

Reception On-Entry Assessment

16 tasks • 15 minutes per child, plus what you already notice • first four weeks of Autumn 1

Sixteen short, practical activities to help you identify each child's starting point in **maths, literacy, early writing, learning behaviours and self-care**. Twelve activities are completed with the child at a table, while the final four are simply observed during their first three weeks in school. Everything you need is already available in the classroom.

This is our own baseline assessment to support planning. It does not replace the statutory Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). Please complete the RBA first, on a different day.

How to administer-

- Sit with the child somewhere they feel happy and comfortable. Keep it feeling like a fun game rather than a test.
- You don't need to do it all in one go. Spread it over two or three short sessions and stop if they've had enough. You can always come back to it another day.
- When you see words in quotation marks, read them exactly as they are written. You can repeat them once, but try not to reword the question or give them any clues.
- Give them a good **five seconds** to think before you help. It can feel like a long time, but children often just need a little extra thinking time.
- Jot down what the child **actually says and does**, rather than just ticking whether they got it right. When you look back in November, these little notes will tell you much more than a score.

Scoring

	Label	What it means
0	Not yet	Not yet, even with your support. This tells you what to teach.
1	Emerging	Partly, inconsistently, or with a prompt.
2	Secure	Independently, first time.
-	Not assessed	Refused or absent. Try again within the four weeks.

Maximum score 32.

Total /32	Starting point	What to do
0-10	Well below what we'd expect	Talk to the SENCO within three weeks. Ask for pre-school and health visitor records. Start support now, not after half term.
11-20	Below	Daily small-group support in whichever strand is weakest. Review at the end of Autumn 1.
21-27	About where we'd expect	Quality first teaching, with targeted help on anything scored 0.
28-32	Above	Plan challenge and depth from week five.

Look at the maths and literacy scores separately before you look at the total - the two profiles need very different responses. Review every child eligible for the Early Years Pupil Premium individually, whatever their total.

How this links to our Key Foundational Skills and Knowledge

Every task is a deliberate precursor of one of the KFSK end points children are working towards by the end of Reception. The tracker tells you where they need to get to; this tells you where they are starting from. The numbers

below are used throughout - each task in the assessment tables and on the record sheet is tagged (KFSK 1), (KFSK 10) and so on, in the same order as the columns on the tracker.

	KFSK end point (from the tracker)	Tasks that show the starting point	Note
1	Compose a simple sentence orally	L1 L2 L3	L3 gives you the child's actual spoken sentence - keep the script, it is the baseline for oral composition
2	Long-ladder letters (l, i, t, u, j, y)	P1 L5	The straight path on the tracking sheet, plus letter-sound knowledge
3	One-armed robot letters (r, b, n, h, m, k, p)	P1	Needs controlled straight lines with a change of direction
4	Curly-caterpillar letters (c, a, o, d, g, q, e, s, f)	P1 L5	The curly path - anti-clockwise control comes before these letters
5	Zig-zag letters (v, w, x, z)	P1	The zig-zag path
6	Hold a pencil correctly (tripod grip)	P1	Record the grip you actually see, and which hand
7	Form numerals (0-9) correctly	M2 P1	Numeral recognition and pencil control both have to be in place first
8	Use a pair of scissors correctly	P2	Check whether the helper hand holds and turns the paper
9	Spell HTRS / common exception words correctly	L4 L5	Oral blending and grapheme knowledge are the precursors - not spelling itself
10	Recall number bonds to 10	M1 M3 M4 M5	Subitising, comparing and partitioning within 5 come before bonds to 10

S1-S4 do not map to a single end point. They underpin all ten - a child who cannot yet sit, attend or manage themselves will not access the teaching that gets them there, which is why they are scored rather than just noted.

S1-S4 need no adult-led task and no resources. Fill them in from what you and the key person already notice in the first three weeks - how children arrive, sit, share and manage themselves tells you as much about their starting point as any table task does.

The 16 tasks

Read the words in quotation marks exactly as written. Repeat once if you need to. Don't model the answer first.

