



Primary Assessment and Moderation Newsletter November 2025



This newsletter provides essential information regarding **assessment and moderation** in Buckinghamshire for 2025-26. The newsletter provides information on the following:

- [Statutory assessment plans for 2025/26](#)
- [DfE Published Guidance](#)
- [Key Dates for 2025/26](#)
- [Statutory Moderation Management Team](#)
- [KS2 Training Events](#)
- [Academy Moderation and Monitoring Process](#)
- [The National Curriculum and Assessment Portal](#)
- [Link to STA updates subscription page](#)

Statutory assessment plans for 2025/26

The STA have announced that the following statutory assessments will take place in 2025/26 following their usual timetable. This includes the:

- end KS2 assessments (including tests and teacher assessments)
- reception baseline assessment
- phonics screening check
- year 4 multiplication tables check

DfE published guidance

Primary assessments dates:

[Primary assessments: future dates - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Key stage 2 teacher assessment guidance 2026 - GOV.UK](#) and

KS1 assessments

Following the [2017 consultation on primary assessment](#), end of KS1 assessments are **no longer statutory**. This took effect from 1 September 2023.

The following KS1 assessments are now **optional**:

- teacher assessment judgements in English reading, English writing, mathematics and science
- tests in English reading and mathematics (the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test will also remain optional)
- where relevant, using the pre-key stage standards or engagement model

There is no legal requirement for schools or local authorities to report KS1 teacher assessment data. There is also no requirement to report results from end of KS1 assessments to parents. As with other years in which there are no statutory assessments, there will still be a requirement for headteachers to provide an annual report to parents or carers about a pupil's general progress in year 2.

Schools who wish to administer the optional KS1 tests, should access the following:

[2026 optional key stage 1 tests guidance - GOV.UK](#)

[2026 optional key stage 1 tests access arrangements guidance - GOV.UK](#)

[Optional key stage 1 national curriculum tests: information for parents](#)

The reception baseline assessment (RBA) will replace the end of KS1 assessments as the baseline for cohort level primary progress measures. This will happen when the first cohort with a statutory RBA reaches the end of key stage 2 (KS2) in 2028.

The **phonics screening check is still statutory**. While there is no legal duty on local authorities to moderate KS1 teacher assessment, they are still required to monitor the phonics screening check.

Past papers

[Past papers](#) are available to use alongside, or help teachers prepare for, the optional tests. These include past KS1 standard and modified large print versions of the national curriculum tests, mark schemes and test administration instructions.

Past versions of the braille papers are available on request by contacting the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 or emailing modifiedtestshelpline@pia.co.uk.

Key Dates for 2025/2026

Key stage 1 – The phonics screen check is within the one-week period **Monday 8th June 2026**

Key stage 2 - The key stage 2 tests are timetabled from **Monday 11th May to Thursday 14th May 2026**.

Multiplication tables check - Schools must administer the multiplication tables check within the 2-week period from **Monday 1st June 2026**.

Introduction to the Statutory Moderation Management Team

Local authorities have a statutory duty to moderate the teacher assessment judgements each year for a minimum sample of 25% of schools in Key stage 2, for writing judgements only.

In 2025-26 the management of this process will be delivered by Buckinghamshire Council. It will be led and managed by our expert team: Lucy Kent (SIA and Moderation Manager) and Eleanor Wallace (Senior Leader, Naphill and Walters Ash School), supported by Katherine Wells (Local Authority officer with strategic responsibility for statutory assessment). Tracey Erasmus will provide Business Support for all assessment and moderation processes.

Training Events

Standardisation Training and Moderation Events - Dates for 2025/26

KS1 & KS2 Training Events

Standardisation Training and Moderation Events - Dates for 2025-2026

In order to support schools and teachers to feel confident and prepare adequately for statutory and non-statutory assessment in 2025-2026, Buckinghamshire Council will be offering a programme of training and support.

KS2 Writing Moderation – Writing with Confidence

Discover the latest insights from the 2025 KS2 writing moderation process and understand what they reveal about effective writing. Learn how to use these insights to drive pupil progress in your school!

Join our expert-led course which is designed to help Year 6 teachers and literacy leads deepen their understanding of the end of KS2 writing expectations; learning how to interpret recent outcomes, apply national standards confidently and elevate writing across your school.

KS2 Writing Moderation – Writing with Confidence <i>Cost – Free for maintained schools</i>	Date: Friday 03 rd October 2025 Time: 09:30am to 12:30pm Venue: County Hall, Walton Street, Aylesbury, HP20 1UA
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£30 – Academy schools FULLY BOOKED	Refreshments provided
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Statutory assessment and standardisation training for teachers NEW to Year 6

A full day training course for moderation and assessment at the end of Key Stage 2 for teachers new to Year 6 or returning to teaching Year 6. This one-day course aims to provide information for teachers who are unfamiliar with, or who have not previously administered, the end of Key Stage 2 statutory assessments. Training will explore national exemplification materials and prepare delegates to undertake teacher assessment and moderation activity with confidence. The course will also clarify national updates to assessment for 2025-26.

