

New National Curriculum 2014

Why the curriculum change?

The main aim is to raise standards by combining international best practice with best practice from schools in England.

What are the main changes?

It is more challenging but the content is actually slimmer, focussing on essential core subject knowledge and skills.

[Click here to see a summary table – dfe website](#)

For most children, the changes to the curriculum take effect from September 2014 but children in Year 2 and 6 will follow the existing programmes of study until September 2015 for English, Maths and Science.

The End of Curriculum Levels

The DfE announced last year that there would no longer be National Curriculum levels, and that schools would have to set up their own way of assessing pupils. This is a new way of thinking for schools, and assessment will look very different to how it has done in the past. Our current Year 2 and 6 pupils will be the last pupils to be awarded a level in their end of Key Stage tests (Summer 2015).

Why are levels disappearing?

The DfE want to avoid children moving through the old National Curriculum levels quickly to achieve higher attainment. The old National Curriculum was sub-divided into levels, but these were not linked to their national curriculum year group. For example, a child in Year 4 could be a Level 3 or even a level 5. Children were achieving Level 5 and 6 at the end of Key Stage 2, but the DfE thought that a significant number were able to achieve a Level 5 or 6 in a test—but were not secure at that level. The feeling from the DfE was that the old national curriculum and the levels system failed to adequately ensure that children had a breadth and depth of knowledge at each national curriculum level.

How will our children be assessed?

We have researched various different methods of assessing pupils and almost all of the systems used the same format, which is similar to the system used in the Early Years and Foundation Stage. This was to take the end of year expectations for each year group and to split this into three categories as follows:

- Emerging — Yet to be secure in the end of year expectations.
- Developing — Secure in the majority of the end of year expectations.
- Securing — Secure in almost all or all the end of year expectations and is able to use and apply their knowledge and skills confidently.

Under the old levels system, children who were exceeding might have moved into the next level. The DfE now want children who are in the exceeding bracket to add more depth and breadth to their knowledge, and to have more opportunities to develop their using and applying skills. They are calling this phase of learning Mastery and Depth. Only exceptional children will move into working towards the end of year expectations from the year above. Similarly, children who are unlikely to be emerging at the end of the year may work towards the expectations from the year below.

How will this look at the end of each Key Stage?

Key Stage 1

It is anticipated that the majority of children will reach the assessment point of Year 2 expected, a smaller number of children will reach Year 2 exceeding, and a small number will be Year 2 emerging, or possibly Year 1 exceeding/expected/emerging.

Key Stage 2

Lots of you may have heard of the expression 'Secondary Ready' as the standard children must achieve by the end of Year 6. Similar to Year 2 there will be some children who may be Year 6 exceeding and some children who are Year 6 emerging. There may also be a small number of children who are still working at a lower level e.g. Year 4/5 exceeding/expected/emerging.

What will change?

As the year progresses, we will move over to assess using these categories, beginning with the core subjects and by September 2015, we will be assessing without levels.

The biggest difference is how we will talk to you about how your child is progressing during the year. With the old National Curriculum levels, each year, children were given a target for the end of the year, and during the year we would tell you at what National Curriculum level your child was working. For Example: A child could finish Year 3 with a level 3a, and in Year 4 would have a target of a 4b for the end of the year. At Parents' Evenings throughout the year you may be told that they have moved to a 4c and then on to a 4b etc.

As the new National Curriculum sets out expectations for each year group, the children will be assessed against those every year e.g. a child in Year 4 will always be judged in the first instance against the expectations for the end of Year 4. During the year, when we have conversations with you about your child's progress you will be told whether your child is on track and where they are in relation to their year group expectations.