

THE NEW NATIONAL CURRICULUM



HOW IS MY CHILD DOING?



Information for Parents & Carers

2015-16

What's changed?

By now, you will no doubt be aware that we are teaching a new National Curriculum in Years 1 to 6, which was introduced by the Government in September 2014. The purpose of this leaflet is to let you know:

- How we will be measuring how well your child is doing;
- How we will communicate this to you.

What's happened to the 'levels' we used to hear about?

You may know that there are no longer any 'levels' attached to the new Curriculum. Under the old National Curriculum, there were a series of levels from 1 to 8, with a description of what your child had to be able to do in order to be judged as working at that level. For example, at the end of Year 2, children were usually working at:

- Level 2C (beginning to work at level 2);
- Level 2B (working within level 2);
- Level 2A (working securely at level 2).

Similarly, pupils in Year 6 were typically assessed at level 4C, 4B or 4A, with more able pupils working at level 5C etc.

So, what's replacing levels?

It is now up to schools to decide how they will measure how well pupils are doing under the new Curriculum, and how they will describe that to pupils and parents. Primary schools in Newmarket have agreed to use a system which is very similar to the current Nursery and Reception way of describing achievement. For example, a Year 5 pupil may be described as:

- **Beginning** to work towards the Year 5 expectations (5B/5B+);
- **Working within** those expectations (5W/5W+);
- **Securely** meeting those expectations (5S/5S+).

How does the new Curriculum compare to the old one?

Put simply... **It's harder!** Some people have said that the new end of Year 6 expectations are roughly equivalent to level 4B on the old National Curriculum, while others feel it's closer to an old level 5. In other words, what was a high standard is now the minimum.

For each year group, there is a new description of what a child should be able to do. **These descriptions are more challenging than the old Curriculum, with new content added and many concepts being taught in earlier year groups;** so, just because a child was working at the expected level under the old Curriculum, it does not mean that they will immediately be assessed as working within the expectations for their year group under the new Curriculum.

It will also take time for the new content and concepts to be taught; so, a child may be assessed at a lower point at the beginning of the year, but may make quick progress once the new elements of the Curriculum have been taught. For example, in Year 3:

- A pupil may be assessed as beginning to work towards the new Year 2 expectations ('2B') at the start of Year 3, but move quickly to be working within Year 3 expectations ('3W') by the end of the year;
- A more able pupil may still be assessed as working within Year 2 expectations ('2W') at the start of the year because they haven't covered all of the new Curriculum yet, but may make excellent progress and have begun to work towards the Year 4 expectations ('4B') by the end of the year.

This is particularly important in Year 3, as these pupils were still being taught the old National Curriculum in Year 2. Miss Cattley and Mrs Baxter will assess Year 3 pupils against the new National Curriculum in the first half of the autumn term, in order to give them a 'baseline' assessment from which to measure progress. Similarly, Year 1 pupils will be assessed by Mrs Durrant, having moved from the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum to the new National Curriculum.

How will we find out about the new assessments?

Each half term, teachers will be completing the tables at the back of your child's Home/School Book for reading, writing and maths:

Start of year assessment:	Start of term assessment:	Half term assessment:	End of term assessment:	End of year target:

- In Years 2, 4, 5 and 6, the 'Start of year assessment' will be the end of year assessment passed up from your child's previous teacher;
- The 'End of year target' for these four year groups will be set by half term;
- In Years 1 and 3, the 'Start of year assessment' will be the same as the 'Half term assessment', since this is a 'baseline' (starting point) from which we will measure progress under the new National Curriculum;
- The 'End of year target' for these two year groups will be completed shortly after half term.

What if we we're not sure or want to help the school to improve?

This has been a huge change for all teachers across the country, having used the previous Curriculum and levels for almost 20 years; we are continuing to work hard to make sure that our judgements are accurate, so that we know how well your child is doing and what they need to do to improve. Similarly, we want you to understand how well your child is doing compared to the Government's expectations, and in which areas they need extra support or challenge.

We are continuing to refine this system; if you have any feedback, or would like to discuss this further, please speak to your child's teacher or Mr Perkins, either at this term's 'Coffee, Cake & Chat' or at any other convenient time.