

Changes to your child's assessment at key stage 1

For parents and carers of children who started year 2 in September 2004

Measuring success – the changes to your child's assessment

The way that children's progress is assessed at the end of year 2 is changing. The emphasis will be on the teacher's judgement of how your child is performing throughout the year. The national curriculum tests (sometimes referred to as 'SATs') will be carried out on a more informal basis. Your child's teacher will decide on the most suitable time for your child to be tested. The information that will be sent to parents by the end of the summer term 2005 will help you to see more easily how your child is progressing.

Why change the current system?

The government listened to the views of parents, teachers and local education authorities (LEAs) and asked the National Assessment Agency to design a system of assessment which gives more importance to how your child is performing throughout the year and places less emphasis on testing.

The new system has been trialled by 5,000 schools throughout England and welcomed by teachers, schools, parents and children as a more flexible and less time-consuming way of assessing what children are learning in their early years at school.

What will the changes mean?

Your child's teacher will continue to check their progress regularly as part of normal classroom practice. The new system gives teachers more flexibility to choose when they carry out assessments. The teacher will decide the best time for your child to take tests that are appropriate for the level they are working at. The tests will provide information to help teachers with their assessments.

Will my child still take tests?

Yes. Schools are obliged by law to test the children they teach. National curriculum tests help ensure a national standard, and are designed to fit in with normal classroom activities as far as possible. Any questions you may have should be discussed with your child's class teacher.

What arrangements are being made for children with special educational needs?

Teachers now have more control over which tasks and tests children take as part of the assessment, so it is easier to cater for individual children's special needs.

Are these changes the same for all schools in England?

Yes, they apply to all state schools.

How can I be sure that all teachers are making a fair judgement?

LEAs will ensure that teachers arrive at fair and consistent judgements.

What will the results look like?

Your child will be given a single level for each assessment area – speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science. The results will be accompanied by an explanation of what the levels mean. If you want more details about your child's results, please talk to their teacher.

Finding out more

If you have any further queries about the year 2 assessments for your child you should talk to the class teacher or headteacher. you want general information about the new assessment system you can:

go online:

- National Assessment Agency website – www.naa.org.uk and click on the link for national curriculum testing
- Department for Education and Skills parents' website – www.parentcentre.gov.uk

write:

- National Assessment Agency
29 Bolton Street
London W1J 8BT
- Department for Education and Skills
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BT

call:

- National Assessment Agency
08700 60 06 22
Minicom: 020 7509 6546
- Department for Education and Skills
08700 00 22 88

If you would like more copies of this leaflet, please phone 08700 60 60 15 quoting reference QCA/04/1338.

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