Course Leaders: Lucy Kent (Buckinghamshire Moderation Manager) and Eleanor Wallace (Senior Lead Moderator)

Statutory assessment and standardisation training for teachers NEW to Year 6 £130 per person	Date: Monday 17 th November 2025 Time: 9:30am to 3:30pm Venue: Weston Turville Golf Course, New Road, Weston Turville, Aylesbury, HP22 5QT Refreshments and lunch provided
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Statutory assessment and standardisation training for *EXPERIENCED* Year 6 teachers

We are offering half a day of standardisation and statutory assessment training **for experienced Year 6 teachers**.

This **half-day course** aims to provide information and assessment updates **for teachers who are already experienced in the assessment cycle for the end of Key Stage 2**. The course includes standardisation training for writing and will refresh teachers' knowledge and understanding of standards at the end of the key stage. Delegates will revise the principles of assessment and moderation, expressed within national documents, with opportunities to discuss and apply understanding.

As part of a broad revision of statutory assessment, the course will also address key points for administering test and clarify national updates for 2025-2026.

Course objectives:

- Revise the principles and practice of statutory assessment for Key Stage 2
- Deepen understanding of the 'pupil-can' statements for writing through standardisation and reference to national materials
- Support accuracy in applying knowledge of the standards for teacher assessment of writing
- Revise principles for the administration of tests
- Explain updates for statutory assessment in 2025-2026
- Encourage reflection upon curriculum and pedagogy to support achievement at the of Key Stage 2.

Course Leaders: Lucy Kent (Buckinghamshire Moderation Manager) and Eleanor Wallace (Senior Lead Moderator)

Statutory assessment and standardisation training for <i>EXPERIENCED</i> Year 6 teachers £80 per person	Date: Tuesday 20 th January 2026 Time: 09:30am to 12:30pm Venue: The Rugby Club, Brook End, Ostler's Field, Weston Turville, Aylesbury, HP22 5RN Refreshments provided
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Securing Judgement – Standardisation and Moderation Session for *Year 6* teachers

This half-day event will bring together Year 6 teachers from across Buckinghamshire. It will allow teachers to discuss their judgements for writing with colleagues beyond their own school and support a standardised application of national frameworks. This session offers an excellent opportunity to work with colleagues from diverse school contexts, including LA external moderators, and provides the basis for high level discussion about pupils' writing and assessment.

Participants will be asked to provide a full sample of writing evidence for 3 pupils who they judge to represent the range of achievement in their class. This should relate to the current school year. To discuss statutory principles such as 'independence' it is important to understand the sequence of teaching underpinning written pieces used for assessment. 'Final copies' alone do not support this discussion. Teachers will also be asked to bring their

own copies of national exemplification portfolios and the Teacher Assessment Framework for the end of KS2.

Pupil evidence could include:

- Current writing evidence from English lessons
- Relevant work from across the curriculum where pupils have had the opportunity to apply and deepen writing knowledge, skills and understanding
- Teachers' records or notes of attainment
- Reviews, journals, self-assessments, or reflections on learning
- Any other existing evidence (e.g., photographs, record-sheets, progress tracking records)

Participants will have the chance to present their evidence, hear from other teachers, work with trained moderators, discuss their findings and consider implications for planning and pedagogy.

Course Leaders: Lucy Kent (Buckinghamshire Moderation Manager) and Eleanor Wallace (Senior Lead Moderator)

KS2 Securing Judgements Sessions £80 per person per session	Date: Tuesday 17 th March 2026 Time: 09:30am to 12:30pm <u>or</u> 1pm to 4pm Venue: The Rugby Club, Brook End, Ostler's Field, Weston Turville, Aylesbury, HP22 5RN Refreshments provided <u>OR</u>
KS2 Securing Judgements Sessions £80 per person per session	Date: Friday 17 th April 2026 Time: 09:30am to 12:30pm <u>or</u> 1pm to 4pm Venue: Adams Park, Hillbottom Road, High Wycombe, HP12 4HJ Refreshments provided

Administering the Phonics Screening Check for Year 1 and 2 teachers

We are offering this short course for teachers of Year 1 and Year 2, preparing to administer the Phonics Screening Check.

