



Standards
& Testing
Agency

Multiplication tables check

Trial administration guidance

February 2018

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1. Introduction

This guidance is for schools participating in the trial of the multiplication tables check (MTC) during the week beginning 26 February 2018. It includes information to help school staff:

- understand the requirements of the trial
- plan for the trial
- access the MTC system
- administer the check
- provide feedback on the MTC digital service and check administration

1.1 Background

In January 2016, the government announced its intention to introduce a multiplication tables check during key stage 2. The check is intended to identify children who have not yet mastered this important mathematical skill so schools can give them additional support.

The [primary assessment consultation](#)¹ invited views on how and when the check should be administered. The preferred option was that the check should be taken at the end of year 4, and that it should not be burdensome on schools, both in terms of the time taken to administer the check, and the requirements for reporting data.

The check will therefore be administered to pupils at the end of year 4, and has been designed to place minimal burden on teachers and pupils. It will become statutory in the 2019 to 2020 academic year.

1.2 Overview of the trial

Schools will administer the on-screen check to assess pupils' ability to fluently recall their multiplication tables up to 12x12 through a set of timed questions. Pupils will answer 3 warm-up questions before the check begins.

During this trial of the system, the check will consist of 25 questions. Pupils will have 5 seconds to answer each question. This may change after the 3 trials in 2018 and before national voluntary rollout in June 2019.

¹ www.gov.uk/government/consultations/primary-assessment-in-england

The purpose of this trial is to help us understand how the check can be administered with minimal burden on schools, and use this information to improve the MTC system. We will do this by:

- gathering and acting on feedback from schools on how the prototype system and this draft administration guidance can be improved
- using the data gathered on schools' ICT and internet connectivity to make improvements to the service
- checking the system meets schools' needs and seeking feedback on areas for improvement
- evaluating the system content and the helpdesk calls raised to ensure that the check and administration application is intuitive and easy to use

Pupils' results will not be returned or reported during the trial.

1.3 Summary of requirements for schools

As part of the February trial, you will need to:

- select year 4 pupils to take the check
- generate a school password and pupil personal identification numbers (PINs)
- administer the check to pupils
- provide feedback on the trial

1.4 Help and support

If you have any queries regarding the MTC, including this trial, you should contact the MTC helpline on 0345 278 8080.

2. Preparing for the check

2.1 Preparing rooms

Schools should administer the check in a room that is quiet and provides a comfortable, well-lit space. You should consider how many pupils will take the check at the same time. You may consider administering the check to a whole class, small groups or individuals, depending on the equipment and check administrators you have available. Pupils who have taken the check do not need to be kept separate from pupils who haven't yet taken it, but they should not discuss its content.

To prepare rooms for administration, you should:

- remove or cover any displays or materials that could help pupils
- ensure seating arrangements will allow all pupils to work quietly and independently
- ensure pupils will not be distracted by other pupils or their equipment
- ensure equipment is charged, turned on, in good working order and logged into the MTC website before pupils are admitted to the room

2.2 Check administrators

The check should be administered by a member of school staff, such as a teacher or teaching assistant, who is familiar with this guidance. They should also be able to support pupils taking the check and provide feedback on the process.

Administrators will need to generate pupil PINs on the day pupils will take the check (see section 2.6). The administrator will either need access to [NCA tools](https://ncatools.education.gov.uk)² to access the administration area of MTC (see section 2.4), or a member of staff with access to NCA tools should print the PINs for the administrator.

