

KEY STAGE
1

YEAR
1

National Curriculum assessments

Assessment and reporting arrangements

Year 1 phonics screening check

**Standards and
Testing Agency**

An executive agency of the
Department for Education

2012

The *Assessment and reporting arrangements* (ARA) contains provisions made pursuant to article 9 of the Education (National Curriculum) (Key Stage 1 Assessment Arrangements) (England) Order 2004, SI 2004/2783, as amended. This Order is made under section 87(3) of the Education Act 2002.

The ARA gives full effect to, or otherwise supplements, the provisions made in the Order and as such has effect as if made by the Order. The ARA provides information and guidance on National Curriculum assessments and their administration.

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2012 Year 1 phonics screening check *Assessment and reporting arrangements*

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1. Introduction

1.1 What is the phonics screening check?

The phonics screening check is a new, statutory assessment for all children in Year 1. The phonics screening check will take place during the week commencing 18 June 2012.

The phonics screening check is designed to confirm whether individual children have learnt phonic decoding to an appropriate standard. Children who do not achieve the appropriate standard should receive support from their school to ensure they can improve their phonic decoding skills. These children will then be expected to retake the phonics screening check the following year.

The phonics screening check comprises a list of 40 words that children read one-to-one with a teacher. The list is a combination of both real and pseudo-words. Using pseudo-words allows this assessment to focus purely on decoding using phonics. As pseudo-words are new to all children, they do not favour children with a good vocabulary knowledge or large visual memory of words. The pseudo-words will be shown to children alongside pictures of imaginary creatures. This allows teachers to explain to the child that the pseudo-word is the name of a type of creature they haven't seen before. This helps children to understand they should not try to match the pseudo-word to their vocabulary.

The phonics screening check is divided into two sections:

Section 1

- grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) usually introduced first to children learning to decode using phonics
- simple word structures

Section 2

- GPCs usually introduced later and graphemes that correspond to more than one phoneme
- more complex word structures, including two syllable words

More information about the structure and content of the phonics screening check, including a sample of the words similar to those that will be included in the phonics screening check, is available at www.education.gov.uk/assessment.

There is no time limit but the phonics screening check would normally take between four and nine minutes for each child.

The phonics screening check was piloted in approximately 300 schools in June 2011. A report evaluating the pilot is available at www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/pedagogy/phonics.

1.2 Key dates

| | |
|--|--|
| Before the phonics screening check | A sample of schools will be selected to provide item level data |
| By end of April 2012 | Training materials and <i>Check administrators' guide</i> made available to schools online at www.education.gov.uk/assessment |
| By 1 June 2012 | Schools receive phonics screening check materials |
| Week commencing 18 June 2012 | Schools administer phonics screening check |
| By 29 June 2012 | Headteachers submit their headteacher's declaration form |
| As soon as possible after the phonics screening check has been completed | Maintained schools submit their results to their local authority. Academies (and Free Schools) submit their results to their local authority or other accredited agency. Exact dates will be provided by local authorities and other accredited agencies |
| By end of July 2012 | Local authority or other accredited body submits results to the Department via COLLECT, which is the system used for data submission for teacher assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 |
| September 2012 | The Department publishes national and local authority statistics |

1.3 What is the ARA?

The *Assessment and reporting arrangements* (ARA) explains the statutory requirements for administering the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2012.

The term 'parent' is used within this document as defined in section 576 of the Education Act 1996 as:

- parents of a child;
- any person who is not a parent of a child but who has parental responsibility for the child; and
- any person who has care of the child.

All information, including dates, is correct at the time of printing and subject to change. Any changes will be communicated to schools and local authorities.

1.4 Legal status of the ARA

The 2012 Year 1 phonics screening check ARA contains provisions made pursuant to Article 9 of The Education (National Curriculum) (Key Stage 1 Assessment Arrangements) (England) Order 2004. This order is made under section 87(3) of the Education Act 2002. This ARA gives full effect to, or otherwise supplements, the provisions made in the Order and as such has effect as if made by the Order. It also contains information that does not form part of the law.

1.5 Who needs to use the ARA?

All those responsible for assessing and reporting on the phonics screening check will need to refer to this document. In particular this ARA is intended to help headteachers, governing bodies and local authorities ensure that schools' statutory assessment and reporting arrangements are completed in accordance with the requirements of the Order.

