

Your child and standardised testing

During your child's time in primary school, she will complete standardised tests in English Reading and Maths. From 2012 on, schools are required to carry out these tests at the end of 2nd, 4th and 6th class. Here at Our Lady of Lourdes N.S., we do these tests at the end of every school year from 1st class on. The results of these tests will be included in your child's end of year report. The following document explains procedure, scoring etc. of these tests. Please read it carefully and keep it in a safe place for future reference. It will also be available on the school website.

What is a standardised test?

A standardised test measures a child's achievement in English Reading and in Maths compared to other children throughout the country at the same class level or age. This information can play a vital part in supporting your child's learning.

The English Reading test gives information about how well your child can understand what she has read. The Maths test finds out how well your child can use numbers and solve Maths problems. These tests give an indication of your child's achievement but they do not give a complete picture of your child's learning in English or Maths.

Are standardised tests the same as intelligence tests?

No. Standardised tests are not intelligence tests. The main purposes of using standardised tests are to help the teacher plan your child's learning, and to inform you about how well your child is doing in English Reading and Maths. When the test scores are used alongside other information gathered by the teacher through observing your child at work, talking with her and looking at her work, they show how your child is getting on in English Reading and Maths, and help the teacher to identify your child's strengths and needs.

What are standardised tests used for?

Standardised tests are used to

- report to you on your child's achievement in English Reading and Maths so that you can support your child's learning**
- help to find out if your child has learning difficulties in these areas**
- help to find out if your child is a high achiever in these areas**
- help the teacher to identify your child's strengths and needs and to plan for further learning**

Understanding the Test Results

You will see a Sten Score for each test

Sten scores go from 1 – 10. The table below describes what the Sten scores tell you about your child's achievement in English Reading and Maths in comparison with other children throughout the country.

Sten Score	What the score means	Proportion of children who get this score
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8 to 10	Well above average	One sixth
7	High average	One sixth
5 to 6	Average	One third
4	Low average	One sixth
1 to 3	Well below average	One sixth

As you can see from the table above, in any group of children who do the test two thirds of them will get a score of 4,5,6 or 7. These scores are regarded as average with 7 being considered on the higher end of average and 4 being considered on the lower end [though still in the average category]. A score of 8,9 or 10 is above average and approximately one sixth of all pupils doing the test will achieve these scores. Finally, a score of 1,2 or 3 is below average and approximately one sixth of all pupils doing the test will achieve these scores.

N.B.

It is very important to realize that these scores do not give a complete picture of your child's learning in English or Maths. They are merely the scores achieved by your child on a given day using a particular test. These results are never taken as the sole means of determining if your child needs extra help or if your child is exceptionally bright. They only form part of a broader picture and are only one tool used by teachers in the classroom. If you are uneasy about your child's score on these tests it is a good idea to discuss it with her teacher who will be able to give you a more complete and accurate picture of her progress.

Further information on Standardised Testing is available at <http://www.ncca.ie/>