2.3 Equipment required

Schools can use any of the following devices to access the check:

- PC
- Mac
- laptop
- tablet

² <https://ncatools.education.gov.uk>

On these devices ensure that:

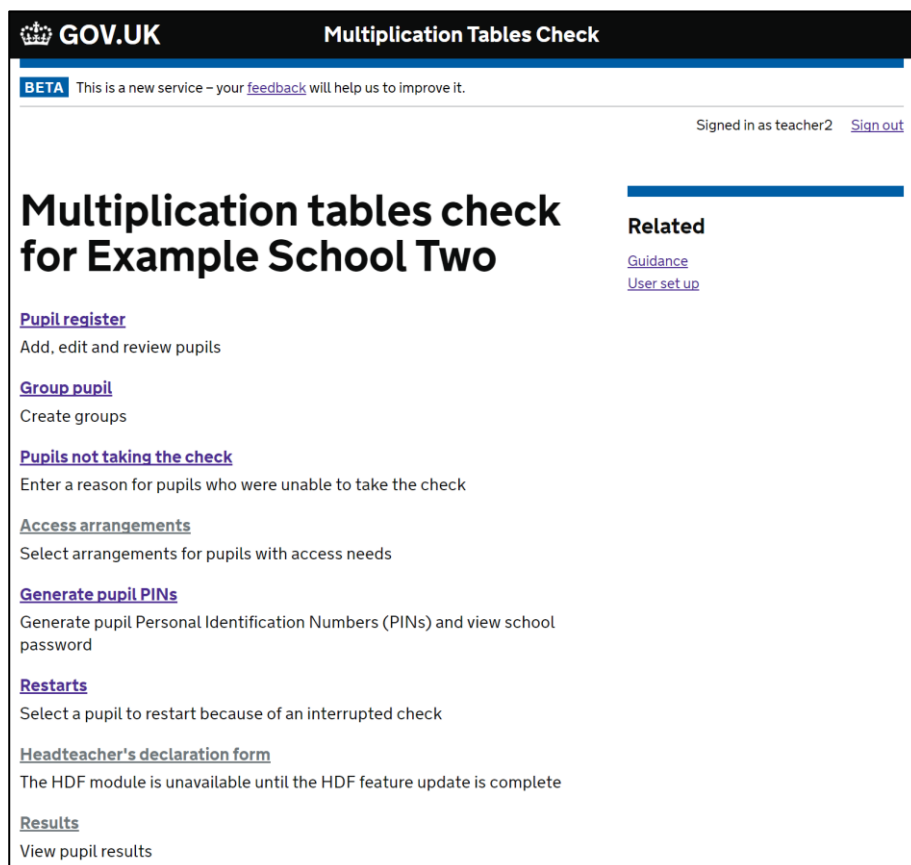
- an internet browser is installed and up to date (for Internet Explorer, use IE10 or later)
- only one tab is open
- the browser is not in private browsing mode
- cookies are enabled
- all other programmes have been closed

2.4 Accessing the system

Schools will access the MTC system via NCA tools. Sign in to NCA tools and select the 'Multiplication tables check' section.

The screenshot shows the NCA tools website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: Home, Test orders, Access arrangements, Pupil registration, Teacher assessment, Pupil results, Test materials, Headteacher's declaration forms, and Multiplication tables check (which is circled in orange). Below the navigation bar, there is a news section with the text: "News : Access arrangements opens Monday 30 January". Below the news section, there is a login section with the text: "Signed in as Mr Test Account of Pelham Primary School (3032012). Your Account. Sign out." Below the login section, there is a section titled "Multiplication tables check" with a sub-section "Launch Multiplication tables check site". The main content area contains the following text: "Schools can use this section to administer the multiplication tables check trial. The trial check will take place during the week beginning 26 June 2017. Only schools that have agreed to take part in the trial need to administer the check." Below this text, there is a section titled "Allow pop-ups" with the following text: "The multiplication tables check page will load in a new browser window. Depending on your web browser's pop-up blocker settings, this page might not appear by default. If the multiplication tables check window has been blocked, your web browser will give you the appropriate indication or warning. Google Chrome will display an image of a window with a cross through it, on the right hand side of the address bar: [Image of a window with a cross through it] Clicking this image will give you the option to allow the pop-up browser window, giving you access to the multiplication tables check section. Firefox will display a yellow banner beneath the address bar: [Image of a yellow banner that says 'Firefox prevented this site from opening a pop-up window.']" On the right side of the main content area, there is a sidebar with two sections: "Welcome Test" with a link "Change your password" and "Guidance and support" with links "Guidance on using the NCA tools website" and "Terms and Conditions".

