 tests and teacher assessment was 73, representing a total of 0.4% of the total number of schools that participated. See Table 1.

Breakdown of maladministration cases in 2017

The table below details the number of cases of maladministration investigated by STA at each key stage from 2015 to 2017.

	2015	2016	2017
Total number of maladministration investigations	516	524	599
Total number of KS1 investigations	16	77	73
% of total number of KS1 participating schools	0.1	0.5	0.4
Total number of phonics screening check investigations	44	17	60
% of total number of phonics screening check participating schools	0.3	0.1	0.4
Total number of KS2 investigations	456	430	466
% of total number of KS2 participating schools	2.9	2.7	2.9

Table 1: Total number of cases investigated at KS1 and KS2

Please note: As the number of participating schools differs between KS1 and KS2, a percentage has not been calculated for the total number of KS1 and KS2 investigations.

Sources of reported maladministration cases

Cases of alleged maladministration are reported to STA from a number of different sources. Across both KS1 and KS2, schools self-reported 26.2% of cases. 21% of cases were reported by LAs, including those reported following LA monitoring visits.

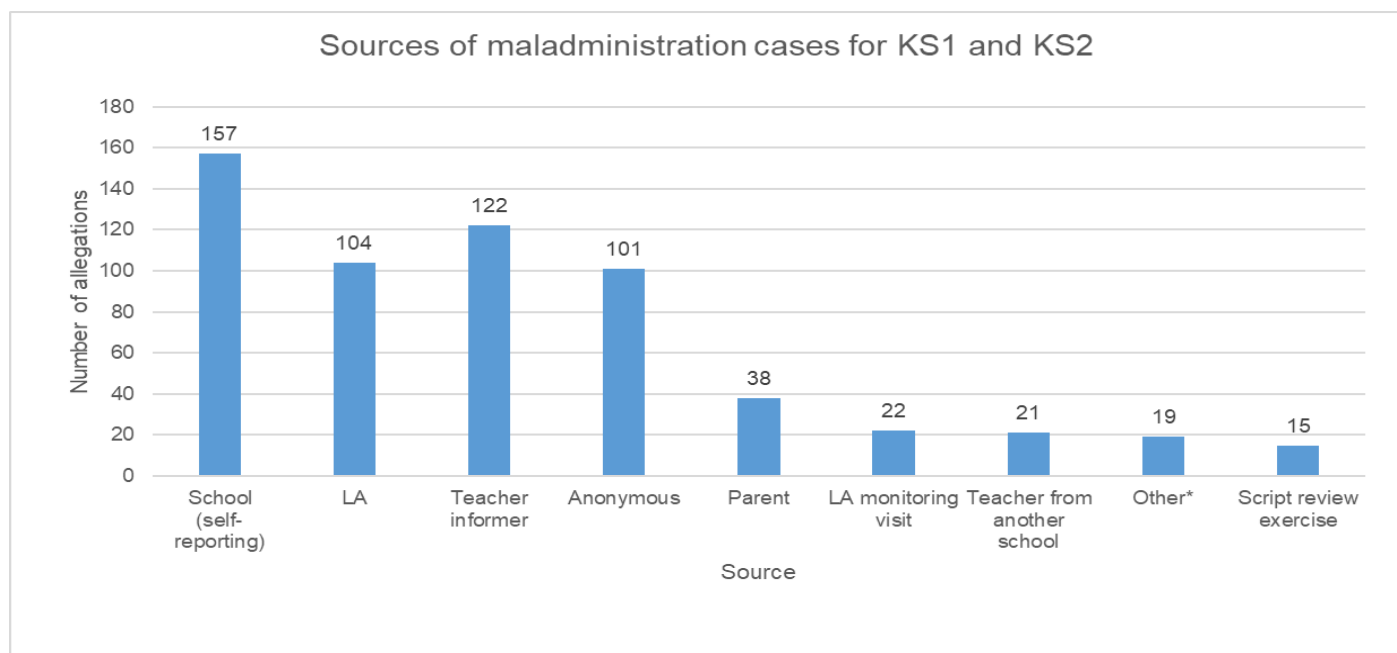


Diagram 1: Sources of reported cases in 2017

* Please note: 'Other' sources within Diagram 1 include governing bodies, parent of another child and referrals from Ofqual.

Key stage 1 maladministration investigations

In 2017, 60 allegations were made about the administration of the phonics screening check, 64 allegations about KS1 tests and 9 allegations about KS1 teacher assessment. The graph below gives a breakdown of allegations by type.

