Peel Park Primary School

The New National Curriculum and Assessment through Key Stage 1 and 2

Key Stage 1 (ages 5 - 7)
Key Stage 2 (ages 7-11)

Explanatory Notes for Parents
2015/16
The new National Curriculum

The national curriculum gives a framework to schools for what should be taught in key stages one and two for the 'core' and 'foundation' subjects. These are set out below:

**Core subjects:**
- English (reading and writing)
- Mathematics
- Science

**Foundation subjects:**
- Art and design
- Computing
- Design and technology
- French (KS2)
- Geography
- History
- Music
- PE
- RE

The new national curriculum was introduced in schools in September 2014. Although many things within the curriculum have stayed the same to the previous national curriculum, the new framework is more challenging in some aspects. The framework includes the essential knowledge and skills every child should have. Schools and teachers can then plan teaching and learning opportunities to match children’s needs and interests.
What has changed in assessment?

Previously, a child's attainment in the national curriculum was assessed against 'levels', with information about levels being reported to parents at the end of the key stages. This information was based on test results and teacher assessment in reading and mathematics, and teacher assessment in writing and science. Many parents will have heard of pupils being assessed, at the end of the year or key stage, with teachers using phrases such as “working at a level 2” or “achieving a level 4”. An average child was expected to achieve at least a level 2 by the end of Year 2 (aged 7) and at least a level 4 by the end of Y6 (aged 11).

The new curriculum is organised largely in year group expectations, with the phrase 'level' no longer being used to assess children's attainment. Instead, teachers will be assessing whether a child achieves the standard expected for their year group.

Teachers already assess children throughout the year to help them with their planning for teaching activities and identify the 'next steps' in learning. This assessment is often informal and may involve the teacher or perhaps a support assistant observing the child in a variety of situations, talking to them and questioning them to check their understanding and of course marking their work. This is called 'Assessment for Learning'.

These assessment methods will continue - but levels have now changed to 'steps'. The new steps focus on year group/age related expectations instead of levels.
For example, a child working in Year 6 would be expected to progress through the Year 6 steps throughout the year (see below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 6 Beginning</th>
<th>Year 6 Beginning +</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 6 Within</td>
<td>Year 6 Within +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6 Secure</td>
<td>Year 6 Secure +</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers are now encouraged to stretch higher ability children within the year group expectations instead of moving children on to the next year group too early on in the year. If children are struggling to meet the steps within their year group, intervention work will be put in place to help close the gaps. Children with special educational needs, who are working below the expectations for Year 1 of the new national curriculum, will still be assessed using 'P Scales' which break down learning into small steps.

What about statutory assessments at the end of key stages 1 and 2?

As previously explained, Summer 2015 was the last time that 'levels' were used for reporting results for children at the end of the key stage. From summer 2016, formal tests and teacher assessment results will be reported using descriptions which compare children's attainment to the 'expected' attainment for the age of the child.

What about children in Early Years Foundation Stage?
What about High School?

Teachers of children in Reception are part of the 'Early Years Foundation Stage' and are still using the Early Years Foundation Stage framework to help them organise their learning and assessment opportunities. As a school, we have decided to use the National Foundation for Educational Research BASELINE assessment that assesses the children in EYFS.
The curriculum has changed however at KS3 and 4, for children at high school, in a similar way to the changes at KS1 and 2. At both points in a child’s school life — when moving from Reception to Year 1, or from Year 6 to Year 7 at high school, teachers will pass on the relevant assessment information, so that the child can settle in quickly and make progress in the next stage of their school life.

Where can I find out more information?

Further information about the new national curriculum, the assessment arrangements for the EYFS, KS1 and 2, and the P scales, can be found at:

www.gov.uk website, then enter “national curriculum” in the search bar
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/standards-and-testing-agency
www.gov.uk/teacher-assessment-using-p-scales