

The 2016 National Tests – A Parent’s Guide Key Stage 1

In the Summer term of 2016, children in Year 2 and Year 6 will be the first to take the new SATs papers. These tests in English and Maths will reflect the new national curriculum, and are intended to be more rigorous. There will also be a completely new marking scheme to replace the existing national curriculum levels.

About the tests the first thing to say about the Key Stage 1 tests is that your child may be completely unaware that they are taking them. We have considerable flexibility in how we implement the tests and much of it will feel like a normal classroom day; teachers will do their best to ensure that children are not at all concerned about the tests. To allow this, the tests do not need to be taken on a specific day, but can be throughout the month of May near the end of Year 2, with pupils either individually, in groups or all together as a class. There are six papers altogether across English and Mathematics.

Mathematics Test

There are two papers in the Mathematics test for Year 2.

Paper 1 – Arithmetic

The arithmetic paper will test your child's number and calculation skills. It has 25 questions, some of which will require children to know some basic number facts, such as the number bonds (adding two single-digit numbers) and the 2's, 5's and 10's times tables. Towards the end, there are some more challenging calculations such as missing number problems or finding simple fractions of quantities.

Paper 2 – Reasoning

The second mathematics paper requires reasoning – using maths to solve problems. The first five questions in this paper will be read to your child, before they move on to the rest of the paper. But don't worry – if they find anything difficult to read, then help will be available.

The questions in this paper will often include some background explanation, such as using money to buy fruit or measuring drinks.

As with the arithmetic paper, the earlier questions will be more straightforward; questions towards the end will offer more challenge. Not all children will reach them or complete them – and that's fine; nobody expects a perfect score! Some of these questions may also require more than one step and so will be worth up to 2 marks.

Marking and Results

Your child's teacher will mark the test and their marks (the total out of 60 marks) will be converted into a scaled score and each child will receive an overall result indicating whether or not they have achieved the required standard of the test.

English Test

Paper 1 – **English Reading** (lower demand)

The first paper contains short texts with two or three questions to answer. Many of these will require either single-word answers or ticking a box.

Paper 2 – **English Reading** (higher demand)

In Paper 2, children will read two different texts and use these to answer questions in a separate booklet. Most children will take this paper, but teachers will not expect all children to complete the whole task. If your child finds reading more of a challenge at this stage, then his/her teacher will stop the test at an appropriate time. The questions in the booklet contain a mix of tick-box and 'circle the correct answer' questions, with some that require a written answer. Some questions require simple retrieval of information from the text; others will ask your child to explain something in more detail.

The Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling Test

Paper 1 – **Spelling**

The spelling paper requires children to spell 20 words. Each word is read out as part of a sentence, which is printed in the answer booklet. Your child will be asked to write the missing word into the gap. The words in the test will be based on the familiar phonics patterns taught in Key Stage 1, in increasing difficulty. All words to be spelled are repeated more than once.

Paper 2 – **Grammar, punctuation and vocabulary**

The second paper assesses grammar and punctuation. 2016 will be the first time that this is tested in Year 2, and the questions will refer both to children's knowledge of grammatical terms (such as noun and verb) and use of words in the right context. Some questions will also require children to put in the appropriate punctuation marks to sentences, or to change the tense of a sentence.

Marking and Results

All the tests will be marked by teachers at your child's school to help them judge the attainment and progress of your child. The results will be reported to you, often as part of a wider school report at the end of the school year. However, the way this is done has changed significantly from the national curriculum levels used in the past. Your child's score will be converted to a scaled score to allow it to be compared to others'. Scaled scores will normally range between 80 and 130. The scale will be set so that reaching a score of 100 will indicate that your child is working at the expected standard for the end of Key Stage 1. Higher scores indicate more advanced attainment, with lower scores suggesting that your child may need some additional support to catch up with his or her peers. Scores will be provided for reading and mathematics, with a single score for grammar, punctuation and spelling. Alongside these scores, your child's school will report on other subjects such as spoken language and science, as well as the more general report comments.

Ask your child's teacher about how you can best support your child in preparing for the tests – perhaps by asking the right sorts of questions when reading with your child, or practising some key number facts.