Headteachers

Headteachers of maintained schools have a duty to make sure that the National Curriculum and associated assessment arrangements are implemented in their schools.

All headteachers of maintained schools must ensure their schools comply with all aspects of the phonics screening check assessment and reporting arrangements.

They must:

- identify the children to be assessed at the end of Year 1;
- consider whether any child should not be assessed at the end of Year 1;
- ensure all phonics screening check materials are stored securely and that children do not have access to the materials before they are used;
- ensure the phonics screening check is administered at the correct time;
- ensure the correct administrative procedures are followed;
- ensure children's responses to the phonics screening check are scored accurately and consistently;
- cooperate with external monitoring visits;
- ensure provision is made to meet the needs of all children with special educational needs (SEN); and
- complete their headteacher's declaration form to confirm that the phonics screening check has been administered in accordance with the statutory arrangements.

Headteachers of maintained schools should also ensure results for all children are submitted to their local authority. Headteachers of Academies (including Free Schools) should ensure results for all children are submitted to their local authority or other accredited agency.

Governing bodies

Governing bodies of maintained schools must carry out their functions so that the phonics screening check assessment and reporting arrangements are implemented effectively in their school.

If the headteacher is temporarily or permanently absent, the governing body should ensure a nominated representative carries out the headteacher's duties as specified in this ARA.

An Academy's (or Free School's) funding agreement requires that the Academy Trust (the body that runs the Academy) complies with any guidance to ensure that children take part in assessments, and teacher assessments of children's performance are carried out, as for maintained schools. This ARA is that guidance and therefore the Academy (or Free School) must comply with it.

Local authorities and other accredited agencies

Local authorities and other accredited agencies must do all they can to ensure that:

- assessment arrangements are implemented and in particular they must monitor whether assessment arrangements are being administered correctly in maintained schools; and
- schools and Academies (including Free Schools) under their responsibility understand and follow the requirements set out in the ARA.

Local authorities are required to undertake monitoring visits to a ten per cent sample of schools to ensure the check is being carried out in accordance with statutory guidance. The visits could take place before, during or after the phonics screening check but the local authority must make visits before and during it. Local authorities will receive additional funding and training to enable them to carry out this function. More details will be provided in the spring term.

Local authorities and other accredited agencies should ensure that maintained schools and, where appropriate, Academies (including Free Schools):

- are aware of the need to store phonics screening check materials securely;
- are offered support on all aspects of the phonics screening check;
- are provided with instructions outlining how they must submit their data; and
- have an electronic system to submit phonics screening check data.

They should also observe a small number of phonics screening checks and confirm that the teachers' scoring is accurate. The observation must be done sensitively without making the children feel uncomfortable, allowing them to show their decoding skills fully.

They should also inform the Standards and Testing Agency (STA) without delay of any irregularities in schools' and Academies' (including Free Schools) assessment arrangements. Information on how to carry out these tasks will be provided electronically.

Local authorities and other accredited agencies should submit data using the Department's COLLECT system. Further information will be made available before the phonics screening check online at www.education.gov.uk/assessment.

1.6 The Standards and Testing Agency (STA)

The Secretary of State for Education announced on 5 November 2010 that a new executive agency was to be established within the Department, accountable to him for the secure delivery of statutory assessment and testing functions.

STA was launched on 1 October 2011 and responsibility for delivery of the relevant functions has now passed from the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency to STA. STA has responsibility for the development and delivery of all statutory assessments at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 and the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

Ofqual will continue to have an important regulatory role in ensuring the integrity and impartiality of statutory assessment and testing.

STA's framework document, providing further detail on its operation, is available from the Department's website at www.education.gov.uk.

The National Curriculum assessments helpline number is still 0300 303 3013.

1.7 How does the ARA apply to different types of schools?

Maintained schools

This ARA applies to all maintained schools with a Year 1 cohort.

Academies (including Free Schools) in England

Where it is a requirement of their funding agreement, Academies (including Free Schools) must ensure they comply with the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum assessment arrangements. Where the funding agreement for an Academy (or Free School) provides that it shall comply with guidance of the Secretary of State in relation to assessments and teacher assessments of children's performance, this ARA is that guidance, and the Academy (or Free School) must comply with it.

