

Key stage 1 SATs replacement to be rolled out from September

From September all new primary school pupils will take the new reception baseline assessment (RBA) that will replace SATs in year 2.

Following successful pilots all over the country, the RBA, a one-to-one exercise done in 20 minutes with a teacher in an informal setting, will be taken by all children in their first six weeks of primary school.

The move paves the way for the removal of the national curriculum assessments at the end of key stage 1 from 2022/23 – commonly known as SATs – when pupils are aged six- or seven-years-old.

It comes after a validity report based on a national pilot confirmed that the new assessments provide an accurate assessment of a pupils' starting point from which to measure the progress they make in primary school.

School Standards Minister Nick Gibb said:

It's hugely important that we understand how much progress primary schools help their pupils make.

This new teacher-led check will replace the SATs taken at the end of year 2 to give a better understanding of a child's starting point when they arrive at school and reduce the number of assessments in primary schools overall.

A new report analysing the effectiveness of the RBA found:

- the assessment is representative of a range of literacy, communication, language and mathematics skills and knowledge appropriate to the age and development of children at the start of reception.
- assessment results provide a fair and accurate measure of pupil performance – including for those with special educational needs and disabilities; and
- pupil performance is comparable within and across schools.
- evidence from the pilot shows we expect over 90% of assessments to be completed within 20 minutes

NAHT General Secretary, Paul Whiteman said:

The NAHT welcomes the transparency and openness shown by Standards and Testing Agency through the publication of this report and we are pleased to see that the government has reiterated its intention to remove SATs at the end of year 2.

NAHT has long argued that it makes little sense to take a baseline measure for progress midway through the primary years, as is the case now, effectively ignoring the incredible work and progress made in those critical first few years of school.

The introduction of a reliable and workable baseline assessment to replace year 2 SATs has the potential to be a fairer way of measuring progress and means we should finally start to see the reduction in the volume of high stakes testing in primary that NAHT has long called for.

The reception baseline assessment has been designed to reflect the types of assessment that most schools already carry out in reception. It will take roughly 20 minutes, be carried out one-to-one with pupils, and does not have a pass mark.

Children will be assessed orally through simple, practical tasks which could include counting or describing pictures, reflecting the types of activities which many parents already do with their children at home. There is no need for teachers or parents to prepare pupils for the assessment.