Curriculum - New NC Parents' Guide

A parental Guide to what your child is being taught and how they will be assessed

All primary schools are now teaching a new National Curriculum. There are substantial changes in the content of this curriculum; English, Maths and Science remain at the heart of the programme of studies. However, if you have had older children you may notice some key changes:

**English**

- Less of a focus on genre and more focus on quality writing
- New content or greater emphasis
- Year-by-year objectives for Y1 and Y2, then LKS2 and UKS2
- Required spelling lists
- Required grammar objectives
- Priority for phonics in both key stages
- Focus on reading for pleasure
- Reciting poetry
- Clearer expectations regarding transcription

**Maths**

Some key changes:

- Data handling is not included in Y1
- There is no use of calculators except near the end of KS2

New content or emphasis

- Yearly objectives
- Larger numbers earlier, e.g. year 1, numbers up to 100.
- Tables to 12x12 by end of Y4, multiplication starts in year 1.
- Earlier introduction of formal written methods
Earlier introduction of standard units of measurement

Focus on fractions

Roman numerals

Binary numbers in Y6

Focus on mastery of skills and being able to apply skills and concepts

If you would like more information about this new National Curriculum (2014) see the section on our website under http://www.stmprimary.org/Curriculum-New-2014

How will children be assessed?

In the past a child’s progress was recorded as an attainment level. From September 2015 National Curriculum levels will no longer be used for statutory assessments and instead children will be assessed without levels.

Why are levels being removed?

A report from the Government has stated:

“Too often levels became viewed as thresholds and teaching became focused on getting pupils across the next threshold instead of ensuring they were secure in the knowledge and understanding defined in the programmes of study. Depth and breadth of understanding were sometimes sacrificed in favour of pace. In reality, the difference between pupils on either side of a boundary might have been very slight, while the difference between pupils within the same level might have been very different.

Progress became synonymous with moving on to the next level, but progress can involve developing deeper or wider understanding, not just moving onto great difficulty. Sometimes progress is simply about consolidation.”

(Final Report of the Commission on Assessment without levels September 2015)

So the Government now wants schools to focus more on securing pupils knowledge within each stage of their development, instead of moving up though the levels.

What will assessment without levels look like? How will my child be graded?

Within each year group a pupil’s attainment will be recorded as being within a band and will fall into one of the following steps: number of steps:

- Beginning
- Beginning +
• Working within
• Working within +
• Secure
• Secure +

A class teacher will examine the evidence of a pupil’s attainment against a range of key indicators for each area of learning, so the grading will depend on the depth of knowledge and understanding demonstrated at any particular time.

Pupils will be assessed to see how well they can apply, and understand their knowledge, skills and processes outlined in the National Curriculum.

Pupils will be challenged to develop mastery of each step, before they move onto the next unit. Mastery is deep, secure learning for all.

What is feedback marking?

The children’s main experience of marking is feedback marking. They will encounter this either when a member of staff talks to them or when a teacher writes a comment on their work. Such guidance is called feedback, and helps a child to develop their learning further. Children are instructed how they can move forward in their learning.

Will my child have to take a National Curriculum test?

Pupils in year 6 and year 2 will take a range summative assessments.

• Year 6: Test week Monday 9th - Friday 13th May
• Year 2: Key Stage 1: tests in May
• Year 1: Key stage 1, Monday 13th June - Friday 17th June, Phonic test week.

Year 6: Science test weeks Monday 6th June - Friday 17th June.

Please note precise times will be notified, once the Department for Education has informed the school.