Academies (including Free Schools) are no longer required to teach the National Curriculum programme of study in English but must teach the subject as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. Where it is a requirement of their funding agreement, they must fully comply with the assessment and monitoring requirements as set out in this ARA. Phonics screening check arrangements are only applicable to those Academies (or Free Schools) that provide education to children at these stages of learning.

Overseas schools

Service Children's Education Schools must administer the phonics screening check but other overseas schools cannot formally participate.

Pupil referral units (PRUs), hospital schools and children educated at home

Children attending a PRU or hospital school are not subject to the assessment arrangements in this ARA. Children still on the register at a maintained school or an Academy (or Free School) but studying at a PRU or hospital school are required to be assessed, and the results should be reported by the home school.

These assessment and reporting arrangements do not apply to children who are being educated at home, unless they are on the register of a maintained school that is participating in the phonics screening check.

Independent schools

Independent schools cannot formally participate in the assessment and reporting arrangements. STA will make materials available online to independent schools after the phonics screening check administration window. Further information will be provided online at www.education.gov.uk/assessment.

1.8 Concerns and complaints

Concerns and complaints should be raised with STA by writing to the Stakeholder relations team at STA, 53-55 Butts Road, Earlsdon Park, Coventry, CV1 3BH, or by email to assessments@education.gov.uk.

Where schools feel that their concerns have not been fully addressed by STA in line with the published procedures, regulatory concerns can be raised with Ofqual. Enquiries and concerns can be sent to the Office of Qualifications and Examinations (Ofqual), Spring Place, Coventry Business Park, Herald Avenue, Coventry, CV5 6UB, or by email to info@ofqual.gov.uk.

2. Getting ready for the phonics screening check

2.1 What to expect

There is no need to register children for the phonics screening check. All schools which must administer the phonics screening check will be sent the materials automatically.

The materials will include a practice sheet to help familiarise children with the layout of the phonics screening check. It will include real words and pseudo-words.

Teachers will also receive mark sheets which they should use to record the child's responses and which they can use to record their own comments. Schools should keep the marksheets on file after the phonics screening check has been administered.

Schools selected to provide item level data will receive separate instructions on how they should record and submit children's responses.

2.2 Who should administer the phonics screening check?

The phonics screening check must be administered by a teacher who is known to the child. It should not be administered by a teaching assistant because the role requires a teacher's professional judgement about which responses are correct, and it forms part of teacher assessment. The administrator should not be a relative or parent of the child taking the phonics screening check.

2.3 Training and guidance

Sample phonics screening check materials are available from www.education.gov.uk/assessment. Additional guidance to support the correct administration and scoring of the phonics screening check will be provided to schools by the end of April 2012. This support will include a *Check administrators' guide* and online training.

Guidance on how to submit results will be provided by local authorities or other accredited agencies. Schools should contact them directly with any queries.

3. Access arrangements for the phonics screening check

3.1 Children who may need access arrangements

Teachers may need to adapt the phonics screening check arrangements for a small number of children. Access arrangements should neither advantage nor disadvantage individual children.

To decide whether a child needs access arrangements for the phonics screening check, schools should consider the type and amount of support that they receive as part of normal classroom practice.

Those who may need access arrangements include children:

- with a statement of special educational needs (SEN) (as described in the SEN Code of Practice) or a local equivalent such as an individual pupil resourcing agreement (IPRA);
- who have provision in school as part of School Action or School Action Plus under the SEN Code of Practice;
- who require alternative access arrangements because of a disability that may or may not give rise to SEN; or
- who are learning English as a second language and who have a limited knowledge of English. It should be noted most children who are learning English as a second language will be able to access the phonics screening check.

It is not possible to list all of the situations in which children may need access arrangements. Schools should contact the National Curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 for information on specific situations not covered by this document.

3.2 Examples of access arrangements

Rest breaks

The phonics screening check should take between four and nine minutes for each child, although there is no time limit and children should be given enough time to respond to each word. If the administrator believes a child will find it difficult to concentrate or may experience fatigue during the phonics screening check, they may use rest breaks to make it more manageable for the child. Rest breaks may be taken when needed and schools should consider the most appropriate time for them. If rest breaks are required more frequently than between the two sections, as outlined in section 1.1, or at the end of a page, we recommend modifying the materials so there are fewer words on each page.

