



Standards
& Testing
Agency

Reception baseline assessment: assessment and reporting arrangements

May 2023

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1 Summary

1.1 About this guidance

This guidance sets out the statutory requirements for the reception baseline assessment (RBA) and reporting arrangements for the 2023/24 academic year. It is produced by the [Standards and Testing Agency \(STA\)](#)¹, an executive agency of the Department for Education (DfE), and is relevant until the end of the 2023/24 academic year. The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) has been contracted by STA to develop and deliver the RBA and there will be references throughout this document to NFER's engagement with schools.

The assessment and reporting arrangements (ARA) apply to the following schools with a reception cohort:

- maintained schools (including maintained special schools)
- academies (including free schools)
- Ministry of Defence (MoD) schools

1.2 Who is this guidance for?

- all staff responsible for administering the RBA
- headteachers and senior leadership teams
- governors and trustees

1.3 Legal status

The ARA contains provisions made in terms of Article 3 (as amended) of [The Early Years Foundation Stage \(Miscellaneous Amendments\) and Childcare Fees \(Amendment\) Regulations 2021](#)². These Regulations are made by the Secretary of State under powers provided for by [section 42 of the Childcare Act 2006](#)³. This document gives full effect to the provisions made in the Regulations concerning the RBA and has effect as if made by the Regulations. The ARA also contains guidance and information that does not form part

¹ www.gov.uk/government/organisations/standards-and-testing-agency

² www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2021/432/contents/made

³ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/21/section/42

of the law. Section 12 contains further guidance on legal requirements and responsibilities.

2 Changes for 2023/24

2.1 Log in details

At the end of the 2022/23 academic year, each school's pupil details, assessment data and school-created staff accounts will be removed from their [Baseline ePortal \(BeP\)](#)⁴.

Schools will be required to provide contact details for their headteacher and RBA lead for the 2023/24 academic year, via the confirmation form (see section 3.3).

School ID and usernames will not change for the Admin and Headteacher accounts. For security, however, the passwords for these accounts will be reset.

Prior to the start of the autumn term, NFER will send out the login details and new passwords needed to access the BeP to the contacts provided in the confirmation form.

The Admin account can then be used to create individual accounts for the members of staff who will be carrying out the assessment.

2.2 Password resets

If a member of staff forgets their password, it can be reset via a school's Admin account on the BeP. Headteachers are also able to reset passwords for any member of staff.

From the start of the 2023/24 autumn term, it will also be possible for the Admin account to reset the Headteacher password. This can be done via the 'Administration' area of the BeP under 'Manage staff'. Information on how to do this can be found in the 'Help' section of the BeP.

⁴ <https://receptionbaseline.education.gov.uk>

3 Reception baseline assessment

3.1 Overview of the RBA

The RBA is an age-appropriate assessment of early mathematics and early literacy, communication and language. It is delivered in English and is administered within the first six weeks of a pupil starting reception. The assessment has two components, each consisting of practical tasks using physical resources. There is an online scoring system for the practitioner to use as the pupil engages with the tasks. DfE will use the data from the RBA to create school-level progress measures for primary schools, which will show the progress of pupils from reception until the end of key stage 2.

3.2 Assessment framework

The [reception baseline assessment framework](#)⁵ is written for assessment developers, though it may also be of interest to schools.

The framework sets out:

- what is assessed by the RBA
- assessment design and delivery

Teachers should not use the assessment framework to guide teaching and learning. Schools should continue to follow the [Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#)⁶ until the end of the reception year. Schools may also find it useful to refer to [Development Matters](#)⁷, which is non-statutory curriculum guidance for the EYFS, available to support providers in their delivery of the EYFS learning and development requirements. As this guidance document is non-statutory, Ofsted and inspectorates of independent schools will not have regard to it in carrying out inspections and it is up to providers to decide how they approach the curriculum.

3.3 Confirmation form

Schools must confirm their RBA contact details for the 2023/24 academic year by completing the RBA confirmation form sent to participating schools' email addresses.

