



Monday, 20th March 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians,

2017 National Curriculum Tests

This letter outlines key information that you may find useful in the run up to the SATs that Year 6 children undertake in early May. You may be aware that the nature of the tests changed last year with an increasing emphasis on rigour. In practice, this means that some questions in the tests are quite challenging and are designed to stretch the most able pupils.

The Standardised Score

Test outcomes are no longer reported using levels. 'Scaled Scores' will be used instead. This score is only decided on and published after the tests have been taken and marked, so cannot be directly compared with the system of 'Levels'. It shows that children achieving 100 or over have been judged to be at or above the national standard.

The new tests by subject

Reading

The Reading test changed very little and the papers are still presented in order of difficulty. Last year's test included some harder questions to encompass some of the skills that may have previously been seen in the old Level 6 paper, particularly when it comes to explaining answers in detail and when referencing the text.

English – Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling

There were radical changes to the breadth and difficulty in all areas. The Grammar and Punctuation paper requires a greater knowledge of grammatical terms, word classes and expanded vocabulary, and is therefore significantly challenging. The Grammar and Punctuation paper is worth 71% of the marks. The spelling section represents 29%; this is based on 20 words being tested. The test is based on the KS2 statutory words. These words are also more difficult and contain many 'tricky' or commonly misspelt words. Copies of the Statutory Word List for KS2 are included with this letter.

Mathematics

In many respects the tests are similar to the pre-2016 papers. The main change is that there is no longer a Mental Mathematics Test; this test has been replaced by a written arithmetic paper. There are still two other papers, now labelled Mathematical Reasoning. These are broadly similar to the previous tests; however, there is no 'easing in' of straightforward questions at the start of the papers. As there is no Level 6 paper, some of the higher-level questions are now included in the main papers. In particular, there is a heavier emphasis on fractions, including their equivalents in decimals and percentages.

Writing

The writing, as in previous years, is teacher assessed. This maintains a look similar to 'levels'. Children will be judged to be on a scale with the following terms: "Working towards the expected standard", "Working at the expected standard" and "Working at greater depth within the expected standard". Feedback will be given to the children, and to parents at Parents'

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Evening, as to where they are currently working against these standards. These standards apply to the 2016-17 academic year only.

What are we doing as a school?

We have been working towards these tests throughout previous years in all subjects, supplying the essential skills that every child needs in readiness for this year.

In spelling – having focused on spelling patterns throughout previous years – we have now been focussing on the statutory words this year.

In Grammar and Punctuation, we are working through all of the skills required in the tests: we have been revising the underlying skills, and have now started introducing some of the more complex terminology and areas.

In Reading, the comprehension texts, Accelerated Reader programme and previous SATs papers are already providing appropriate challenge to pupils in readiness for the tests. Support is being given where needed for those who need help to meet this challenge.

In Mathematics, the new curriculum is fully embedded in the Junior School; the children have been working on appropriate resources and tests for the last two years. We are currently using our Mental Mathematics lesson to practise papers in a similar format in order to improve mental dexterity and key mental arithmetic skills. The curriculum also covers the necessary methods and techniques required by the written arithmetic paper.

What can you do as parents/guardians?

- Make sure they do their homework! Everything they do is targeted carefully to consolidate and improve skills; it is imperative that this is given priority and that they are organised.
- Let them do their homework independently – if they struggle we'd like to know, so let us know if it has to be completed with help. If you are used to working through homework with your child, try checking their work after it has been completed and ask them to explain what they have been doing.
- Keep to the 30-minute timescale for set work. It is important that they do not spend longer than this, they do need their rest and down time.
- Make sure that they do 20 minutes reading every night. It is important it is done out loud with an adult to check understanding of the text, and so that they can work on their expression, tone and pace.
- Test their spellings and times tables little and often as appropriate. These key skills are extremely important.