School-based modifications

An electronic version of the phonics screening check will be made available. Details about how to access it will be provided in the *Check administrators' guide*. The types of modification that can be made by schools include:

- changing the font;
- changing the font size;
- reducing the number of words on each page; and
- printing on different coloured paper.

Braille versions of the check

Braille versions of the check are available on request. They will be provided in grade 1 Braille without pictures of imaginary creatures. Schools may order a Braille version by contacting the modified test agency on 0300 303 3019. To comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, schools must not send these requests by email.

Use of coloured overlays

Schools may use a coloured overlay if this is normal classroom practice for a child.

Use of cued speech

If the child is familiar with cued speech it can be used throughout the phonics screening check by a professional skilled in cued speech and by the deaf child to make their responses clear for all words. The deaf child may however wish to speak the words in which case cued speech should be used to help clarify what sound they were aiming for. Additional time may be needed for this.

Use of visual phonics

These techniques can be used to help children make their responses clear, if this is normal classroom practice.

Rephrasing instructions

The phonics screening check will have a standard introduction. However, if a child is likely to be confused by the standard introduction, schools may choose to develop their own introduction. The instructions may refer to the practice words but must not refer to the actual phonics screening check words.

Use of British Sign Language (BSL)

Some children using BSL or other sign-supported communication to spell out individual letters are not using phonics in the sense of linking letters and sounds, so consideration should be given to disapplying them from the phonics screening check.

4. Administering the phonics screening check

4.1 Receiving the phonics screening check materials

Schools will receive the phonics screening check materials by 1 June 2012. Each school will receive one set of materials per 30 children. Electronic versions will also be made available to allow modification.

When the phonics screening check materials are received, the headteacher or delegated senior member of staff must check the delivery against the delivery note to ensure that the correct number of phonic screening check packs has been received. If the delivery is found to be incomplete, or contains more packs than shown on the delivery note, the school must report this immediately to the STA distribution agency helpline on 0800 169 4195 to arrange for the correct number of packs to be sent to the school.

If any of the packs are unsealed or damaged on arrival, the school must report this immediately to the National Curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013. They may be asked to send a photograph of the damaged packages to STA.

Administrators should not open the packs until Monday 18 June. However, they should familiarise themselves with the phonics screening check by using the guidance and training materials available at www.education.gov.uk/assessment.

4.2 Conditions for administering the phonics screening check

The phonics screening check should be administered in a room that is free from excessive noise and provides a comfortable, well-lit space for the child. The child and teacher must be able to clearly hear each other. The room must be prepared before children are admitted. Any displays or materials that could help children in the phonics screening check should be removed or covered.

If the phonics screening check is under way and it becomes evident that a child is struggling, the teacher should consider stopping it to prevent the child from having a negative experience. Further advice on this will be provided in the *Check administrators' guide*.

4.3 Children who are working below the level of the phonics screening check

Most children are expected to be able to access the phonics screening check, in particular the first section. Wherever possible children should participate in the phonics screening check. However a headteacher may decide that a child should not participate in it if they have not shown any understanding of grapheme-phoneme correspondences.

Before a final decision is made parents must be informed about why their child has been disapplied and the steps the school has taken to help the child to learn to decode using phonics. If appropriate, the school should also provide the parents with documentary evidence to support their decision.

Any child who is disapplied should be considered for the phonics screening check the following year.

4.4 Arrangements for children who cannot take the phonics screening check at the scheduled time

The phonics screening check can be administered on any day during the week commencing 18 June 2012. If a child is unexpectedly absent during that week, the school can administer the phonics screening check up until Friday 29 June 2012. Any child who is absent from school for this entire period should be recorded as absent when submitting the data for the phonics screening check.

5. Reporting and using results

5.1 Reporting results to parents

Teachers must tell parents whether or not their child met the required standard to ensure they are aware of their child's progress in developing phonics skills. This must be done by the end of the summer term at the latest. Schools will have been sent the threshold mark with the phonics screening check materials. Schools can use their judgement about the best method of communication with parents and may wish to include additional information such as how parents can support their child to progress with their phonics and reading at home.

