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Y6 SATs information

Dear Parent/ Carer,

As you will no doubt already know, this year your child will sit the Y6 SATs tests alongside every other year six pupil in England and Wales. Last Summer, the DfE made significant changes to these tests, the way in which they were marked and how results were represented. These changes were to bring the tests/ assessments in line with the new national curriculum which was introduced in September 2014. These new tests saw a noticeable rise in the standard expected for children to be considered as working at the level appropriate for their age and therefore meeting the 'expected standard' for their age, set by the DfE.

We are writing to you now because children will sit these tests in May. We have been working hard with your child since the start of the academic year in readiness for these tests but will now be 'stepping it up a gear' in the final run up to them to ensure we have given children the very best chance of showing what they can do. This letter aims to explain more about the tests and the teacher assessment which also takes place.

The 2017 SATs schedule is as follows:

Monday 8 May 2017	English reading
	English grammar, punctuation and spelling Paper 1: questions
Tuesday 9 May 2017	English grammar, punctuation and spelling Paper 2: spelling
	Mathematics Paper 1: arithmetic
Wednesday 10 May 2017	Mathematics Paper 2: reasoning
Thursday 11 May 2017	Mathematics Paper 3: reasoning

It is extremely important that you child is present for the SATs tests.

TEST DETAILS:

READING

The reading test is a single paper with questions based on three passages of text. **Your child will have one hour, including reading time, to complete the test.**

There will be a selection of question types, including:

- **Ranking/ordering**, e.g. 'Number the events below to show the order in which they happen in the story'
- **Labelling**, e.g. 'Label the text to show the title of the story'
- **Find and copy**, e.g. 'Find and copy one word that suggests what the weather is like in the story'
- **Short constructed response**, e.g. 'What does the bear eat?'
- **Open-ended response**, e.g. 'Look at the sentence that begins *Once upon a time*. How does the writer increase the tension throughout this paragraph? Explain fully, referring to the text in your answer.'

GRAMMAR, PUNCTUATION AND SPELLING (sometimes referred to as GPS or SPAG)

The grammar, punctuation and spelling test consists of two parts: a **grammar and punctuation paper** requiring short answers, lasting 45 minutes, and an **aural spelling test of 20 words**, lasting around 15 minutes, in which a paragraph is read to the children and they have to write in the missing words.

The grammar and punctuation test will include two sub-types of questions:

- **Selected response**, e.g. 'Identify the adjectives in the sentence below'
- **Constructed response**, e.g. 'Correct/complete/rewrite the sentence below,' or, 'The sentence below has an apostrophe missing. Explain why it needs an apostrophe.'

MATHS

Children sit three papers in maths:

- Paper 1: **arithmetic**, 30 minutes
- Papers 2 and 3: **reasoning**, 40 minutes per paper

Paper 1 will consist of fixed response questions, where children have to give the correct answer to calculations, including long multiplication and division. Papers 2 and 3 will involve a number of question types, including:



- Multiple choice
- True or false
- Constrained questions, e.g. giving the answer to a calculation, drawing a shape or completing a table or chart
- Less constrained questions, where children will have to explain their approach for solving a problem

MARKING TESTS AND RESULTS EXPLAINED

All of the tests are administered under exam conditions, often witnessed by a governor to ensure compliance with all of the rules and regulations. Tests are sealed in bags immediately following the test and collected from school to be marked by external markers across the country. Results usually come back into school early to mid July. Children's actual score from a test is converted into a 'scaled score' which determines whether a child has met the standard or not. A score of 99 or less means a child has failed to meet the standard. 100 is the expected standard score so a score of 100 or more will mean your child has met the expected standard. Some children will be working at greater depth because they achieve a much higher scaled score. The threshold score for 'greater depth' is not pre-determined; it is worked out after all tests across the country have been marked. Last year children who scored 110 or higher were awarded greater depth, but this may be higher or lower this year.

In the report which we will send you at the end of the summer term, we will tell you whether your child met the standard or not and whether they were working at greater depth. Please remember, we do not get this information ourselves until early to mid July.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT DETAILS:

There is no writing test. Only pupils in randomly selected schools are required to sit a science test. Instead, teachers make a judgement about whether a child has met the standard, or indeed is working at greater depth within the standard, using the documents attached- the 'interim assessments'. As you will see, the things Y6 children are required to do to meet the standard expected for their age are tough! Children have to evidence that they can do every single one of the things in the list within each of the three bands before a teacher can judge them to be at that standard; it is what we call an 'all fit', not a 'best fit' model.

As you will appreciate, meeting the 'expected standard' is quite a challenge for many Y6 children. That said, we are working very hard (as are the children) to ensure they are as well prepared as possible for the tests. In order to support your child's preparation for the assessments, we are also implementing the following in school:



Booster sessions: Your child maybe chosen to take part in additional lessons that focus on the key skills of maths and reading- these sessions support children in small groups to be able to revise and work at their own pace.

TEST readiness lessons: Pupils will spend time examining test formats; how to answer questions, pacing to ensure the tests are completed; working under test conditions; and how to play to their own strengths during the test.

Extra Homework: The majority of homework will now be focused on achieving the expected standard and higher. Most will encourage the revision of key maths, reading and grammar skills. There will be the standard class homework and also an optional extra challenge that the children can also complete if they would like to. As always, homework will be handout and expected in on Mondays each week.

How to help your child

We appreciate that sometimes, as parents, you find it really difficult to know how to best support your child. Here are a few simple things which you can do which make a huge difference:

- Practise basic skills eg times tables (fast recall is really important in a timed test!), spellings (there are lists your child can learn- see their class teacher if you haven't seen them).
- Hear your child read regularly at home – children need to read with SPEED, ACCURACY and FLUENCY in a timed test. In previous years, good readers have failed to score well in test situations because they are just too slow.
- Ask your child questions as they read eg, how do you think character X feels and why, explain why character Y acted in such a way, why did the author choose to, find a word in the text which means the same as....., find a phrase in the text which tells you.....
- Develop and support your child to adopt the attitude of “ always do your best!”
- Purchase specific workbooks aimed at KS2 SATs, curriculum 2014 (ensure it is the new curriculum). These are particularly useful as the layout reflects SAT papers and offers help and guidance both to the pupil and parent (maths reasoning workbooks are very good).
- Keep help low key, stay relaxed; we don't want stressed out children! At the end of the day they are just tests for ten year olds! See your child's class teacher if you are concerned about anything.

We will be completing practice papers in school and will send them home after children have completed them in class so that you can see their individual strengths and where they need more help.

We hope that you find the information in this letter useful.

Mrs C Hughes

Mrs L Walker

Mr G Dyer