Maths • M1-M5

Task	You need	What to do and say	0 Not yet	1 Emerging	2 Secure
M1 How many? (KFSK 10)	Dot cards 1-5; 12 bears and a bowl	Show a dot card for two seconds, then hide it. "How many dots? Don't count - just tell me." Use 2, 3, 5. Then: "Can you put six bears in the bowl for me?"	Cannot say how many; no one-to-one counting	Sees 1-3 without counting; counts to 5 accurately	Sees up to 5 without counting; gives 6 bears correctly
M2 Numerals 0-10 (KFSK 7)	Numeral cards 0-10	Turn the cards over one at a time. "Tell me the number you can see." Don't correct - just record what they say.	None, or one or two	Recognises numerals to 5	Recognises 0-10
M3 Which has more? (KFSK 10)	Two plates, six counters	Three counters on one plate, six on the other. "Which plate has more? How do you know?"	Guesses; no explanation	Picks the right plate	Picks it and explains, by counting or comparing
M4 Hiding game (within 5) (KFSK 10)	5 ducks or bears, a cloth	"Here are five ducks. Watch - two swim under the bridge." Cover two. "How many can you still see? How many are hiding?" Repeat with 4 (hide 1) and 5 (hide 3).	Guesses, or lifts the cloth every time	Correct when everything is visible	Correct on two hidden-part questions without looking
M5 Patterns (KFSK 10)	Cubes or bears in two colours	Build red, blue, red, blue, red, blue. "What comes next? Can you carry it on?" Then: "Now make a pattern of your own."	Places pieces randomly	Continues the pattern with a prompt	Continues it independently and makes their own

Literacy and language • L1-L5

Task	You need	What to do and say	0 Not yet	1 Emerging	2 Secure
L1 Naming pictures (KFSK 1)	10 picture cards: cup, dog, shoe, spoon, ladder, key, elbow, envelope, wheelbarrow, telescope	One card at a time. "What is this?" Home-language answers count - note them down.	Names 3 or fewer	Names 4-7	Names 8 or more
L2 Following instructions (KFSK 1)	Brick, cup, teddy, pencil, tray	Keep your hands still and don't look at the objects. One step: "Put the brick in the cup." Two steps: "Give the pencil to teddy, then put the cup on the tray." Three steps: "Put the brick under the chair, give me the pencil, and clap your hands."	Needs the one-step instruction repeated or gestured	Manages one and two steps	Manages three steps in order, first time
L3 Talking about a picture (KFSK 1)	One busy scene picture	"Tell me what is happening in this picture." Wait. Prompt once: "Tell me some more." Write down what they say word for word.	Single words or pointing	Two- to four-word phrases	A full sentence of six or more words
L4 Rhyme and robot talk (KFSK 9)	Nothing - spoken only	Rhyme: "Which rhymes with cat - hat or dog?" Then pin (bin/cup) and bed (red/sock). Blending: "I'm talking like a robot. What's my word?" c-a-t, p-i-g, sh-o-p, l-e-g. Pure sounds - "c" not "cuh".	Neither; may just repeat the sounds back	Hears rhyme, or blends with support	Blends at least three words independently
L5 Sounds and name writing (KFSK 9, 2-5)	Grapheme cards s a t p i n m d; paper and pencil	"What sound does this letter make?" (sound, not letter name) Then: "Can you write your name for me?"	No sounds; scribble with no letter shapes	1-4 sounds; some letter shapes or the first letter of their name	5 or more sounds; writes their first name recognisably

Pencil and scissors • P1-P2

Task	You need	What to do and say	0 Not yet	1 Emerging	2 Secure
P1 Pencil grip (KFSK 6, 7, 2-5)	Pencil; sheet with a straight, a curly and a zig-zag path	"Here's a road. Can you drive along it without crashing?" Don't correct the grip - record what you see, and note which hand.	Fisted grip; marks don't follow the path	Four-finger grip; follows the straight path	Tripod grip; follows all three paths
P2 Scissors (KFSK 8)	Child scissors (left-handed available); card with a bold 10cm line	"Can you make some snips along the edge?" Then: "Now cut all the way along this line."	Cannot open and close the blades	Snips the edge	Cuts the whole line, holding the paper with the other hand

Learning behaviours and self-care • S1-S4 (observation only - no adult-led task)

Task	You need	What to watch for	0 Not yet	1 Emerging	2 Secure
S1 Settling and transitions (underpins all)	Watch at drop-off and between activities	How do they separate at the door? How long does any upset last? How do they cope moving between activities, rooms and the hall?	Upset every day; needs an adult beside them at every change	Settles within a few minutes; needs a reminder or an adult at transitions	Separates comfortably and moves with the group
S2 Sitting and attending (underpins all)	Watch during a five-minute carpet session	How long do they stay sitting and attending? Do they look up and respond when you say their name?	Cannot stay in the group; leaves repeatedly	Sits for two or three minutes, or with an adult close by	Sits and attends for the whole session and responds to their name
S3 Turn taking and play (underpins all)	Watch during continuous provision	Do they play alone, alongside others, or with others? Can they wait for a turn? What happens when another child takes something they were using?	Plays alone only; every disagreement needs an adult to sort out	Plays alongside others; takes turns with adult support	Plays with others, takes turns and starts to sort out small disagreements
S4 Managing themselves (underpins all)	Watch across the day	Toilet and hand washing. Coat and shoes. Knife and fork, and opening lunch packaging. Record it factually and kindly. Any toileting worry needs an early, warm conversation with the family - never make it the child's problem.	Not yet toilet trained, or needs full help with everything	Manages some of it; needs help with fastenings, cutlery or toilet reminders	Toilet independent, washes hands, dresses with little help and uses cutlery

