

Quick guide to school testing in England

Children in Care will have a PEP as soon as they start nursery or early years provision, which may be from as early as 2 years old as early intervention can have the most impact on learning. The key focus in early years is on reaching developmental expectations across a wide range of areas or GLD.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which is how the Government and early years professionals describe a child's developmental life between birth and age 5.

From birth up to the age of 5, early years experiences should be happy, active, exciting, fun and secure; and support their development, care and learning needs. Nurseries, pre-schools, reception classes and childminders registered to deliver the EYFS must follow a legal document called the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.

The EYFS Framework explains how and what the child will be learning to support their healthy development. Their understanding and development is demonstrated through the 7 areas of learning and development.

Children should mostly develop the 3 prime areas first.

- Communication and language;
- Physical development; and
- Personal, social and emotional development.

As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in 4 specific areas.

- Literacy;
- Mathematics;
- Understanding the world; and
- Expressive arts and design

After Reception, children move to Key Stage 1.

Key Stage 1 includes years 1 and 2.

The new national curriculum has greater content.

Year 1 phonics screening check

This “check” is at the end of year 1 and tests whether the child can sound and blend sounds to form words. They read 40 words out loud to a teacher. It will identify if further help is needed and if needed, they will resit in year 2. 32 is the pass mark.

Key stage 1 SATs

Key stage 1 tests cover:

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

The take place in May of year 2. It is vital that school's apply for special consideration

Key stage 2

Children will take national tests in May when they reach the end of key stage 2 in year 6. These test the child's skills in:

- English reading
- English grammar, punctuation and spelling
- Maths
- Writing-assessed by the teacher rather than a test

The tests last less than 4 hours. The scaled score for a pass is 100. If a child gets less than 100 but is close, an appeal can be put in up to a month after results. It is also vital schools apply for special consideration.

Apply for special consideration in SATs & GCSEs

".....special consideration if a pupil's performance in a key stage 2 test has been affected by extremely distressing circumstances in test week or the weeks immediately before test week. It may also apply when an incident that occurred in the months before the tests is still having an impact on the pupil demonstrating their full potential."

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/key-stage-2-tests-how-to-apply-for-special-consideration>

The number of scaled score points that will be added for each subject are as follows:

Test	Number of points to be added to the scaled score
English reading	3
English grammar, punctuation and spelling	3
Mathematics	3

Schools can add the number of points to a pupil's reported scaled score for a test to understand what adjusted scaled score will be used in the performance tables.

Adjusted scaled scores will be capped at the maximum score available for a test. For example if a pupil's scaled score from the test is 105, then a scaled score of 108, the maximum scaled score on the tests, will be used for calculations in the performance tables.

It is worth applying for special consideration within any exams for our Children in Care as they very often have serious and disruptive domestic crisis leading up to or at the time of their exams or tests

JCQ Key Stage 4 Candidates who are present for the assessment but disadvantaged. The size of the allowance depends on the timing, nature and extent of the illness or misfortune. Up to 5% will be added and can be for serious and disruptive domestic crisis at or near the time of the examination."

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Key Stage 3

This consists of years 7, 8 and usually although some schools now start Key Stage 4 in Year 9.

There can be a dip in progress between years 6 and 7 so it is important transition is well planned to support the child and PEP meetings focus on ensuring expected progress is being made from SATs results.

(see expected progress chart document)

Many schools are now using GCSE grades in years 7, 8 and 9 now as national curriculum levels are no longer valid.

Key Stage 4

This usually consists of years 10 and 11

Students will take a range of subjects at GCSE. There are a number of GCSE equivalent qualifications such as some BTECs but only some will count in results by the DfE.

Generally all mainstream students will take maths, English Language, English Literature, science and then 3 or 4 others. Some schools give less choice and insist on a humanity eg geography or a language also.

Students may take just a foundation level in the exams to maximise their chances of achieving a grade 4 or 5 (low / high C). Although schools can count a grade 4/5 in English Literature as a pass in English, many colleges are unable to allow this and have to only accept a grade 4/5 in English Language.

It is **vital** students do not move schools during GCSEs as due to the choice in exam boards, reading books, syllabuses and coursework, it is very unlikely they will be able to match their subjects in another school.

Often the most beneficial support is a 1 to 1 teacher at the school tutoring them in maths and English each week.

Key Stage 5

Key Stage 5 or Post 16 or years 12/13 onwards can take place at a 6th form, college or another provider. Detailed transition is vital.

Since 2014, students without a good pass in English and Maths GCSE (a '4' or higher under the new GCSE grading system) must continue to study these subjects until they are 18, or secure a qualification in them.

This policy was modified in 2015 so that learners achieving a grade '3' (roughly equivalent to a 'D') must be enrolled on a GCSE course, whereas those with lower prior grades may take functional skills courses.

However, supporting older learners to secure these qualifications is challenging. Given that these are young people who have already been studying English and maths for 11 years and haven't achieved the target grades, they are more likely than other learners to feel disaffected and disengaged.