

St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School

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Monday 27th February 2017

Dear Parents/Carers,

As you may be aware, it is approaching the time of the year when Year 2 children will be formally assessed as they approach the end of Key Stage 1. So here are some answers to frequently asked questions to help inform you of the process:

Why are the children assessed?

It is a statutory requirement that all children in their final year of key stage 1 in the school year 2016/17 must be assessed.

Who assesses the children?

The class teacher.

What areas are the children assessed in?

At the end of key stage 1, teachers have to summarise their judgements for each child, taking into account the child's progress and performance throughout the year. They need to determine whether your child is:

- working towards the expected standard
- at the expected standard or
- at a greater depth within the expected standard

Teachers are no longer required to report numerical levels such as 2c, 2b or 2a. This grading system no longer exists. Teachers need to determine to what degree your child is working at regarding the expected standard (above) in the following curriculum areas:

- reading
- writing
- mathematics

For science, teachers only need to determine whether your child is working at the expected standard or below this.

Where are the children assessed?

Teacher assessment is the main focus for end of key stage one assessment and reporting. It is carried out as part of teaching and learning in the classroom.

How are the children assessed?

A set of tests are used to help inform the final **teacher assessment** judgement reported for each child at the end of key stage 1.

They provide a snapshot of children's attainment.

Teachers must administer National Curriculum tests to help them arrive at a secure judgement for their final teacher assessment at the end of key stage 1. The children must take the tests detailed below. The government have said the grammar, punctuation and spellings tests are optional this year, however, we will be administering them in our school.

- English reading Paper 1: combined reading prompt and answer booklet (30mins)
- English reading Paper 2: reading booklet and reading answer booklet (40mins)

- Mathematics Paper 1: arithmetic (20mins)
- Mathematics Paper 2: reasoning (35mins)

- English grammar, punctuation and spelling Paper 1: spelling, 20 words (15mins)
- English grammar, punctuation and spelling Paper 2: questions (20mins)

The tests are in the form of test papers and they are not strictly timed. If deemed appropriate by the class teacher, the children work through the series of questions in the test paper. The children are given clear instructions and there are always practice questions the children complete together, discussing the answers before completing the rest of the test independently.

The children **do not** have to complete any tests under strict timed conditions.

The children are given the tests and work through them undisturbed and individually at their own pace, whilst supervised by the teacher.

They are encouraged to 'have a go' at each question, but not to worry if they cannot answer some.

Class teachers are vigilant during the administering of tests and tasks and will encourage children to take short breaks when deemed appropriate for each individual.

The children often work individually and undisturbed on tasks in class. Therefore the assessments are not stressful or pressurising. Please re-iterate to your child to simply try their best, as pressure hinders learning.

The class teacher organises the administering of the tests in the way deemed appropriate for the children. This may mean tests are administered with small groups of children or individuals in turn.

When are the children assessed?

The children are expected to be assessed in May 2017.

How can I help my child prepare for the assessments?

In class we have been preparing for the assessments in different ways, including talking through test papers to familiarise the children with the language and layout of the papers. The structures we have put in place from reception have been designed to support your child in reaching their full potential in his/her learning. So please continue to support the following:

- Spellings
- Reading (asking questions – to check your child’s comprehension)
- Homework (encourage joined handwriting and reinforce discrete grammar teaching)
- Maths targets

An Easter homework pack will be sent home with your child for the two week Easter holiday period. There is a reading test, a spelling test, a grammar test and some example maths test questions in the pack. The children should complete the pack over the break, but we suggest you separate each part into manageable sections spread over the 15 days.

Some children will be able to work through the questions independently, some may require support at certain times, others may need you to talk through and discuss each question with them. You have been given an answer booklet, for you to check your child’s answers, but please spend time discussing the appropriate responses and strategies with your child, (e.g. re-reading parts of the text of the reading test to extract information for answers/estimating answers to maths sums before working them out). We also ask that you place an emphasis on the children explaining *how* they worked out their answers to maths questions, so please spend time asking your child to explain the *strategies* s/he used to ‘work out’ the different problems.

This opportunity and experience allows the children to become familiar with test type questions and is of great value to your child for this assessment period and in preparation for future tests they will meet.

When will I know the outcome?

You will receive a report of your child’s progress prior to the summer term open evening. The outcomes achieved by your child will be reported with the end of year report and you will have the opportunity to discuss them at the open evening.

I hope you have found this letter informative and understand that the assessment process is well-managed and non-threatening. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your child’s class teacher at the end of the day.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Alford
(Deputy Headteacher)