⁵ www.gov.uk/government/publications/reception-baseline-assessment-framework

⁶ www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2

⁷ www.gov.uk/government/publications/development-matters--2/development-matters

STA takes email addresses from [Get Information about Schools](#)⁸, therefore, schools must ensure their details are up to date and log in to GIAS via [DfE Sign-in](#)⁹ to make changes. Practitioners can find further information about updating records in the help menu on the GIAS website.

Schools will receive this form on Monday 15 May 2023 and must complete this by Friday 16 June 2023.

The form asks schools to provide:

- their headteacher's name and email address
- their nominated RBA lead's name and email address
- the number of pupils anticipated in their upcoming reception cohort
- the date in the autumn term when their reception cohort will start school

Schools that will not have a reception cohort in the 2023/24 academic year should confirm this using the form.

If schools do not receive the RBA confirmation form, they should contact the RBA helpline on 0330 088 4171.

3.4 Assessment materials

Schools will not automatically receive RBA materials for the 2023/24 academic year. You should have securely stored the materials used for the RBA in 2022/23 for reuse with the September 2023 reception intake.

Schools that are new to the RBA, such as newly established schools, will receive assessment materials at the beginning of the 2023 autumn term.

If schools have any concerns regarding their assessment materials, they should contact the RBA helpline on 0330 088 4171.

3.5 Making adaptations to the assessment

We have developed the RBA to be an inclusive assessment, accessible to the majority of pupils on entry to school. We have designed it so that pupils with Special Educational

⁸ www.get-information-schools.service.gov.uk

⁹ <https://services.signin.education.gov.uk>

Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and those learning English as an additional language can participate.

Practitioners can make adaptations to the resources if they deem this necessary, for example, enlarging these to an appropriate size for the pupil. Any adaptations should not advantage individual pupils and you should base them primarily on early indication of what is normal classroom practice. You can find information on adapting resources in the RBA administration guide provided with your assessment materials and available to download from the 'Documents' section of the [BeP](#)¹⁰, and in the modified guide which you can request through the 'Resources' section of the BeP.

Schools may find that some pupils are unable to access the assessment even with necessary adaptations. If this is the case, schools must record those pupils as disapplied on the BeP (see section 7.1). This includes schools where you deem all pupils unable to access the assessment.

3.6 Modified assessment materials

Modified materials are available for pupils with visual impairments where adjustments to the standard resources would not be sufficient. Schools who require these materials can request them through the 'Resources' area of the BeP.

More information on modified materials is available in the RBA administration guide provided with assessment materials and is also available to download from the BeP.

¹⁰ <https://receptionbaseline.education.gov.uk>

4 Important dates for 2023

These dates may be subject to change.

Date	Action
Monday 15 May	Schools receive RBA confirmation form via email, requesting updated RBA contact details.
Friday 16 June	Deadline for all schools to complete RBA confirmation form.
Start of the autumn term	RBA contacts receive log-in details for the BeP. Schools can upload pupil data and administer assessments with pupils from the start of their autumn term.
Monday 18 September onwards	Narrative reports for pupils who have completed both assessment components are available for practitioners to download.
Tuesday 7 November	Deadline for headteachers to submit the headteacher's declaration form (HDF) on the BeP.

5 Responsibilities

5.1 Headteachers' responsibilities

All references to headteachers include acting headteachers or anyone with delegated authority in the absence of the headteacher.

Headteachers have a duty to ensure that:

- the requirements outlined in the ARA are implemented in their school
- teachers and other staff comply with the ARA
- the deadlines in the ARA are met
- the needs of all pupils are considered, and suitable arrangements are put in place to enable pupils to take part in the assessment, where possible (see section 7.1)
- parents are issued with a [privacy notice](#)¹¹ that explains how pupils' personal data is processed

Headteachers must:

- complete and submit the RBA confirmation form by Friday 16 June 2023
- ensure pupil data has been uploaded to the BeP for all reception pupils, including any who start reception later in the academic year
- work with practitioners to identify which pupils will take the RBA and whether there are any who the headteacher should disapply from the assessment
- discuss with practitioners whether any pupils will need modified versions of the assessment and, if so, place an order on the BeP
- keep all assessment materials secure and confidential
- ensure that those administering the assessment are familiar with the materials and follow the guidance in the RBA administration guide
- ensure that assessments are administered in the first six weeks of participating pupils starting reception
- work with practitioners to ensure that they have recorded an appropriate assessment status on the BeP for any pupils not participating in the assessment (see section 7.1)
- notify STA of any incident that may have affected the integrity, security, or confidentiality of the assessment
- complete and submit the RBA HDF on the BeP by Tuesday 7 November 2023