Course objectives include:

- Understand the content and expectations of the Phonic Screening Check
- Know how to plan for and administer the check according to guidance
- Know how to submit your school's check results

This course will support teachers in year 1 and year 2 to understand the administrative requirements of the Phonics Screening Check. All teachers administering the check are required to have undertaken appropriate training to ensure a consistent and accurate approach in line with guidance from DfE. For those administering the check for the first time, this course will ensure the requisite training.

This course offers opportunities for delegates to have their questions answered. A hardcopy of the guidance will be sent to all supported schools, prior to the training, to follow and keep for further reference.

Course Leader: Lucy Kent (Buckinghamshire Moderation Manager)

Administering the Phonics Screening Check for Year 2 teachers £30	Date: Thursday 12 th March 2026 Time: 3:30pm to 4:30pm Venue: Online – Teams
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KS2 Writing Standardisation Training for headteachers and senior leaders (KS2/KS3)

We are offering a half day writing standardisation training course for primary headteachers and senior leaders focusing on end of KS2 writing attainment. This is also suitable for KS3 English leads. This half day course aims to support headteachers and senior leaders wishing to refresh, review and deepen their knowledge of the end of Key Stage 2 Teacher Assessment Framework.

We will review the 'pupil-can' statements for writing and the interpretation of these as clarified through STA moderator training. Using national exemplification materials, we will explore the three standards for writing and seek to explain how accurate judgements can be made.

This course will provide invaluable guidance for headteachers and senior leaders supporting Year 6 teachers to make accurate teacher assessment judgements for writing at the end of Key Stage 2. It will also provide an invaluable insight for KS3 English leaders to understand the process and standards for writing that pupils attain at the end of KS2 as they transition into KS3.

Course objectives:

- Secure understanding of the Teacher Assessment Framework (TAF) for KS2
- Explore and exemplify national standards for writing
- Provide guidance to support staff to make accurate judgements for writing.

Course Leaders: Lucy Kent (Buckinghamshire Moderation Manager) and Eleanor Wallace (Senior Lead Moderator)

KS2 Writing Standardisation Training for headteachers and senior leaders (KS2/KS3) £80 per person	Date: Tuesday 10 th February 2026 Time: 09:30am to 12:30pm Venue: The Gateway, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury, HP19 8FF Refreshments provided
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Assessment Briefings

The Assessment Briefing provides Headteachers and Assessment Leads with information on primary statutory assessment and accountability for 2025-2026.

Headteacher and Assessment Lead Briefings – for all Schools	Date – Friday 01 st May 2026 Time – 9:30am to 12:30pm Location – Online via Teams Lead – Sarah Sewell and Lucy Kent Cost – FREE
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All the above training events should be booked by clicking on the link below -

<https://bookwhen.com/moderation>

If you have any queries relating to the courses, please contact Tracey Erasmus at sis@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Academy Moderation and Monitoring Process

Academies will need to have a written agreement for the external moderation of teacher assessment in place with a chosen local authority. These academies must report this to STA on the NCA (National Curriculum Assessment portal)

Academies must have a written agreement in place and notify STA on the NCA if they have chosen a non-geographic local authority, by **Friday 9 January 2026**. Participating independent schools must have a written agreement in place and confirm which local authority they have selected on the PAG by **Friday 5 December 2025**.

Buckinghamshire Council will provide statutory monitoring and moderation services to Buckinghamshire academies with primary pupils in 2025/26. **The Buckinghamshire Council Primary Assessment Team will write to the Headteachers of all academies with primary pupils with an agreements survey, nearer to the time.**

The National Curriculum Assessment portal

The Primary Assessment Gateway has been replaced by the [National Curriculum Assessments Portal \(NCA Portal\)](#), developed by Pearson.

Managing accounts

The NCA Portal uses multi-factor authentication (MFA) to help protect pupil data and ensure secure access. On the first sign in of each day, users will need to enter a unique 6-digit verification code, which will be sent to their registered email address.

For full instructions and support on how to access the system and manage user accounts, please refer to the guidance on [how to access the NCA Portal](#).

New NCA Portal activities

In addition to existing activities, users will now be able to complete new tasks within the NCA Portal.

Schools will now be able to:

- complete attendance registers alongside notification of aid for KS2 tests online
- order electronic modified large print (MLP) papers
- report maladministration for KS2 tests
- submit, view and update helpdesk requests related to own cases

Link to STA updates subscription page

The Department for Education sends regular updates for information regarding statutory assessment and moderation throughout the term time. Schools and stakeholders are advised to sign-up for this regular update as essential information is published here first.

To ensure you receive weekly updates from STA directly to your inbox, [register here](#).

If you have any further questions regarding statutory assessments, please contact Tracey Erasmus sis@buckinghamshire.gov.uk. Tracey will be able to direct your enquiry to the best person for a response.