



Department for Education

2025-0020924

**Catherine McKinnell MP
Minister for School Standards**

Mr Ben Kingsley
Legal Affairs, UsForThem and SafeScreens
By email: legal@usforthem.co.uk

18 July 2025

Dear Mr Kingsley,

Thank you for your correspondence of 9 June, addressed to the Secretary of State, regarding the reception baseline assessment (RBA). I am replying as the minister responsible for this policy area. I would be grateful if you could please share this response with your co-signatories.

The revisions to the RBA do not involve a prolonged use of screen time amongst young children. The use of a digital device by children within the assessment is situated within an educational context, where children engage with the device to showcase their performance. This is very different to unregulated access to digital devices and social media. Moreover, the department does not expect that reception aged children will need to know how to use a digital device independently.

The RBA is a short, interactive assessment of early mathematics and early language, literacy, and communication administered by teachers with individual reception aged pupils. The assessment has been developed by assessment experts at the Standards and Testing Agency (STA), with its purpose being to provide baseline data for primary progress measures. These measures show the progress pupils make from reception until the end of key stage 2.

We recognise that teacher-pupil interaction and relationships are important. Adding these digital elements to the assessment helps to reduce administrative burdens associated with paper-based assessments, allowing the teacher to focus more on their interaction with the pupil.

Using a digital approach has also been valuable to allow teachers to implement accessibility settings more easily for pupils with specific needs. The STA will capture data on how many teachers use accessibility settings which will help us understand how to better support children with special educational needs and disabilities in future.

Thank you for writing. I hope that this response is useful.

Yours,

**Catherine McKinnell MP
Minister for School Standards**