¹¹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/data-protection-and-privacy-privacy-notice

RBA Headteacher's declaration form

The HDF confirms that all assessments have been or will be administered according to guidance or that any issues have been or will be reported to the RBA helpline on 0330 088 4171, as stated in [Annex B](#)¹² (headteacher's responsibilities) of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework.

The HDF will be available from the start of the autumn term, and you must submit it by Tuesday 7 November 2023.

If you cannot complete the HDF, or have made errors in your submission, you should also notify the RBA helpline on 0330 088 4171.

5.2 Teachers' responsibilities

Teachers and other practitioners administering the RBA must comply with the provisions of this ARA, along with [Annex B](#)¹³ of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework, when carrying out assessment and reporting functions.

¹² www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2

¹³ www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2

6 Assessment administration

6.1 When to administer the assessment

Practitioners must complete the RBA for participating pupils in the first six weeks after they enter reception. Assessments must continue throughout the academic year for any pupils who join reception and have not already participated in the RBA.

6.2 Staff administering the assessment

The assessment must be administered on a one-to-one basis by a practitioner who is known to the pupil. This does not need to be the class teacher; it could also be a reception teaching assistant or suitably qualified practitioner, such as an early years lead or Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO).

Practitioners should familiarise themselves with the preview assessment, assessment training videos and administration guidance on the BeP ahead of administering the RBA to their pupils. Training can be completed individually, in groups, or across schools.

Each practitioner administering the assessment must have their own named BeP account. The school's Admin account must create these accounts and give them practitioner permissions. Practitioners can also be given admin permissions, if required.

6.3 Uploading pupil data

Schools can upload pupil data using the Admin or Headteacher logins. You can also create named user accounts with admin permissions to upload pupil data.

Schools must upload data to the BeP for all reception pupils at the start of the autumn term before carrying out any assessments. The 'system guide', available via the 'Help' button on the BeP, gives detailed instructions on how to do this.

Pupil data uploaded before the start of the academic year will be treated as part of the 2022/23 reception cohort. This data will be removed from the BeP before the start of the new academic year.

We recommend that schools use a [Common Transfer File \(CTF\)](#)¹⁴ to upload pupil data onto the BeP. Alternatively, you can download templates from BeP which you can

¹⁴ www.gov.uk/government/collections/common-transfer-file

populate with pupil data and then upload onto the BeP. The BeP will ask for pupils' personal details, including a Unique Pupil Number (UPN).

Schools should continue to upload pupil data for any pupils who start reception later in the academic year and have not already completed the assessment.

6.4 Data collection and reporting

Practitioners must record a pupil's answers on the BeP. While administering the assessment, the practitioner must select 'Yes' if the pupil answers correctly, or 'No' if the pupil answers the question incorrectly. The data will be submitted automatically but practitioners should make sure to press the 'End' button at the end of each assessment component.

Narrative statements on how pupils performed in the assessment, across both components, will be available for practitioners to download from the reporting section of the BeP from Monday 18 September 2023.

No numerical score will be shared, and the Department will only use the assessment data for the purposes of calculating the progress measure.

6.5 Security of assessment materials

Headteachers must continue to keep materials secure and ensure that confidentiality of assessment materials is maintained at all times so that no pupil has an advantage. Schools must not use assessment materials for any purpose other than administering the assessment.

Headteachers should ensure teachers and all other staff who may handle the materials understand the need to maintain the integrity, security and confidentiality of the assessment.

6.6 Administration guidance

Schools must administer the assessment in accordance with the administration guide. This is to ensure that assessments are delivered consistently and fairly.

The administration guide is available on the [BeP](#)¹⁵ in the 'Documents' section. To access this area, select your account name in the top right corner, then select 'Documents' from the drop-down menu.

