

## THE CHALLENGE

The Reception Baseline Assessment is a national test for children aged 4-5 in all primary, infant and first schools in England and is set by the Department for Education. It includes questions on maths, language, communication and literacy.

The assessment takes place in a child's first six weeks at school using an electronic device. It is recorded digitally by school staff and the child does not do anything on the screen themselves. Schools can decide if they think a child is not able to take the test and 'disapply' the pupil, however this information will also be sent to the Department for Education with reasons for not taking it.

The test is adaptive which means not all children get asked all of the same questions. A score is calculated automatically. Parents should get given a copy of the individual report containing written statements related to the outcomes of the assessment for a child. The scores are not made available to families but are sent to the Department for Education and go into the child's national pupil record in the National Pupil Database ("NPD"). The Assessment became statutory from September 2021. The government has produced official information for parents online.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Reception baseline assessment: information for parents  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reception-baseline-assessment-information-for-parents>

## THE CONCERNS

This assessment raises many ethical questions regarding collecting children's data. It is not anonymised and can be kept for use for 66 years. The record is the start of a lifetime record, added to across a child's education and sensitive personal information such as sexual orientation and religion may be added through the University applications process. Records from the NPD have been distributed since 2012 to commercial businesses as well charities, researchers, journalists, used by the Home Office and police and more.

## YOUR RIGHTS

Educational settings are under a legal obligation to inform you of what data will be passed on to the Department for Education in the Reception Baseline Assessment, and how it will be used, but not when the test will take place – ask your child's school to find out.

You have a right to object to the processing of the data but not the test itself. See overleaf or download the template text to personalise to you and your child at:  
<https://defenddigitalme.org/resources/>

**"New research by UCL Institute of Education (IOE) has found only 20% of teachers believe that the new Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA) provides an accurate picture of current child attainment."**

**”**

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe/news/2020/feb/only-20-teachers-believe-baseline-assessment-tests-are-accurate>

## TAKE ACTION

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