Class overview

Enter 0, 1 or 2. If a third of the class scores 0 on the same task, that's a whole-class teaching priority, not an intervention group.

[illegible]

[illegible]

Record sheet

Child		Term of birth	Aut / Spr / Sum
Dates assessed		EYPP / SEND / EAL	

	Task	Score	What the child said or did
M1	How many? (KFSK 10)		
M2	Numerals 0-10 (KFSK 7)		
M3	Which has more? (KFSK 10)		
M4	Hiding game (within 5) (KFSK 10)		
M5	Patterns (KFSK 10)		
L1	Naming pictures (KFSK 1)		
L2	Following instructions (KFSK 1)		
L3	Talking about a picture (KFSK 1)		
L4	Rhyme and robot talk (KFSK 9)		
L5	Sounds and name writing (KFSK 9, 2-5)		
P1	Pencil grip (KFSK 6, 7, 2-5)		
P2	Scissors (KFSK 8)		
S1	Settling and transitions (underpins all)		
S2	Sitting and attending (underpins all)		
S3	Turn taking and play (underpins all)		
S4	Managing themselves (underpins all)		
Total	Maths ___/10 Literacy ___/10 Pencil ___/4 Behaviours ___/8		Total _____/32

Strengths to build on

Three priorities for this half term

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Shared with parents on _____ Signed _____

What to do next

If you see...	Then...
0 or 1 on M1 or M4	Number sense isn't there yet, even if they can count by rote. Daily subitising routines and practical counting with real objects - Mastering Number style - before any recording.
0 or 1 on M2 but secure on M1	They understand quantity but not the symbol. Numerals everywhere in provision, matching numerals to amounts. Hold off formal numeral formation until P1 is stronger.
0 or 1 on L1 and L3	Language is the priority above everything else. Screen for NELI now. Vocabulary of the week, story time three times a day, real back-and-forth conversations logged by the key person.
0 or 1 on L4 and L5	Not phonics-ready yet. Little Wandle Foundations for Phonics daily - rhythm, rhyme, oral blending - alongside Phase 2. Keep-up support from day one.
0 or 1 on P1 and P2	Physical readiness, not attitude, is what's holding writing back. Dough Disco, Squiggle Whilst You Wiggle, funky fingers, big mark making at the easel. Don't start formal letter formation until they can copy a cross.
Four or more 0s	Talk to the SENCO within three weeks. Gather the two-year-old check and pre-school records, start assess-plan-do-review, and bring parents in from the start.
0 or 1 on S2 or S3	Attention and turn-taking have to be taught, not waited for. Jigsaw units, a visual timetable, short attention games that get gradually longer, and a staggered start to carpet sessions if they need it.
0 on S4 (toileting)	A practical barrier to learning and a wellbeing issue. Early, warm conversation with the family, agree a shared approach, and signpost to the health visiting team or the local family hub.
28+ overall	Plan depth rather than acceleration - richer vocabulary, longer sentences, partitioning beyond 5, open-ended challenges in provision.

For the whole cohort

- Work out what percentage of the class scored 0 on each task. Anything a third of them can't do is a whole-class priority for Autumn 1.
- Compare EYPP and non-EYPP averages now, so the gap in July means something.
- Check summer-born against autumn-born before drawing conclusions about any individual child.
- Send a short cohort summary to feeder pre-schools - it improves next year's intake and it's exactly the school-to-setting partnership the DfE early years strategy is asking for.

What you need

One box per class, for M1-P2. S1-S4 need nothing at all. Check the box is complete before you start.

- Dot cards 1-5 • numeral cards 0-10 • 12 bears and a bowl
- 5 ducks or bears and a cloth • cubes in two colours • two plates and six counters
- 10 picture cards • a brick, cup, teddy, pencil and tray • one busy scene picture
- Grapheme cards s a t p i n m d • paper and pencils
- Tracking sheet with straight, curly and zig-zag paths • scissors (including left-handed) and card strips