The administration guide contains assessment-specific content and you must keep it securely.

If you have any questions about the administration guide, please contact the RBA helpline on 0330 088 4171.

6.7 IT guidance

Schools should check that their operating systems and internet browsers are compatible with the BeP and familiarise themselves with the online system guidance available in the 'Help' section.

Suitable operating systems include:

- Windows 10 and 11
- macOS 14+
- iOS 12.1+ (iOS 14+ preferred)
- Android 11+
- Chrome OS

It is strongly recommended that schools use the latest version of Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge to access the BeP. The latest versions of Safari and Firefox are, however, also suitable.

¹⁵ <https://receptionbaseline.education.gov.uk>

7 Assessment participation

7.1 Participating pupils

You must upload details for all eligible pupils in the reception cohort to the BeP.

Headteachers make the final decision about whether it is appropriate for a pupil to take the RBA. In exceptional circumstances, headteachers may decide that a pupil is unable to participate, even when making appropriate adaptations to resources, and should therefore be disapplied.

In these cases, a headteacher should:

- discuss the pupil's circumstances and needs with their parents and teachers
- consult, if appropriate, with the school's SENCO, an educational psychologist, medical professional, or other specialist staff to consider whether modified resources may make the assessment accessible

To disapply a pupil, the headteacher should login to the BeP using their headteacher account and select the 'Headteacher' area. You must do this before the assessment begins. The headteacher must confirm that the pupil cannot access either component of the assessment. Please see the 'system guide' for more detail on how to do this.

7.2 Pupils who change schools

If a pupil arrives at your school after completing both assessment components at another school, they do not need to be reassessed, nor does their data need to be uploaded to the BeP. However, if their data has been uploaded to your school in error you should change their overall status to be 'pupil uploaded in error/did not join the school'.

If a pupil leaves your school prior to completing the whole assessment, you should change that pupil's overall status to 'pupil has left the school without completing assessments'.

7.3 Delaying pupils

It may be appropriate for the headteacher to delay a pupil's assessment if they are unable to complete the assessment within six weeks of starting reception. For example, a pupil may not start school at the intended time due to deferred entry, or a long period of illness. To delay a pupil's assessment, the headteacher must login to the BeP using their headteacher account and select the 'Headteacher' area.

If you record a pupil as delayed before they complete the assessment, they will have an assessment status of 'delayed incomplete'. Pupils who have completed the assessment, after being marked as delayed, will have an assessment status of 'delayed complete'.

7.4 Assessment statuses

Schools must ensure all pupils have an assessment status on the BeP six weeks after entering reception. This includes pupils not participating in the assessment.

Schools will be able to assign one of the following statuses on the BeP:

- assessment complete
- delayed complete
- delayed incomplete
- disappled (unable to participate in the assessment)
- pupil has left the school without completing assessments
- pupil uploaded in error/did not join the school

If a pupil has been set to 'pupil uploaded in error/did not join the school', or 'pupil has left the school without completing assessments' by mistake, a headteacher can reset a pupil's status back to 'pupil enrolled at this school' by logging into the BeP using their Headteacher account and editing the pupil's details.

8 Quality monitoring

STA uses quality monitoring to ensure the assessment is being administered according to the guidance. Schools have a statutory responsibility to carry out the RBA and a quality monitoring visit, if selected, is part of this responsibility. We will contact schools if they are going to receive a quality monitoring visit and they must arrange a convenient date and time.

We use quality monitoring visits to ensure that practitioners have sufficient understanding of how to administer the assessment. Quality monitoring visits are not carried out by local authorities but by the National Foundation of Educational Research (NFER), on behalf of STA.

9 Maladministration

The term 'maladministration' refers to any act that:

- affects the integrity, security, or confidentiality of the RBA
- leads to an outcome that does not accurately reflect a pupil's independent achievement

Potential maladministration can arise from misunderstandings about how to administer the RBA. To help avoid this, practitioners should ensure they are familiar with the training materials and must administer the assessment in accordance with the guidance.