The MTC home page will look like this:



The text on some screens may change before the trial, based on feedback from an ongoing usability study.

2.5 Registering pupils for the trial

In this trial, schools should administer the check to pupils from year 4. No pupil data will be stored in the prototype system so the pupil register will be pre-populated with 60 numbered pupils (Pupil 1, Pupil 2, Pupil 3). You do not need to use all pupil records in the system. To administer the check to more than 60 pupils, call the helpdesk for advice about adding more records.

Accessibility is an important factor in the development of the MTC. However, we aren't ready yet to test access arrangements for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Therefore, we would advise you not to include any pupils that may need additional support in this trial.

If you would like to volunteer to participate in future user research about how access arrangements may be incorporated email mtc.sta@education.gov.uk.

2.6 Generating pupil PINs

Pupils will log in to the check using a unique PIN. A member of the school staff with access to NCA tools will need to generate the pupil PINs. Click 'Generate pupil PINs' on the MTC home page. Select pupil records for the number of pupils who will take the check that day and click 'Confirm'.

School 5, Pupil 07	<input type="checkbox"/>
School 5, Pupil 08	<input type="checkbox"/>
School 5, Pupil 09	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
School 5, Pupil 10	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
School 5, Pupil 11	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
School 5, Pupil 12	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Pupil(s) selected: 4


Confirm Cancel

This will generate the school password and a unique PIN for each pupil selected. They are valid until 4pm on the day they are generated.

Generate pupil PINs

Pupil PINs and school password generated
Valid only until 4pm, Tuesday 13 February

Please distribute pupil Personal Identification Numbers (PINs) and school password to your pupils.







 [Print pupil PINs and school password](#)

Generate more PINs

Example School Four's password for the day:
gig26wit


Pupil	Pupil PIN
School 5, Pupil 01	5824
School 5, Pupil 02	7766
School 5, Pupil 03	7556
School 5, Pupil 04	3635

To print a list, click 'Print pupil PINs and school password'. This is an example of the print-out:

Multiplication Table Check	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please cut out and distribute to pupils The school passwords and pupil PINs will expire 4pm on Tuesday 13 February New PINs will need to be generated if not used by 4pm on Tuesday 13 February 	
Pupil 01 School 5 School Password: gig26wit Pupil PIN: 5824  https://pupil-as-uat-mtc.azurewebsites.net	Pupil 02 School 5 School Password: gig26wit Pupil PIN: 7766  https://pupil-as-uat-mtc.azurewebsites.net
Pupil 03 School 5 School Password: gig26wit Pupil PIN: 7556  https://pupil-as-uat-mtc.azurewebsites.net	Pupil 04 School 5 School Password: gig26wit Pupil PIN: 3635  https://pupil-as-uat-mtc.azurewebsites.net
Pupil 05 School 5 School Password: gig26wit Pupil PIN: 8773  https://pupil-as-uat-mtc.azurewebsites.net	Pupil 06 School 5 School Password: gig26wit Pupil PIN: 9937  https://pupil-as-uat-mtc.azurewebsites.net

2.7 Pupil register

You can monitor progress of the administration of the check for your school on the 'Pupil register' page. The 'Status' column shows whether they have a PIN generated, have not yet started the check, have completed the check or whether their check is 'In progress'. This column will update automatically.



Multiplication Tables Check

BETA This is a trial service – please leave feedback to help improve it

[Home](#) > [Pupil register](#)

Signed in as John Smith [Sign out](#)

Pupil register

During the trial pupils will take the check anonymously. Below is a list of 60 pre-populated pupil records. If your school requires additional pupil records please contact the helpline.

