

# St Mary's C.E. Primary School



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Dear Parents

As you may be aware from the media, the Government has made a big change in the way children at school are assessed. You may have heard talk of 'assessment without levels' and this refers to the announcement from the Department for Education (DfE) that there would no longer be national curriculum levels. Children in Years 1 to 6 will no longer be assessed against levels from a 1c to a level 6. Children in Reception will continue to be assessed against the areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP).

This runs alongside changes to the National Curriculum which we introduced in school from September 2014. The old and new curriculum have different content which means that it is not possible to have an exact correlation between an old national curriculum level and the more challenging requirements of the new curriculum. Instead of assessing a child's attainment using "Levels", the Department for Education have introduced Age Related Expectations for each year group from Year 1 upwards. These outline what every child is expected to know for Reading, Writing and Maths by the end of each school year.

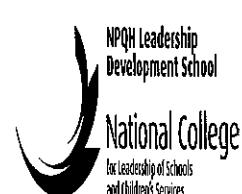
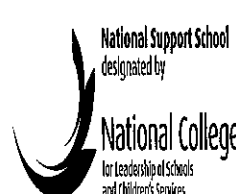
At St. Mary's Academy Trust, we have embraced this opportunity to review and develop our assessment procedures in a way that best suits our children. As a group of six schools, we have undertaken extensive research into different methods and systems that we could use to track and maximise children's progress across the school.

St. Mary's Primary School have always believed in the principles of finding out what pupils already know and their personal strengths; assessing what they need to learn next and then ensuring that we personalise our curriculum to teach them their next steps to make progress. All of our teachers know what their pupils' individual strengths and areas for development are and share these with both pupils and parents. When designing our new assessment system, we kept these thoughts at the forefront of our mind.

Teachers will continually assess pupils to determine how they are progressing and identify their next steps in learning. Pupils will, as before, receive personal targets to work on which will be shared with you at parents' evening next week. We will track pupils throughout the year to determine their attainment and their progress, and put measures in place to support those who are at risk of not meeting their targets.

Our new assessment system uses some new language to explain where children are working within the age related expectations. This language is the same as many schools across Barnsley and the country are using. We will use the terms emerging, developing, secure and mastered.

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What these terms means is set out below:

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| <b>Emerging:</b>   | This means that your child has met at least 25% of objectives for a year group.   |
| <b>Developing:</b> | This means that your child has met at least 50% of objectives, including some of the key objectives that we think are really important for that year group.   |
| <b>Secure:</b>     | This means that your child has met at least 85% of objectives, including most of the key objectives that we think are really important for that year group.   |
| <b>Mastered:</b>   | This means that your child has met at least 90% of objectives and can use them independently in a range of contexts, including all of the key objectives. They are beginning to work on objectives from the next year group's curriculum. |

The new curriculum has significantly raised the expectations of what pupils are expected to know by the end of each year group. Therefore, it is very unlikely that any pupils would be working at 'mastered' level unless they are exceptionally gifted. It is also likely that a child who previously had been working at an expected "level" is now assessed as being below Age Related Expectations. Children may be taught objectives from a younger Year group if this is appropriate to their needs.

At our first parents evening, the focus will be placed on discussing your individual child's strengths and areas for development in the curriculum. You will also receive your child's personal targets so you know how you can help support their learning at home. At the end of each academic year, your child's annual report will inform you of both their attainment (where they are working within the curriculum) and the progress that they have made.

Although we continue to have high expectations of all our pupils, we are also completely committed to ensuring their time at school is a positive enjoyable and enriching experience. To this end, we strive to provide a broad and engaging curriculum.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any concerns or would like to discuss this further.

Best wishes,



Lee Spencer  
Head teacher