STA receives allegations of maladministration from various sources, including parents, school staff or external organisations, for example, Ofsted. We log all allegations of maladministration, and we will ask anyone reporting an allegation for as much detail as possible so cases can be investigated. We will process and retain all information collected in accordance with the [General Data Protection Regulation \(UK GDPR\)](#)¹⁶ and the [Data Protection Act \(DPA 2018\)](#)¹⁷ and the [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#)¹⁸.

If practitioners do not comply with the provisions of this ARA and other guidance, this could result in STA investigating the school for maladministration. Investigations of maladministration are reviewed and investigated in consultation with schools to support practices, provide clarification and ultimately check and ensure the validity of data.

¹⁶ www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2016/679/contents

¹⁷ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents

¹⁸ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/contents

10 Reporting to parents

Schools should inform parents that they will be administering the RBA with all participating reception pupils. Schools have access to model [privacy notices](#)¹⁹ they can use as a basis for their own. You should share privacy notices with parents at the beginning of the school year. There is no legal requirement for schools to report RBA narrative statements to parents, although it may be helpful to use them as the basis of any feedback to parents. However, schools must share a pupil's RBA narrative statements with the child's parents if they request them.

¹⁹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/data-protection-and-privacy-privacy-notices

11 Keeping and maintaining records

11.1 Pupils' educational records

Maintained schools and non-maintained special schools must ensure that educational records are maintained and disclosed to parents on request, as prescribed in the [Education \(Pupil Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2005](#)²⁰. Educational records include information about pupils (and former pupils):

- processed by, or on behalf of, the governing body or a teacher
- originating from, or supplied by, local authority employees
- originating from, or supplied by, teachers or other employees of the school

Information processed by a teacher solely for the teacher's own use is excluded from the definition of educational records.

Maintained schools and non-maintained special schools must also keep curricular records on every pupil. Curricular records form a 'subset' of a pupil's educational record. They are a formal record of a pupil's academic achievements, skills, abilities, and the progress they make at a school. You must update these records at least once every academic year.

Under the UK GDPR and the DPA 2018, schools are responsible for ensuring that the collation, retention, storage, and security of all personal information they produce, and hold, meets the provisions of the Act.

This includes:

- personal information appearing in a pupil's educational record
- any other information they hold that identifies individuals, including pupils, staff, and parents

Schools must consider the implications of the DPA, under which they are required to [register](#)²¹ as a data controller with the [Information Commissioner's Office \(ICO\)](#)²². Many schools consult their legal advisers for guidance on their responsibilities under the DPA

²⁰ www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2005/1437/made

²¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/480/contents/made

²² <https://ico.org.uk>

12 Legal requirements and responsibilities

12.1 How the arrangements apply to different types of schools

Maintained schools

This ARA applies to maintained schools, including maintained special schools, with pupils in a reception cohort.

Academies and free schools

This ARA applies to all academies and free schools with pupils in a reception cohort.

Ministry of Defence schools

This ARA applies to all MoD schools with pupils in a reception cohort. Overseas schools which are not MoD schools cannot participate in the RBA.

Maintained nursery schools

This ARA does not apply to maintained nursery schools, even if a nursery has pupils of reception age.

Independent schools

This ARA does not apply to independent schools or nurseries. Independent schools cannot opt into the RBA, even if the school has pupils of reception age.

Home-educated pupils

This ARA does not apply to pupils who are being educated at home.

12.2 Special educational provision

Schools should put in place the right support for pupils with special educational needs. Schools must also make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled pupils are not at a substantial disadvantage compared to their peers.

12.3 Regulatory concerns

If you have any regulatory concerns that have not been fully addressed by STA in line with the published procedures, you can raise them with the [Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation \(Ofqual\)](#)²⁶. Ofqual regulates qualifications, examinations and assessments in England.

²⁶ www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual

13 Further information

13.1 Useful website

Further RBA guidance is available at www.gov.uk/government/collections/reception-baseline²⁷.

13.2 General enquiries

For general enquiries about the administration of the RBA, please contact the RBA helpline on 0330 088 4171 or email receptionbaseline@nfer.ac.uk.

²⁷ www.gov.uk/government/collections/reception-baseline



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About this publication:

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Reference: STA/23/8669/e

ISBN: 978-1-78957-862-1