

# **ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING**

**Summer 2016**

## **A PARENTS' GUIDE TO THE NEW ARRANGEMENTS**

This document explains recent changes that have been made to

- national testing of children in Year 2 and Year 6 (SATS)
- government expectations for teacher assessment
- Henleaze Junior School's new assessment framework
- Henleaze Junior School's new format for end of year reports to parents

The document is intended to help HJS parents understand changes they will have heard about in the news, changes they may have observed in the focus of the curriculum being taught to their children, and the changes they will observe in the end of year report on their child's progress and attainment

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## What has changed?

The government introduced a new [National Curriculum](#) for Key Stage 1 and 2 in September 2014. New test formats for the revised curriculum are being used for the first time this summer to assess children in Year 6 and Year 2.

As an academy, Henleaze Junior School is not obliged to deliver the National Curriculum – we are free to design our own – but all children are required to take the end of key stage tests in Year 6, so inevitably our English, Maths and Science curricula cannot differ radically from the National Curriculum, and since our children will go on to secondary schools which may or may not be academies, our coverage of other subjects has to be broadly in line with the National Curriculum.

### Assessment in the olden days

Previous versions of the National Curriculum have defined **Programmes of Study**, which described broadly what should be taught for each subject and **Level Descriptors**, which described how we could tell if a child was working at Level 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc. Level 2 was a description of what an average child should be able to do at the end of Year 2 and Level 4 was the average for Year 6.

### Assessment and the new National Curriculum

The new National Curriculum Programmes of Study describe what is to be taught in each subject in more prescriptive detail, for the core subjects of English, Maths and Science, and probably less detail for other subjects. It does not describe the standards children are expected to meet. Levels have gone.

Schools have been told they are free to devise their own assessment framework to track and measure pupils' progress. The inevitable result of this is that different schools may now describe children's outcomes in different ways.

## Tests and Teacher Assessments

Schools are still required to make children do standard tests (SATs) in English and Maths at the end of Years 2 and 6.

At Year 2, these tests are done during the summer term and marked internally. The results are used to help teachers decide whether children are working at an appropriate standard.

At Year 6, the tests are done on specific days, dictated by the Department for Education (DfE), under strict test conditions, and sent away to be marked. Teachers have to submit their teacher assessments, based on all the evidence available to them, for English, Maths and Science, by the end of June. The test results do not come back until the beginning of July, so they cannot be used to inform our Teacher Assessment.

### The tests

At Key Stage 2, children sit the following tests:

**Reading** – They have an hour to read a booklet containing several passages of text, and answer another booklet full of questions.

**Spelling Punctuation and Grammar** – Paper 1 has questions about punctuation and grammar, for which they have 45 minutes, and Paper 2 is a spelling test of 20 words.

**Arithmetic** – 30 minutes to do 36 questions – basically sums (including fractions).

**Mathematics** – Paper 1 and Paper 2, 45 minutes each, covering the full range of the mathematics curriculum, including calculation, geometry, statistics, measurement.

There is no Science test, but we have to submit a Science teacher assessment.

Scores from the tests will be converted into a “scaled score”, based on 100 representing the standard required for the end of the key stage. Scores above 100 will represent “exceeding the standard” and scores below 100 will represent “working below the standard”. The conversion scale will not be known until after all the tests have been marked, so we cannot tell children how their results in the mock tests would have related to “meeting the required standard”.

The test results will come back as a raw score, a scaled score and a statement saying they have either Met or Not met the required standard.

### **Teacher Assessment**

We are required to submit 4 teacher assessments: Reading, Writing, Mathematics and Science.

For Reading, Mathematics and Science, we report either “Working at the expected standard” or “Not working at the expected standard”.

For Writing (where there is no test, apart from the Spelling Punctuation and Grammar) we report either “Working at the expected standard”, “Working towards the expected standard” or “Working at greater depth within the expected standard”. There is an additional category for children not meeting the expected standard.

An [Interim Assessment Framework](#) was published in September 2016 setting out the criteria to be used in reaching our Teacher Assessment. In order to “meet the expected standard”, there must be evidence that children can do **everything** on the list.

Controversially, this means that a child must be able to **spell most words correctly**, which appears to mean that children with dyslexia cannot meet expectations, in spite of everything we know about the abilities of dyslexic students. It also rules out children who cannot **produce legible joined handwriting**, including anyone for whom we might have identified a computer as an acceptable recording device to overcome specific challenges. Subsequent clarification has allowed that the handwriting requirement may be waived in terms of “meeting the standard”, but it will prevent children from “working at greater depth.”

[Exemplifications materials](#), indicating what constitutes “the expected standard”, were not published until 2016 – Maths in January, Writing in February, Reading and Science in April. The response of the teaching profession nationally was one of shock, since the examples given appeared to represent a standard much higher than children would previously have been expected to meet. The DfE was forced to issue a [Clarification](#) letter.

To add to the confusion, three days before Christmas 2015, the DfE uploaded a new timeline to their website, bringing forward the date on which schools are required to submit their Teacher Assessments by one month, from the end of June to the end of May. After pressure from the profession, on 19<sup>th</sup> February the DfE uploaded an [announcement](#) that they would put the date back to 30<sup>th</sup> June.