Practice tests

Please avoid doing any past SATs papers after 2011. We have started doing practice tests in school. There are some new sample tests available, please also avoid these. It is very important that the children experience these papers 'as new' in order that they become more comfortable with the 'examination experience'; this can only take place when they are seeing the test for the first time. Practising these recent tests with you, or with tutors, will significantly hamper what we are doing with your child in class.

Commercially available tests, for example from Letts or CGP are fine, and will not interfere with what we are doing in school. If you are unsure, please do come and ask.

A message for the children

Year 6 is not just about the SATs! We do expect you to work hard and be prepared, but there is a lot more going on in the school and lots to enjoy! If you make sure that you are organised, do your homework on time, and are well-prepared for each school day, it will help you to make sure that you make the most of your own time.

If you are worried about anything, please see your Form Teacher straight away. There is nothing that cannot be worked on, sorted, or help given where needed.

Should you have any queries, please contact your child's Form Teacher.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs S Courtney
Year 6 Form Teacher
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Timetable: Year 6 SATs 2017

	1 08:50 - 09:25	2 09:25 - 10:00	BREAK	3 10:10- 10:45	4 10:45- 11:20	BREAK	5 11:35-12:10	LUNCH	6 13:55 - 14:30	7 14:30 - 15:05	8 15:05 - 15:40
Monday 8th May	English Reading Test								<i>Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling Revision</i>		
Tuesday 9th May	English Punctuation and Spelling Test – Paper 1 (Short Answer Questions)	Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling Test – Paper 1 (Short Answer Questions)		English Punctuation and Spelling Test – Paper 2 (Spelling)	Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling Test – Paper 2 (Spelling)				<i>Mathematics Revision</i>		
Wednesday 10th May	Mathematics Paper 1 - Arithmetic			Mathematics Paper 2 - Reasoning					<i>Mathematics Revision</i>		
Thursday 11th May	Mathematics Paper 3 - Reasoning			<i>Lammack</i>			<i>Lammack</i>				
Friday 13th May											

KS2 Statutory Word List

accident(ally)	correspond	harass	persuade	system
accommodate	criticise (critic + ise)	heard	physical	temperature
accompany	curiosity	heart	popular	therefore
according	decide	height	position	thorough
achieve	definite	hindrance	possess(ion)	though/although
actual(ly)	describe	history	possible	thought
address	desperate	identity	potatoes	through
aggressive	determined	imagine	prejudice	twelfth
amateur	develop	immediate(ly)	pressure	variety
ancient	dictionary	important	privilege	various
answer	different	increase	probably	vegetable
apparent	difficult	individual	profession	vehicle
appear	disappear	interest	programme	weight
appreciate	disastrous	interfere	promise	woman/women
arrive	disappear	interrupt	pronunciation	yacht
attached	early	island	purpose	
available	earth	knowledge	quarter	
average	eight/eighth	language	question	
awkward	embarrass	learn	queue	
bargain	enough	leisure	recent	
believe	environment	length	recognise	
bicycle	equip (-ped, - ment)	library	recommend	
breath	especially	lightning	regular	
breathe	exaggerate	marvellous	reign	
bruise	excellent	material	relevant	
build	exercise	medicine	remember	
busy/business	existence	mention	restaurant	
calendar	experience	minute	rhyme	
category	experiment	mischievous	rhythm	
caught	explanation	muscle	sacrifice	
cemetery	extreme	natural	secretary	
centre	familiar	naughty	sentence	
century	famously	necessary	separate	
certain	February	neighbour	shoulder	
circle	foreign	notice	signature	
committee	forty	nuisance	sincere(ly)	
communicate	forward(s)	occasion(ally)	soldier	
community	frequently	occupy	special	
competition	fruit	occur	stomach	
complete	government	often	straight	
conscience*	grammar	opportunity	strange	
conscious*	group	opposite	strength	
consider	guarantee	ordinary	sufficient	
continue	guard	parliament	suggest	
controversy	guide	particular	suppose	
convenience		peculiar	surprise	
		perhaps	symbol	