

The Haven VA CE/Methodist Primary School

The New National Curriculum – A guide for Parents



The new curriculum was introduced in schools this September for all year groups apart from Year 2 and Year 6. For children in Year 2 and Year 6, the new curriculum won't become statutory until September 2015. This is because these children are in their last year of the Key Stages.

What's changed?

English, Mathematics and Science remain very important and are considered the core subjects. The National Curriculum sets out in some detail what must be taught in each of these subjects, and they take up a substantial part of your child's learning week. Alongside these are the familiar foundation subjects: Art, Computing (previously ICT), Design & Technology, Foreign Languages (age 7+ only), Geography, History, Music and Physical Education. For these foundation subjects, the details in the curriculum are significantly briefer: schools have much more flexibility regarding what they cover in these subjects.

Much of the publicity about the changes to the curriculum has focused on **'higher expectations'** in various subjects, and it is certainly the case that the **content of the new curriculum is significantly more demanding than in the past**. For example, in mathematics there is now a much greater focus on the skills of arithmetic and also working with fractions. The expectation of the end of Key Stage 2 mathematics curriculum, particularly in number, is now more like an old level 5, which is a whole level higher than was the case with the previous curriculum where the expected level in mathematics was a level 4. In English lessons there is now more attention paid to the study of grammar and spelling; an area which was far less notable in previous curricula. (A summary of the main changes can be found overleaf.)

High Achievers

If your child is achieving well, rather than moving on to the following year group's work, schools are being informed to encourage more in-depth and investigative work to allow a greater mastery and understanding of concepts and ideas.

Tests your child will take

Year 2 and Year 6 children are formally assessed to judge their progress against the requirements of the curriculum. Because the 2014 curriculum will have only been in place for nine months, these children will be assessed against the requirements of the old curriculum in the National Curriculum Tests in the Summer 2015.

New National curriculum tests for children in Year 2 and Year 6 will be introduced from 2016. Where previously these tests – and other teacher assessments – were graded in levels (normally numbering between Level 1 and Level 6 in primary school), from 2016 the tests will be reported as a scaled score, with a score of 100 representing the expected level for each age group.

The DfE have left it up to schools to decide how to measure pupils' progress in the intervening years. We have been given this year to devise our assessment system. As a school, we are fully embracing developing a new assessment system without levels and we are proud of the fact that we are further ahead in this development than many East Sussex schools. This means that at the end of this academic year, in your child's final report, we will be reporting their academic achievements differently from previous years. Whilst pupils' achievements in Years 2 & 6 will still be recorded as levels, for those pupils in other year groups achievement will be reported with regards to whether they are working 'Below National Expectation', 'Working at National Expectation' and 'Working above National Expectation'.





The table below summarises the main changes in English and Mathematics

Subject	What's new:
English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Higher expectations. For instance the end of Key Stage 2 expectation is closer to an old level 4a rather than the current expectation of an old level 4c <p><u>Speaking and Listening</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Greater emphasis on spoken English including standard English <p><u>Writing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stronger emphasis on grammar and punctuation – more than content and composition. There is a prescriptive list of grammar and punctuation for each year group. ▪ Higher expectations of spelling, including from dictation ▪ Greater emphasis on the role of phonics for spelling earlier in Year 1 – not just phonics for reading ▪ Handwriting (not currently assessed under the old National curriculum) is expected to be joined by the end of Year 3 ▪ Bigger focus on proof reading and accuracy ▪ There are less specific genres to be covered in writing. The focus is more on the quality of written English <p><u>Reading</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New focus on reading aloud with pace and expression ▪ Greater emphasis on poetry - learning and reciting poems for performance ▪ Greater emphasis on justifying opinions and responses with direct reference to the text
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Higher expectations. For instance the end of Key Stage 2 expectation is closer to an old level 5c rather than the current expectation of an old level 4c ▪ Five year olds are expected to count up to 100 (compared to 20 under the old curriculum) and learn number bonds to 20 (compared to up to 10 under the old curriculum) ▪ Children are expected to know all times tables and division facts up to 12 x 12 by the end of Year 4 (compared to knowing times tables and division facts up to 10 x 10 by the end of Year 6 under the old curriculum) ▪ Fraction work starts earlier with simple fractions (1/4 and 1/2) taught from KS1. Year 4 children are introduced to adding two fractions with the same denominator (this was in Year 6 in the old curriculum) ▪ Data handling has been removed and replaced in Years 4,5, & 6 by 'statistics' ▪ Greater emphasis on using and applying, which will form a major part of Year 6 assessments ▪ Formal column methods for addition and subtraction are expected by the end of Year 3 ▪ Greater emphasis on checking work and explaining why an answer is correct