### **What does all this mean for children, parents and teachers?**

Children in all year groups may have noticed that work in Maths has got tougher, but hopefully they will also have noticed that we have spent more time trying to consolidate skills before moving on to the next topic. They will undoubtedly have found that they have spent more time in English learning about grammar, as they are now expected to know lots of technical terms and, rightly or wrongly, to be able to identify types of words, clauses and punctuation in sentences.

Year 6 are being tested this year on four years-worth of new curriculum, when they have only had two years to study it.

Teachers have been trying to strike a balance between delivering the curriculum that we believe children need and deserve, and teaching the content required to meet a set of expectations which were not made clear to them until well into this school year.

The DfE recently issued [guidance for parents in the form of a booklet and video](#). It does not convey the enormous impact of the changes they have introduced on the way children are taught and assessed.

### **What does this mean for Henleaze Junior School?**

We have attempted to minimise the impact of the changes by continuing to deliver a meaningful, enriched curriculum full of opportunities for all children. Our aim, as always is to equip children to be independent learners, articulate communicators, creative thinkers and considerate, responsible contributors to the community.

We recognise that we must also give our children every opportunity to be successful in the end of key stage 2 tests in order to validate their hard work and give them the confidence to move on to secondary school. For that reason, we have spent more lesson time than usual this year practising test questions and learning exam techniques.

We are not working in isolation. All schools are in the same position and we have made the most of our connections with our neighbouring schools in the [NW24 Teaching and Learning Partnership](#). We have been working together to establish a consistent understanding of what is required.

## The HJS assessment framework

Many schools were quick to purchase assessment systems which were published following the introduction of the new curriculum. At HJS, we chose to develop our own system that measures what we think it important to teach, rather than teaches just what the government requires us to measure.

### Non-negotiables

Our teaching and assessment frameworks are based on a set of **non-negotiable** statements for each year group. So far we have drawn up non-negotiables for Reading, Writing and Maths. These do not cover everything that we have taught or that the children have learnt, but they identify key indicators that they are ready to move on to the next stage.

### BMX

We have coined the term BMX to describe our grading system. It stands for **B**elow, **M**eeting or **eX**ceeding our expectations.

Our teaching should always recognise what children can already do and what they need to learn next. When we plan and deliver any lesson or series of lessons, we should have an expectation of what the children should be able to do at the end. Most children will **M**eeet our expectations (M). Some will **eX**ceed our expectations (X) and a small number will be working at a level **B**elow our expectations for the rest of the children.

This principle guides our day to day teaching and can be similarly used constructively as an end of year assessment grade. We need to know who has not met our expectations, and more specifically, what is holding them back, so that we can help them plug the gaps. We need to know who has not only met our expectations, but is capable of tackling greater challenge. We expect the majority of children to meet our expectations.

Throughout the year, teachers have been tracking progress using BMX grades. At the end of the year, children will be **M** if they have met ALL of the non-negotiables for the year. We have introduced a grade of **M-** for children who have met most of the non-negotiables, but still have some work to do on one or, at most, two objectives.

Children who are working at a lower level generally than expected for their year group will be **B**. They will usually be set differentiated work, and may receive some additional learning support. We will be measuring their progress against the non-negotiables for a previous year.

We have not yet developed hard and fast criteria to describe children who are exceeding expectations. This year, we will only flag children up as **X** if we have clear evidence, based on our professional experience, that they are very secure in all the required skills and able to apply them independently and creatively in a variety of contexts.

## Reporting to parents

The Annual Report that you will receive this year will have a slightly different format from previous years. It will include:

### ***This year's curriculum coverage:***

*A description of the skills and knowledge that we have taught, broken down by National Curriculum subject.*

### ***This year's expectations for Reading, Writing and Maths***

*An explanation of the "non-negotiables" that a child in this year group should have mastered.*

### ***This year's progress***

*A description of your child's achievements and progress this year, including:*

- Their development as a learner and the contribution they have made to the class and the school.*
- Relevant comments on curriculum subjects and topic work, including particular highlights of the year, areas of notable strength or specific targets for development.*
- A target to work on to prepare for next September.*
- Progress in Reading, Writing and Maths, including an assessment of their current attainment and a target if they have not yet met our expectations for their year group.*

### ***Self-Assessment***

*Your child's own report on the year gone by and their aspiration for the year ahead.*

### ***Attendance data***

*The number of half-day sessions attended up to the end of June, a total percentage attendance for the year and, if appropriate, the number of unauthorised absences.*

We expect to be reporting that many children have met our expectations for the current year.

If children have met most of our expectations, we will tell you which non-negotiable they need to work on.

Only a few children will be described as **exceeding** expectations. This is because as yet there is insufficient guidance to enable us to define that extra dimension. We do not expect children to start working on the next year's curriculum.

If children are still working below our expectations for the year group, we will set an appropriate target for their next step.

If children are meeting or exceeding our expectations for the year, we will not set a specific target. There will be a general target under the heading "Moving On".

Children in Year 6 will also be given the results of their SATs tests, although these may not be available until after the main report is sent out.