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Welsh Government

Online personalised assessments in reading and numeracy

Information for parents and carers of children in Years 2 to 9 in maintained schools in Wales



Further information

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What are personalised assessments?

Personalised assessments are online assessments of learners' skills in reading and numeracy. They are taken by learners in Years 2 to 9 in maintained schools in Wales.

The assessments are taken at least once a year and are available in the following subjects: Numeracy (Procedural), Numeracy (Reasoning) and Reading (English and Welsh).

Numeracy (Procedural) focuses on numerical facts and procedures – the numerical 'tools' that are needed to apply numeracy within a range of contexts.

Numeracy (Reasoning) focuses on how well your child can use and apply what they know in order to solve numerical problems.

Reading personalised assessments provide information on how well your child understands a text and whether they are able to make judgements about what they are reading.



What is the purpose of personalised assessments?

The assessments provide feedback on your child's reading and numeracy skills so that they, their teachers and parents or carers can understand where they are in their learning journey. The information from the assessments helps teachers to plan next steps and to support learners to make progress.

A personalised assessment gives a snapshot of your child's skills at a particular time. It is just one source of information on your child's knowledge and understanding that teachers will consider alongside the other information they have about your child's reading and numeracy work in the classroom.



What are the benefits of personalised assessments?

Personalised assessments:

- provide information on your child's skills, development and progression
- provide an interactive experience to engage your child and assess the level of their skills
- are tailored for each child because they are 'adaptive'
- are flexible – schools can schedule them for a time they consider to be most beneficial to help plan learning and teaching.

How do the assessments work?

The personalised assessments are 'adaptive' which means that each learner will have a unique assessment. Questions are chosen based on the learner's response to the previous questions; in Numeracy (Procedural) and Numeracy (Reasoning), if a learner answers a question correctly, they will get a harder question. If a learner cannot answer a question or answers incorrectly, they are given an easier question. In the Reading assessments, groups of questions are linked to a reading text – if a learner answers the group of questions correctly they will move on to a more challenging text and questions, but if they answer incorrectly they will receive an easier text and questions. This tailors the level of challenge for every learner.

Learners will get some questions right and some questions wrong as the assessment gathers information on the limits of what each learner can do at that particular time. Learners are not confined to questions linked to their year group or age. Teachers can start the assessment with questions from a lower year group if appropriate. The 'adaptive' nature of the assessments means that the level of difficulty will vary throughout the assessment until enough information is collected to provide feedback on your child's skills.

How long do they take?

Children can work at their own pace and therefore the assessment time will vary in length. The length of the assessment is not a reflection of the learner's ability. Numeracy (Procedural) and Numeracy (Reasoning) usually take between 20 and 45 minutes, and Reading usually takes between 30 and 50 minutes. When the system has collected enough information to assess the learner's skills the assessment will end automatically. The assessments can be paused or stopped by a teacher at any time if required.

What language will the assessment be taken in?



The assessments are available in both English and Welsh.

When scheduling a Numeracy assessment, teachers set the language in which the assessment will be taken. The alternative language version of the question is available to the learner as a pop-up window at any time.

Learners in English-medium schools take a Reading assessment in English only. Learners in Welsh-medium schools take Reading assessments in Welsh, and from Year 4 they must also take a Reading assessment in English.

When are assessments taken?

Assessments can be taken at any time during the school year. Schools can decide on the time that they wish to have the information on their learners' skills in order to plan learning, teaching and progression.

Your child will take the Reading and Numeracy assessments at least once during the school year. The assessments are also available to schools for an optional second use within the school year so that they can see how learners are progressing.

Do all children take them?



The assessments have been designed so that nearly all children will be able to access them without special arrangements.

However, where accessible versions are needed, the assessments have been devised to meet the widest possible range of needs, and to work with a wide range of commonly used access technologies.

Children can be provided with support to access the assessments in the same way that they are provided with support to access work day-to-day in the classroom.

