

**2023-2026**

**EDUCATION  
STAGES**

**Focus: DCS Schools & Settings**

**VERSION: 1**

**DATE: 24th April 2024**

# KEY STAGES

The education system in the UK is divided into four main parts, early years, primary education, secondary education, further education or higher education.

The education system is divided into key stages of learning which breaks down as follows:

- Key Stage 1:** 5 to 7 years old
- Key Stage 2:** 7 to 11 years old
- Key Stage 3:** 11 to 14 years old
- Key Stage 4:** 14 to 16 years old
- Key Stage 5:** 16 to 18 years old (non compulsory)

Child Age	Year Group	Stage of Learning	Education Level	Notes
0+	Nursery	N/A	Nursery Setting	
1	Nursery	N/A		
2	Nursery	N/A		
3 to 4	Foundation Stage 1	Early Years Foundation Stage	Early Years	
4 to 5	Foundation Stage 2 (Often called Reception)			Children undergo Reception Baseline in September
5 to 6	Year 1	Key Stage 1 (Often know as Infants)	Primary School	Year 1 Phonics Testing in June
6 to 7	Year 2			Key Stage 1 SATs (non compulsory)
7 to 8	Year 3	Key Stage 2 (Often known as Juniors)		
8 to 9	Year 4			Multiplication Tables Check (MTC) in June
9 to 10	Year 5			
10 to 11	Year 6			End of Key Stage 2 SATs in May
11 to 12	Year 7	Key Stage 3	Secondary School	
12 to 13	Year 8			
13 to 14	Year 9			Options Year Key Stage 3 tests
14 to 15	Year 10	Key Stage 4		
15 to 16	Year 11			GCSE / iGCSE from May
16 to 17	Year 12 (known as lower Sixth Form)	Key Stage 5		
17 to 18	Year 12 (kown as Sixth Form)		A-Levels, BTecs, IB	

# COMPULSORY EDUCATION

**Education** is compulsory until the age of 18, **schooling** is compulsory to the age of 16 thus post 16 education can take a number of forms, and may be academic, vocational or applied.

This can involve continued schooling, known as the sixth form. It can also include work-based apprenticeships, traineeships and volunteering.

# HIGHER EDUCATION

Level	Qualification / Education Route			
	Academic Route		Vocational Route	Applied / Work Route
8	Doctorate (PhD)			NVQ 8
7	Masters Degree (MA)			Degree Apprenticeship NVQ 5, 6, 7
6	Bachelors Degree BA or BSc			
5	Foundation Degree		Higher National Diploma (HND)	
4				Higher Apprenticeship / NVQ 4
3	A Levels Grades A-E	International Baccalaureate	BTEC Diploma BTEC Certificate	Advanced Apprenticeship / NVQ 3
2	GCSE Grades 4-9 (C,B, A or A*)		BTEC First Diploma	Intermediate Apprenticeship / NVQ 2
1	GCSE Grades 1-3 (D,E,F or G)		Foundation Diploma	Traineeships / NVQ 1