Multiplication tables check helpline
0345 278 8080

Related

[Guidance](#)
[Pupils not taking the check](#)

Pupil ▼	Group ▼	Status ▼
Pupil 1	Group 1	Completed
Pupil 2	Group 1	Not started
Pupil 3	Group 1	PIN generated
Pupil 4	Group 1	In progress
Pupil 5	Group 1	In progress
Pupil 6	Group 1	Restart
Pupil 7	Group 1	Not taking the check

3. Administering the check

Headteachers should agree their own schedule for trialling the check with school staff. It can be administered on any day(s) during the week beginning 26 February 2018 and can be administered to individuals, small groups, or a whole class.

To administer the check, open an internet browser and go to the [MTC website](http://multiplication-tables-check-trial.service.gov.uk)³.

3.1 Instructions to pupils

Pupils must only complete the check once. Each pupil will need the school password and their unique pupil PIN to take the check. You should introduce the check as consistently as possible, bearing in mind some pupils may require more explanation to understand the instructions.

The following text provides an example of how you could introduce the check.

We are helping the Standards and Testing Agency to develop the multiplication tables check by trialling the system. In this activity, you are going to be asked 25 multiplication tables questions on screen.

You will be testing the website to make sure it works properly. You won't get a result, because the system is not keeping score in this trial.

First, there are 3 practice questions. Have a go at these to get used to the system.

You can use these to practise putting in your answers into the answer box.

(For pupils using a PC/Mac/laptop) You can use the number pad on your keyboard, or you can click the numbers on the screen using a mouse, or if you are using a touchscreen, by pressing the numbers on the screen.

(For pupils using a tablet) Put in your answer using the numbers on the touchscreen.

When the check starts, you will have 5 seconds to answer each question. The system will automatically accept your answer after 5 seconds.

You don't need to press the 'Enter' button if you don't want to, but you can bring up the next question sooner by pressing or clicking 'Enter'. If you don't press the

³ <http://multiplication-tables-check-trial.service.gov.uk>

'Enter' button, after 5 seconds the check will move to the next question. The system will save whatever answer you have written in the answer box.

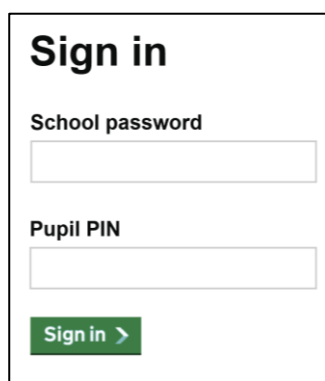
There will be a short pause between each question.

You cannot pause or stop the check once you have started and you cannot go back even if you have missed answering a question.

Does anybody have any questions before we begin?

You can now enter your details to sign in.

The first screen pupils will see requires the school password and their pupil PIN:



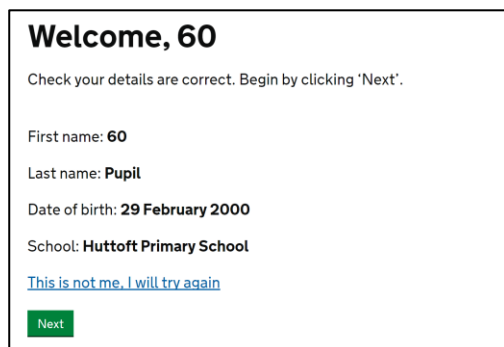
The 'Sign in' screen features a title 'Sign in' at the top. Below it are two input fields: 'School password' and 'Pupil PIN'. At the bottom is a green button labeled 'Sign in >'.

If a pupil makes an error when entering their PIN, they will see the following page:



This screen is identical to the previous one but includes an error message. A red vertical line is to the left of the 'Pupil PIN' label. Below the label, the text 'Please enter a valid PIN' is displayed in red. The 'Pupil PIN' input field is outlined in red. The 'Sign in >' button remains green.