There are modified versions available for children who require them. These include colour and contrast options, text enlargement, use of screen readers (for Numeracy assessments only), and Braille and tactile diagrams. The assessments are compatible with standard assistive technologies.

Feedback reports – what they tell me

After a Numeracy (Procedural) and Reading assessment, the school will have feedback on your child's skills which they may discuss with your child before sharing with you.

The feedback is a snapshot of your child's skills at the time each assessment was taken.

In the Numeracy (Procedural) and Reading feedback reports, the first section, '**The hardest questions I got right were on these skills:**', lists the areas in which your child gave correct answers for the most challenging questions.

■ The hardest questions I got right were on these skills:

understanding place value for whole numbers up to 1000

[Sample question \(PDF\)](#)

finding change or working out differences (up to £1)

[Sample question \(PDF\)](#)

solving simple two-step money problems

[Sample question \(PDF\)](#)

converting units of measurement (simple examples)

[Sample question \(PDF\)](#)

■ The hardest questions I got right were on these skills:

identifying information from a text accurately and sorting into categories or headings

[Sample question \(PDF\)](#)

skimming to gain an overview of a text

[Sample question \(PDF\)](#)

accurately identifying the topic and main ideas of a text

[Sample question \(PDF\)](#)

explaining relevant details from texts

[Sample question \(PDF\)](#)

The second section of the report, **‘Some of the questions I got wrong were on:’**, relates to the easiest questions answered incorrectly.

Some of the questions I got wrong were on:

- adding or subtracting 2-digit numbers (simple calculations)
- remembering facts from the 2-, 5- or 10-times tables
- multiplying and dividing numbers by 10 (whole number answers)
- solving simple problems using halves or quarters

[Sample question \(PDF\)](#)

[Sample question \(PDF\)](#)

[Sample question \(PDF\)](#)

[Sample question \(PDF\)](#)

Some of the questions I got wrong were on:

- looking for specific information in texts using contents, indexes, glossaries, dictionaries
- looking for key words to find out what the text is about
- deducing ideas and information by linking explicit statements
- using text features

[Sample question \(PDF\)](#)

[Sample question \(PDF\)](#)

[Sample question \(PDF\)](#)

[Sample question \(PDF\)](#)

The final 2 sections, **‘Most pupils with similar skills are able to:’** and **‘And are likely to move on to:’**, relate to your child’s overall attainment in the assessment and provide an overview of the sort of skills that learners with a similar pattern of answers are able to achieve or are working towards.

Most learners with similar skills are able to:

- understand place value for whole numbers up to 1000 and can add or subtract 2-digit numbers
- knowledge of tables extends to the 3- and 4-times tables, and they solve simple problems involving money (up to £1)
- use a calendar and find perimeters of shapes with all side lengths shown/areas of shapes with internal squares shown
- interpret information presented in pictograms (1 symbol representing more than 1 unit)

And are likely to move on to:

- add or subtract 2- and 3-digit numbers, multiply and divide numbers by 10 (whole number answers) and find unit fractions such as $\frac{1}{3}$ of a number
- understand how to ‘undo’ addition, subtraction, multiplication or division and can find a simple time interval
- find perimeters of simple shapes (not all side lengths shown) and interpret simple information presented in tables or Venn diagrams

Most learners with similar skills are able to:

- read independently
- look for key words to establish meaning
- make meaning from words and sentences
- identify key features of a text

And are likely to move on to:

- use visual clues such as diagrams and charts to enhance understanding
- use key features to make meaning
- identify and sort information accurately according to the question

After your child has taken a Numeracy (Reasoning) assessment the feedback will not be in the format shown above. Instead their teacher will have information linked to resources and activities, which they may use with your child in class to help develop their reasoning skills further.

