

The Best Start Kindergarten Assessment

What is the Best Start Kindergarten Assessment?

The Best Start Kindergarten Assessment is a literacy and numeracy assessment that may be conducted with Kindergarten students upon entry to school.

The Best Start Kindergarten Assessment is mapped to the National Literacy and Numeracy Learning Progressions.

The assessment can be conducted online using the Best Start Kindergarten online assessment tool. A paper-based copy of the assessment can also be utilised by schools.

The Best Start Kindergarten Assessment

Best Start Kindergarten Assessment:

- is conducted as a one-to-one assessment usually within students' first five weeks of Term 1
- focuses on some of the key literacy and numeracy skills students may demonstrate at the start of school
- available as an online or paper-based assessment.

The **paper-based** Best Start Kindergarten Assessment folder:

- includes the Best Start Kindergarten Assessment administration guide along with a student recording form that can be photocopied
- provides further details for schools in preparing for and conducting the assessment. Interested schools will use the 2019 version folders in 2020 (this folder will not be updated for 2020 or 2021).

The **online** Best Start Kindergarten Assessment:

- is available at a cost of **\$2 per student**
- is supported by software that captures student information to support planning
- automatically transfers information to PLAN2, mapping to the National Literacy and Numeracy Learning Progressions
- enables teachers to view student skills as soon as the assessment is lodged.

Accessing the online tool

Teachers administer the assessment using the online tool for capturing student responses.

The online tool is accessed via the Assessing Literacy and Numeracy website (ALAN):

<https://alan.cese.nsw.gov.au>

ALAN also contains access to PLAN2 software and administration help. Support guides are available on the ALAN helpdesk page:

<https://literacynumeracysupport.freshdesk.com/support/home>

Costs

Access for NSW independent schools to use the online Best Start Year Kindergarten in 2021 is **\$2 per student**.

The NSW Department of Education will invoice schools for payment.

Professional learning: External eLearning modules are available to access via the AISNSW website to support schools participating in the Best Start Kindergarten Assessment in 2021.

Frequently Asked Questions

When is the Best Start Kindergarten Assessment held?

The Best Start Kindergarten Assessment is completed in the first five weeks of school.

How long will the assessment take to complete?

The duration of the assessment depends on each student. It typically takes 20 minutes for each of the assessments to be completed.

It is recommended that the assessments are conducted separately.

How is the assessment administered?

The assessment is administered one-on-one with a student and teacher. There is the option to use the paper-based student recording form available in the folder or the online tool.

How do I administer the assessment using the online tool?

The online tool means data is automatically recorded in PLAN2 software and available soon after the assessment is completed. There is no need to separately submit assessment data.

Can I provide feedback to parents and carers?

Feedback to families may be provided following the assessment. Schools have the flexibility to choose how to provide feedback to families. A printable report is available.

What do I need to know about PLAN2 to access and use the online Best Start Kindergarten Assessment information?

PLAN2 is a software tool to capture observations on students' literacy and numeracy development using the progressions. Student assessment feedback from the online Best Start Kindergarten Assessment is mapped to the learning progressions in PLAN2. The Literacy and Numeracy Learning Progressions are also available to download on NESA's website:

<https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/understanding-the-curriculum/literacy-andnumeracy/national-literacy-and-numeracy-progressions>

An individual student summary report can be printed directly from the online tool without using PLAN2. Using PLAN2 provides teachers with student skill-level information, including the ability to view observations at student, class or cohort level and to focus on sub-groups of skills (ie sub-elements).

PLAN2 also generates the parent feedback summary.

What information does PLAN2 provide teachers?

PLAN2 contains a range of analysis, observation screens and planning features that can support teachers in accessing indicator level observations and comments captured during the assessment.

Teachers can view information on individual students, groups of students or the class by syllabus outcomes or by sub-elements of the Literacy and Numeracy Learning Progressions.

School leadership teams can view the analysis across the entire Kindergarten cohort.

When can I update information in PLAN2?

Information in PLAN2 can be updated at any time following the assessment.

Can teachers continue to use PLAN2 after the Best Start Kindergarten Assessment?

Yes. The information from the Best Start summary can be used effectively with the NSW Early Stage 1 English and mathematics syllabuses to inform teaching and learning.

PLAN2 continues to undergo enhancements and represents an effective tool for monitoring learning and planning for literacy and numeracy using the learning progressions across the curriculum.

What do I need to know about the learning progressions to access and use Best Start Kindergarten Assessment information?

The Best Start Kindergarten Assessment is mapped to the learning progressions and the NSW English and Mathematics syllabuses. Schools can use the information in Best Start Kindergarten at the item level to plan and program without deep knowledge of the learning progressions.

The learning progressions will support teachers to target student learning and differentiate teaching experiences for students in greater detail.

What support is available if I haven't attended professional learning on PLAN2 or the learning progressions?

Professional learning is available to support the use of the learning progressions and PLAN2. This includes face-to-face and eLearning modules. Further information is available on the Literacy and Numeracy Learning Progressions page of the AISNSW website.