If this occurs, check they have the correct PIN. When the pupil has entered their PIN correctly, they will see the welcome screen:



The 'Welcome' screen has the title 'Welcome, 60'. Below it is the instruction 'Check your details are correct. Begin by clicking 'Next''. The user's details are listed: 'First name: 60', 'Last name: Pupil', 'Date of birth: 29 February 2000', and 'School: Huttoft Primary School'. A blue link reads 'This is not me, I will try again'. At the bottom is a green button labeled 'Next'.

In this trial, pupils will see a generic 'First name', 'Last name' and 'Date of birth'. Tell pupils to click 'Next' to move onto the next screen.

The 'What to expect' screen will reinforce the instructions you have already given. Pupils should click 'Go to practice questions' when they are ready.

What to expect

- There will be **25 questions**.
- Each question will show for **5 seconds**.

Go to practice questions

Pupils must click 'Start now' to begin the practice questions:

Practice questions

There will be 3 practice questions.

Start now >

They will then see 3 warm-up questions, such as the one below:

PRACTICE

$5 \times 2 =$

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9
<input type="button" value="X"/>	0	Enter

When they have completed the warm-up questions, pupils will see the following screen.

Practice completed

You have completed the practice questions. Press 'Begin check' when you are ready to start the check.

Begin check

When they are ready, the pupil should click 'Begin check' to start the check.

When pupils have completed the check, they will see the following screen.

Thank you

You have completed the multiplication tables check.

Thank you for taking part in this trial. To help ensure it is easy to use please leave [feedback](#).

Sign out

Pupils will be invited to leave feedback. Pupils will be asked how they feel about the check, and given the option to suggest how it could be improved. The feedback screen is detailed below:

Give feedback

How did you enter your answers today?

☐ Touchscreen

☐ Mouse

☐ Keyboard

☐ Mix of the above

How easy or difficult was it to enter your answers today?

☐ Very easy

☐ Easy

☐ Neither easy or difficult

☐ Difficult

☐ Very difficult

What would make it better?

(Limit is 1200 characters)

Send feedback >

They can then click 'Sign out' to return to the start page where the next pupil can log in.

Thanks for your feedback

Sign out

3.2 Problems or queries during check administration

Answering pupils' questions

There is no option for a pupil to pause, go back or stop the check once it has started. Ensure you do not say anything that might advantage a pupil. If a pupil asks you how to

answer a particular question, explain that you will discuss it with them after the check has finished and ask them to continue.

IT issues

If you have IT issues during the check, speak to your local IT support in the first instance. If you need additional advice, contact the MTC helpline on 0345 278 8080.

Restarts

If a pupil or group was significantly interrupted while taking the check, you may allow pupil(s) to restart the check by selecting 'Restarts' on the MTC home page.

Restarts

If a pupil's progress was significantly interrupted while taking the check, use this page to notify STA that they will restart the check. The pupil will take a different check form from their previous attempt and the last completed attempt will be reported.

Select pupils to restart

No pupils selected to restart the check.

On the 'Restarts' page, you can choose pupils to restart the check and provide the reason.

Select pupils for restart

1. Select reason for restart

☐ Loss of internet

☐ IT issues

☐ Classroom disruption

☐ Did not complete

If necessary, please provide further information:

▼ What do these reasons mean?

2. Select pupil(s)

Filter by name

Q

Filter by groups

3.3 Staff feedback

There is a feedback link at the top of the school administration screen where school staff can provide feedback after the check. It will open in a new browser using the

'SmartSurvey' website. Staff completing the survey will be asked what they feel about the service, and how we can improve it. Tell us about any positive or negative experiences using the service and any suggestions for improvement that will help schools administer the check in the future.

GOV.UK Multiplication Tables Check

BETA This is a new service - your feedback will help us to improve it.

Signed in as teacher2 [Sign out](#)

Multiplication tables check for Example School Two

[Pupil register](#)
Add, edit and review pupils

[Group pupil](#)
Create groups

[Pupils not taking the check](#)
Enter a reason for pupils who were unable to take the check

Related

[Guidance](#)
[User set up](#)



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