

Item validation trial of key stage 2 test materials

Information sheet for schools

I have received notification my school has been selected – what do I have to do now?

Once you have been notified of your selection, you will need to complete the online reply form as soon as possible. Details of how to do this will have been included in your notification of selection letter and email.

The information we gather in the reply form is:

- confirmation we hold the correct school details
- nomination of a school contact person that we will communicate with regarding the trial moving forwards
- any dates you are unavailable for testing within the testing window
- the name of the class in the selected year group that you would like to participate and the number of pupils in the class. We only need one class for the trial so if you have multiple classes in your year 6, please provide details of only one.

Once we have received your completed reply form, we will then ask you to confirm the details of the pupils in the participating class. We also collect details about any test modifications you may require in order for pupils to access the tests (more details on this can be found below).

1 What does participation in the trial involve?

Your school will be asked to trial tests in **key stage 2 English reading**.

We will arrange for a representative from NFER to come to your school to administer the tests to one class of your year 6 pupils.

The date of the trialling will be arranged at your convenience within the below testing periods:

Test trial	Testing period
Key Stage 2	18 – 22 May 2026 and 01 – 05 June 2026 <i>(There are two testing periods to allow for May half term)</i>

To help you keep track of the important dates in the trial we have provided a '**key dates**' document which can be downloaded from the main project information page.

During the administration, a member of school staff, with experience in the test subject, is required to assist the administration. At the end of the administration, they will be asked to complete a short questionnaire giving their opinions on the content of the tests.

Further information about the trial is provided in a '**Trial Information**' document that can be downloaded from the main project information page.

2 How are the tests administered?

Your school will be allocated to someone from a pool of highly trained NFER test administrators, all of whom have a background in teaching. The test administrator will run the test, with the support of a member of school staff, and will ensure the pupils are put at ease during the testing.

Each administrator will hold an up-to-date DBS certificate, and they will carry a NFER ID badge with them when they visit the school so they will be easily identifiable. We will write to you ahead of administration to confirm the name of the test administrator we expect to visit your school. We will endeavour to keep you up to date with any changes that may arise.

Your allocated test administrator will contact you ahead of trialling in mid to late March. During this call, they should:

- make arrangements for any set up required including:
 - checking suitable room availability and layout
 - instructions to cover any subject relevant posters
 - confirm arrival date and time
 - instructions to seat pupils in alphabetical order by surname
- check any modifications requested so they can check these against received materials
- check the name of the class and expected number of pupils
- inform you of any support they will need on the day.

The test administrators will bring all test booklets and materials along with them on the day and will take them away with them at the end of the administration. There will be no marking required of school staff. As these are highly confidential, the test packs will be sealed before leaving school and it is important that no booklets are photocopied or taken away from the test administrator. All members of school staff who are in contact with the test materials will be required to sign a statement of confidentiality that the test administrator will bring with them.

3 What if my pupils require modifications to access the tests?

We try to emulate the live national curriculum tests in these trials where possible, however for trialling we are only able to offer enlarged (A3) and/or coloured copies of tests as modifications. Test papers cannot be photocopied within school on coloured or larger sized paper. You will have the opportunity to inform us of any pupils that require modifications and which modifications they need when you confirm the pupil data of the participating class. All requests for modifications must be received by NFER by **Friday 13th March 2026**, to ensure we have timely processing.

4 What if pupils require access arrangements?

The following access arrangements and reasonable adjustments can be used in trialling if the pupil would usually use these:

- Additional time
- Use of scribes and readers

- Use of prompters
- Rest breaks
- Administering the test in multiple sittings
- Use of transcripts
- Oral translation

We aim to cover as many access arrangements as possible within the constraints of trialling. Our test administrators are experienced in accommodating these arrangements within the administration. To fulfil our obligations regarding test security, our test administrators are required to remain with all materials while in the school and will need to be present for all testing sessions. If it is absolutely not possible to seat all pupils together in one room with the test administrator present, please notify NFER in advance via the School Portal so that multiple sequential testing sessions can be arranged within your selected testing date.

We appreciate that testing in one room may mean that the Department for Education requirements for national curriculum tests may not be able to be met in full; however, in most circumstances testing in a classroom should meet the needs of this test trial.

The trial model is set up to only assign one test administrator per school. In exceptional cases we may be able to provide a second test administrator, however, this cannot be guaranteed and can only be confirmed once all schools have been allocated an administrator and we know whether additional capacity is available within your locality.

5 How will NFER collect data about pupils from my school?

Under a data sharing agreement, STA will provide NFER with the autumn 2025 census data containing a list of pupils in the participating year group. Once we have received your reply, we will upload the pupil census data to our secure school portal and ask you to indicate which pupils are in the class selected to participate in the trial.

We will also ask you to check and, if required, update the background data and indicate if any pupils require modified versions of the tests (enlarged and coloured copies are provided for trialling). You will also be asked to add names and background data for any new pupils.

The background data we need about the pupils will be:

- name
- date of birth
- gender

Full details of how to provide this information will be available to download on the school portal. You will be given another opportunity to check this data ahead of the trial to ensure that it is accurate and that we have collected all pupil details and all modified test needs.

This data will be used to provide personalised test materials to all pupils. This ensures that the data used in analysis is accurate and we can be confident the correct pupils use the correct test papers.

Once the trial is complete, NFER will provide STA with the updated pupil data, the scores derived from NFER's coding of the tests, as well as the scanned images of the test booklets completed by your pupils.

The privacy notice that covers collection of pupil data can be found at: [Privacy information: early years foundation stage to key stage 3](#)