

Reception baseline assessment: information for parents

Find out what the reception baseline assessment means for your child when they start school.

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Overview

The reception baseline assessment (RBA) is a short, task-based assessment of your child's early literacy, communication, language and mathematics skills when they begin school. It is statutory for all schools from September 2021.

The assessment can take place at any point in the first 6 weeks of your child starting reception. The assessment will form the start of a new measure of how schools are helping their pupils to progress between reception and year 6.

Your child does not need to prepare. There is no pass mark or score and your child should not realise they're doing an assessment.

Once the RBA is fully established, the intention is to make the key stage 1 national curriculum tests and teacher assessments that children currently take at the end of year 2 non-statutory.

What the assessment involves

During a short one-to-one session with their teacher or teaching assistant, your child will do a number of practical and interactive tasks.

Your child can answer questions verbally or by pointing or moving objects. The assessment has been designed to be inclusive and there are modified materials available – this means it is also accessible to children with special educational needs or disability (SEND) or English as an additional language (EAL). The teacher may pause the assessment at any time, for example, if a child needs a break.

What the assessment measures

The tasks are carefully designed to assess early mathematics, literacy, communication and language skills.

What you need to do

You do not need to do anything. Your child is unlikely to even know that they are doing an assessment when they are completing the tasks.

Why the assessment is being introduced

The assessment provides a better starting point to measure the progress a school makes with their pupils throughout their whole time at primary school, between reception and year 6.

Parents will be able to see how well the school is supporting its pupils. It will also help teachers get to know their new class when they start school.

How the data will be used

Children will not 'pass' or 'fail' the assessment; it will provide a snapshot of where they are when they start school in the reception year. The results of the assessment will not be used by government to track or label individual pupils, or to judge the performance of early years settings.

The data from the assessment will only be used at school level to measure the progress of the year group from reception to year 6. The data from the assessment, including numerical scores, will not be shared with parents, pupils, teachers, or external bodies, including schools. There will be no published score.

The [RBA privacy notices](#) explain what personal data is collected and how this is processed, including your child's data.

What will be reported to you

Teachers will receive narrative statements on how your child did, which will tell them how your child performed in the assessment. Schools are not obliged to report the narrative statements to you as a matter of course. However, schools must share the narrative statements with you upon your request.

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