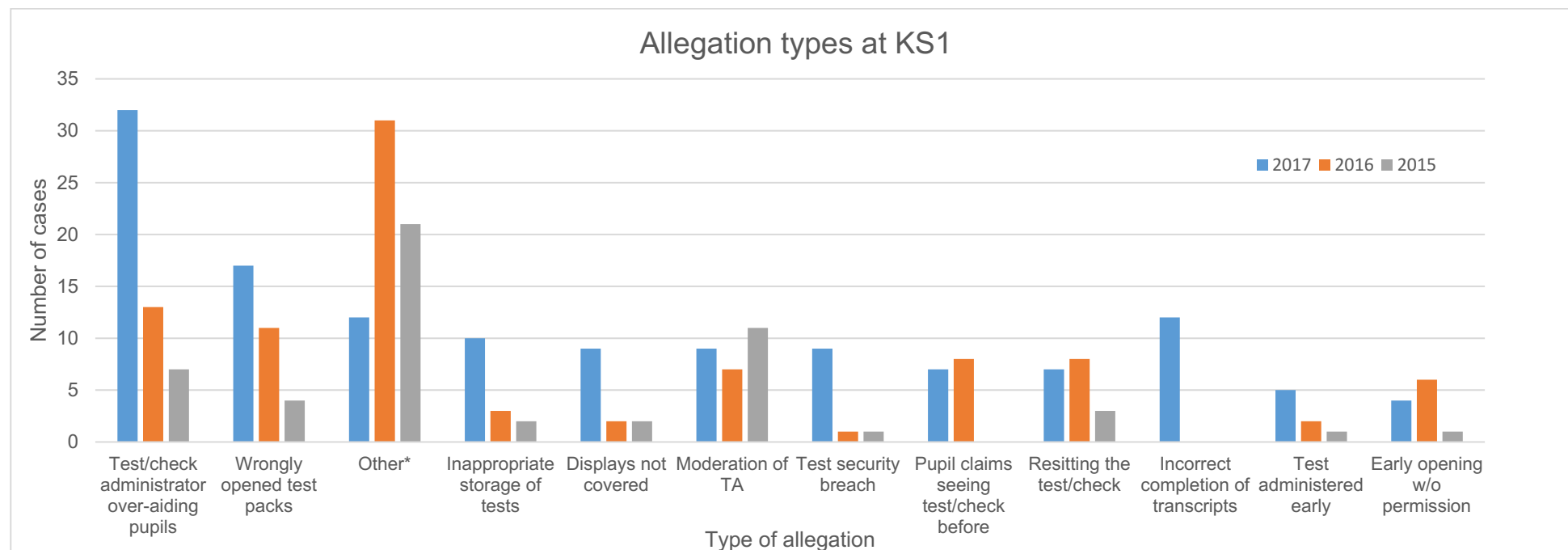


Diagram 2: Allegation types at KS1

* Please note: 'Other' allegations within Diagram 2 include consignment note/distribution issues, incorrect papers given to pupils, incorrect storage of completed test papers, inappropriate room for test/check, inappropriate test/check administrator, lost test/check materials, over emphasising the spelling, overactive reader, overactive translator, unauthorised test/check timetable variation, inappropriate coaching of pupils, issues after the test/check, pupil cheating, changes to paper in another hand, early opening without permission to photocopy, mark scheme opened early, test/check packs damaged on arrival. Fewer than 3 allegations were received for each of these allegation types.

The largest number of allegations at KS1 were about test/check administrators over-aiding pupils during the KS1 tests and phonics screening check.

Key stage 2 maladministration investigations

There were a total of 466 maladministration allegations received for KS2 in 2017: 451 relating to the tests; 15 to teacher assessment.