5.2 How results will be used

- School-level results will be made available via RAISEonline at www.raiseonline.org for schools to analyse their own performance and for Ofsted to use in inspections. Ofsted will use the results from the phonics screening check in context alongside other information about a school's reading teaching when considering a school's performance.
- School-level results will not be published in performance tables.
- National results will be used to track standards over time.
- National and local authority results will be available with the Key Stage 1 statistics in autumn 2012 to allow schools to benchmark their children's performance.

A sample of schools will be selected to provide item level data for all children in their cohort. The data will be used for a technical analysis of the phonics screening check and will not be used for school-level accountability. Selected schools will receive information on the process for submitting the data.

Children who have not reached the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 must be considered for a retake of the phonics screening check in June of Year 2. Further information about this will be published in next year's ARA.

5.3 Reporting results to local authorities or other accredited agencies

Maintained schools should report pupil-level phonics screening check results to their local authority. Academies (including Free Schools) should report pupil-level phonics screening check results to their local authority or other accredited agency.

If a child moves school after taking the phonics screening check their results should be passed to their next school.

Assessment codes

To report phonics screening check results teachers should use the assessment codes in the table below.

In addition to the basic pupil identifiers, schools will be asked to provide each child's 'phonics mark' and 'outcome code' (except for schools selected to be part of the item level data sample).

The 'phonics mark' will be the mark from 0-40 for those children who have taken the phonics screening check.

Teachers should use these outcome codes to report the outcome of the phonics screening check:

| Description | Phonics outcome code |
|---|----------------------|
| Child took the phonics screening check and met the required standard | Wa |
| Child took the phonics screening check and did not meet the required standard | Wt |
| Absent | A |
| Child did not take the phonics screening check | D |
| Child has left the school | L |

6. Contact details

Please make sure you have your seven-digit DfE number before you call, for example 123/4567.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| National Curriculum assessments helpline For general enquiries about National Curriculum assessments | Tel: 0300 303 3013 Email: assessments@education.gov.uk Websites: www.education.gov.uk/assessment www.education.gov.uk/ks1 | 53–55 Butts Road Earlsdon Park Coventry CV1 3BH |
| STA modified test helpline For guidance on ordering modified test materials | Tel: 0300 303 3019 Email: schooltests@rnib.org.uk | |
| STA distribution agency helpline For enquiries about phonics screening check materials | Tel: 0800 169 4195 | 53–55 Butts Road Earlsdon Park Coventry CV1 3BH |
| Ofqual Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation | Tel: 0300 303 3346 Fax: 0300 303 3348 Email: info@ofqual.gov.uk Website: www.ofqual.gov.uk | Spring Place Coventry Business Park Herald Avenue Coventry CV5 6UB |
| DfE national enquiry line For enquiries about the statutory requirements for assessment, national results, achievement and attainment tables and reporting to parents | Tel: 0370 000 2288 Fax: 01928 738 248 Website: www.education.gov.uk/contactus | Castle View House East Lane Runcorn Cheshire WA7 2GJ |
| DfE publications helpline To order single copies of DfE materials and circulars | Tel: 0845 602 2260 Fax: 0845 603 3360 Website: www.education.gov.uk/publications | PO Box 5050 Annesley Nottingham NG15 0DJ |
| Information Commissioner's Office For enquiries about the Data Protection Act 1998 | Tel: 01625 545 745 Email: mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk Website: www.ico.gov.uk | Wycliffe House Water Lane Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF |

About this publication

Who is it for?

Headteachers and staff within local authorities.

What is it for?

The phonics screening check ARA sets out statutory arrangements and provides information and guidance on the phonics screening check assessment and reporting arrangements in 2012.

What does it cover?

- Statutory assessment and reporting requirements for the phonics screening check.
- How to administer the phonics screening check.
- Information about moderation of the phonics screening check.

Related materials

2012 EYFS *Assessment and reporting arrangements* STA/12/5569

2012 Key Stage 1 *Assessment and reporting arrangements* STA/12/5570

For more copies

Additional printed copies of this ARA are not available. The phonics screening check ARA can be accessed on the STA Orderline at <http://orderline.education.gov.uk> Search using the PDF product code reference STA/11/5688/p.

**Standards and
Testing Agency**

An executive agency of the
Department for Education
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