



# Bottisham Community Primary School

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## Guidance for parents: New National Curriculum: Rise in age related expectations

As a school we felt that it is important to explain some very important changes to the National Curriculum for years 1 to 6.

### Assessment without Level

The Government has made a huge change in the way that children in schools are to be assessed. This is to tie in with the new National Curriculum that started to be used by all schools last year. This is a new way of thinking for schools, and assessment will look very different to how it has done for the past 20 years. The Department for Education (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.

### So why are levels disappearing?

The DfE want to avoid what has been termed 'The level Race' where children have moved 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.

We have spent a long time researching various different methods of assessing pupils and working alongside colleagues in local schools. From this term, we will be assessing the children against their age expected objectives and will use the following language:

<b>Emerging</b>	<b>Below age expected</b>	These pupils are below the <u>new</u> standards for their year group and receive more frequent support and intervention programmes.
<b>Developing</b>	<b>At age expected</b>	These pupils have reached the new age related expectations however there are <u>small</u> gaps in their knowledge or skills meaning their knowledge is not yet fully secure. They need more practice.
<b>Secure</b>	<b>Securely at age expected</b>	These pupils are confidently working at the new National Standard for their year group and can apply these skills independently. <b>The * on the table below.</b>
<b>Mastery</b>	<b>Above age expected</b>	These pupils have mastered and are confident in using and applying their skills in a variety of contexts and are starting to work on the National Standards from the year above.

Class teachers will continue to use their professional judgement based on testing, marking and working alongside pupils to assess the children.

We have all been used to the old Levels but it is important to note that the changes to the new National Curriculum means that there is **no** simple conversion between the old levels and the new expectations for each year group.

The new curriculum has considerably **increased** the thresholds requiring children to **achieve more** than they used to in order to reach the new year group expectations. The following attempts to show how the expectations for an average child have increased.

Mapping of new Curriculum Year group expectations to the old Levels expectation																	
Old levels	Wb	1c	1b	1a	2c	2b	2a	3c	3b	3a	4c	4b	4a	5c	5b	5a	6c
Year 1				*													
Year 2							*										
Year 3									*								
Year 4										*							
Year 5											*						
Year 6													*				

The green squares show the old age expectations for each year group.  
 The **star** shows **Age expected**: where a pupil is **now** expected to be by the end of each year.

This means that some children, in comparison to previous years, may now be judged to be achieving a lower level. For example a child who was previously Above when using the **old** system may now be assessed to be Age Expected. This does not mean that they have fallen behind or are failing to make progress. It is a reflection of how the thresholds have increased. The staff are already working hard to ensure that the new objectives are being taught and over the next few years we know the children will become more confident meeting and then exceeding the new expectations.

In the first few years the system will take time to become fully embedded and understood by staff, pupils, parents, governors, government & Ofsted and as a school we are trying to remain ahead of the game by keeping parents fully informed. Some aspects of the curriculum will now need to be taught to younger year groups and some year groups will need time to be taught and catch up on the increased expectations which they are now expected to know. We have every faith in the ability of our staff and pupils to rise to and meet the challenge.

We trust that this goes some way to explain the new expectations. Further information will follow through parent consultations, letters and the school website. We may decide to offer an information (question and answer) session for parents later in the school year. If you would be interested in attending a session on this are then please return the slip below.

Yours sincerely

Paul Belzar  
 Headteacher

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**Only return this slip if you would like to attend an information session on assessment procedures.**

**Name:**  
**Name of child:**  
**Year Group:**