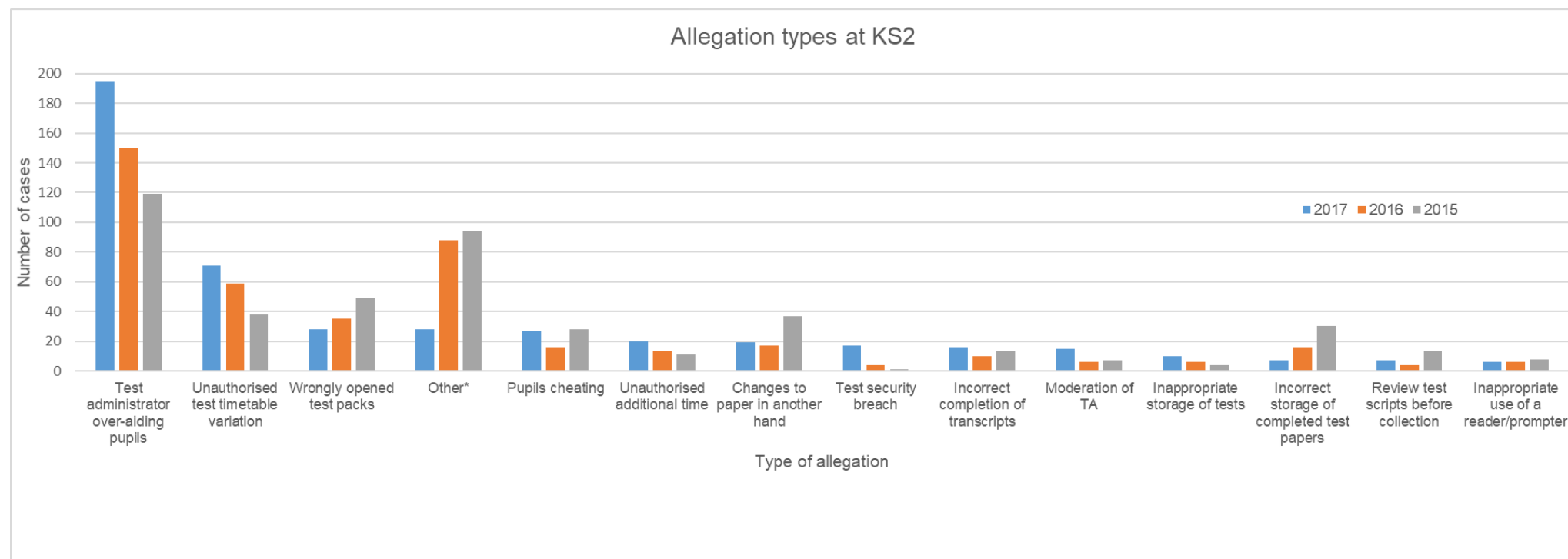


Diagram 3: Allegation types at KS2

* Please note: 'Other' allegations within Diagram 3 include displays not covered, incorrect papers given to pupils, test packs damaged on arrival, incorrect time allocation, lost test materials, inappropriate coaching of pupils, early opening without permission, unsupervised break, boycott, change of marked scripts before review, test administered to a child working below the level, use of inappropriate equipment, over emphasising the spelling/overactive reader/overactive translator, pupil claims to have seen the test paper before, resitting the test, issues before, during and after the test, change to English writing standard, consignment note/distribution issues, inappropriate room for a test/check, inappropriate test/check administrator, mark scheme packs opened early, test administered early. Fewer than 5 allegations were received for each of these allegation types.

The most common allegation type in 2017 was regarding test administrators over-aiding pupils during the KS2 tests. In 2016, 35.0% of allegations were of this type, compared to 42.3% in 2017 (an increase of 7.3 percentage points).

Amendments to, and annulments of, test results

Following an investigation, if STA finds that the accuracy of a pupil's test results are in doubt, a senior manager makes a decision to amend or annul results and this decision is communicated to the school.

Where a school believes a pupil has gained an advantage as a result of cheating, the headteacher notifies STA of the incident. In doing this, they agree to the removal of marks for the specific questions where the pupil has gained an advantage or the annulment of the pupil's paper.

Amendment and annulment breakdown by school

14.3% of all KS1 cases in 2017 resulted in an amendment or annulment of results. In summary:

- 2 schools had pupils' KS1 teacher assessment results amended or annulled.
- 10 schools had their phonics screening check results amended or annulled. These schools were advised that the pupils affected would be required to have the phonics screening check re-administered to them in 2018.
- 7 schools had their KS1 test results annulled. The schools were informed they were not to use these results to inform their teacher assessment judgements.

Year	Teacher assessment	National curriculum tests	Phonics screening check	% of all cases at KS1
2015	1	0	2	5.0
2016	0	0	2	2.1
2017	2	7	10	14.3

Table 2: Number of KS1 schools with amendments or annulments to results from 2015 to 2017

In summary, for KS2 in 2017:

- 78 schools either had pupils' results amended or annulled as a result of maladministration (11 of these schools were identified from a script review exercise).
- Of these 78, 24 schools had a whole cohort annulment for at least one subject.
- 22 schools either had pupils' KS2 test results amended or annulled after notifying STA of a pupil cheating.

Year	Schools with whole cohort annulments of at least 1 subject	Schools with individual pupil annulments/ amendments to results in at least 1 subject	Total of schools with amendments or annulments to their results	% of all cases at KS2
2015	7	78	85	18.6
2016	5	60*	65*	15.1
2017	24	54	78	16.7

Table 3: Number of KS2 schools with amendments or annulments to results from 2015 to 2017

* Please note: One school in 2016 had amendments or annulments as a result of pupil cheating and a separate maladministration investigation.

In 2017, approximately 0.5% of schools that participated in the KS2 assessments had their results amended. There is a 1.6 percentage point increase between the proportion of maladministration cases in 2016 and 2017, which resulted in an amendment or annulment of a school's KS2 results.



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