



Darlington
Learning
Zone

FREE
Foundation
or Higher
for
GCSE MATHS?

A quick, 10-question check with a score guide and what it means for your child.



Schools decide whether your child does Foundation or Higher based on their assessments so far, but it does not always show the full picture.

This free check gives your child 10 questions to try on paper, without a calculator. It takes about 20 minutes.

Mark it using the answer key, then use the score guide to see which tier fits best right now and read the explanations for what each result means.

Created by Darlington Learning Zone, with years of experience preparing children for GCSE Maths.

THE 10-QUESTION CHECK

Ask your child to work through these on paper, without a calculator. Do not help and do not let them rush.



20 minutes

1 45% of 80

2 Solve $2x + 5 = 17$

3 Find the area of a triangle with base 8 cm and height 5 cm

4 Share £180 in the ratio 2 : 7

THE 10-QUESTION CHECK

5 Simplify $(2x^2y)^3$

6 Write 84 as a product of its prime factors

7 Solve $x^2 - 3x - 10 = 0$

8 Simplify $\sqrt{72}$

9 Make x the subject
 $y = \frac{3x + 2}{x - 1}$

10 Write $0.\dot{4}\dot{5}$ as a fraction in its simplest form

ANSWERS & SCORE

1	45% of 80	36
2	Solve $2x + 5 = 17$	$x = 6$
3	Find the area of a triangle with base 8 cm and height 5 cm	20 cm^2
4	Share £180 in the ratio 2 : 7	£40 : £140
5	Simplify $(2x^2y)^3$	$8x^6y^3$
6	Write 84 as a product of its prime factors	$2^2 \times 3 \times 7$
7	Solve $x^2 - 3x - 10 = 0$	$x = 5, x = -2$
8	Simplify $\sqrt{72}$	$6\sqrt{2}$
9	Make x the subject $y = \frac{3x+2}{x-1}$	$x = \frac{y+2}{y-3}$
10	Write 0.45 as a fraction in its simplest form	$\frac{5}{11}$

0-4 Foundation tier

5-7 Solid Foundation,
or Higher with support

8-10 Higher tier

This is a quick guide to which tier may suit your child right now, not a formal or definitive result. If you're unsure, it is always worth talking it through with their maths teacher.

WHAT THE SCORE MEANS

0-4: Foundation tier

A clear, steady grounding is the priority now. There is no need to chase Higher-tier content early – secure marks on Foundation topics matter far more for the final grade.

5-7: Solid Foundation, or Higher with support

This is the borderline zone, and it is worth watching how they reached correct answers, not just whether they did. Confident working, rather than a lucky guess, is what tips this towards Higher.

8-10: Higher tier

Ready for the stretch. Questions 8 to 10 – surds, rearranging a formula and recurring decimals are Higher-only content, so real confidence with these is the strongest sign Higher tier is the right fit.

Whatever the score, we are always happy to talk through what it means for your child – see the next page to get in touch.

GET IN TOUCH



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Owner and tutor at Darlington Learning Zone

If you would like to talk through your child's results or find out more about GCSE Maths tuition, we would love to hear from you.



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