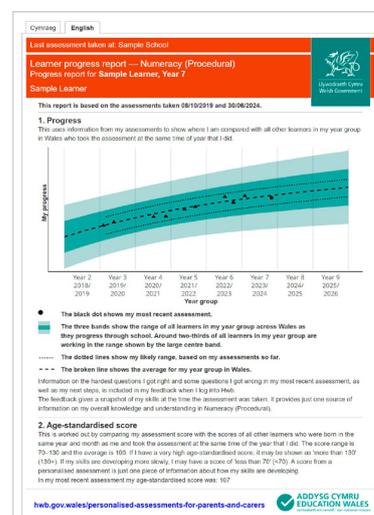
Assessment feedback is just one source of information on your child’s overall knowledge and understanding. Your child’s teacher will consider this feedback, alongside other information they have on your child’s skills in reading and numeracy work in the classroom, in order to plan their learning.



Progress reports – what they tell me

The school will also share progress reports, showing progress over time in the Reading and Numeracy personalised assessments.

The progress chart shows all the online assessments your child has taken. There is one report for each subject, Numeracy (Procedural), Numeracy (Reasoning) and Reading (Welsh and/or English as appropriate). Using the information from their assessments, the graph shows where your child is in comparison with all other children in their year group across Wales who took the assessment at the same time of the year that they did. You will be able to see your child's progress from one year to the next.



The progress report also includes your child's age-standardised score from their most recent assessment. The score shows how your child has done compared with other children in Wales born in the same year and month who took the assessment at the same time of the year as your child. The score range is 70 to 130 and the average is 100.

Schools will decide when to share these reports with parents and carers.

For assessments taken from September 2023, age-standardised scores take account of 'learning time' by comparing your child's assessment scores with those of other learners in their year group who took the assessment at the same time in the school year. This means your child's age-standardised score is adjusted relative to the date they complete the assessment.

Following the inclusion of learning time, children who maintain the same or similar scores in their assessments over time are making consistent progress.

This approach makes it easier for you and your school to identify whether your child is making consistent progress. It also supports schools with comparing the progress of children who take assessments at different times of the year and their progression planning.



Should my child prepare for the assessments?

No. The purpose of personalised assessments is to find out children's strengths and possible next steps in reading and numeracy so that their teachers can help them develop their skills.

The assessments are designed to be easy to use. Familiarisation assessments are available so that schools can ensure that children see and understand the question types before they take an assessment, and are familiar with how the assessment works.

Can I help my child to improve their reading and numeracy skills?

Yes, definitely! Getting involved in your child's learning while at home and out and about can make a big difference to their progress. Any of the following will be a huge help:

- using numbers when shopping, when walking or driving to school or planning trips, or when looking at football scores, times of TV programmes, budgeting, and so on
- sharing activities that involve reading and numeracy, such as cooking or baking, playing board games, watching or playing sport, writing emails, map reading, and so on
- talking about words and numbers you come across in everyday life such as signs in your community or news articles.



Useful information

[Hwb](#) – the learning platform, full of useful resources. Use search terms such as ‘reading’ and ‘numeracy’

[Personalised assessment animations](#) – a quick guide for parents and carers

[Education Begins at Home](#) – ideas on helping your child at home with fun activities

[Education is changing](#) – information for parents, carers and learners about the new Curriculum for Wales

[Cymraeg in Education](#) – information about Welsh-medium education and resources

[Encouraging reading in older learners](#) – tips to encourage children to read with enjoyment

[BookTrust Cymru](#) – programmes and projects to inspire a love of reading in children of all ages

[Help your child with mathematics](#) – mathematics and numeracy resources for learners aged 11 to 18 (Welsh only)

[Money Helper](#) – for help teaching children about money

[Money Heroes](#) – free resources for developing children’s money-management skills

[MathsThroughStories.org](#) – a website sharing the benefits of learning and teaching through stories and creative writing (English only)

[The Entrepreneurship Exchange for Parents and Guardians](#) – Big Ideas Wales – resources for parents and carers to encourage their child to be entrepreneurial

