



Year Two SATs

Information for Parents

KS1 SATs

Information for parents

What happens when it's SATs time?

Overview

During May, all 7 and 11 year olds take the end of Key Stage national tests (often called 'SATs'). These tests are designed to check that children in all schools are making progress. This leaflet looks at what actually happens during the testing period and how you can help your child.

The law says:

- All children must take the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Testing must take place in May. Key Stage 1 children have the whole month to do the tests.
- 7-year-olds are tested on reading, writing, spelling and maths.
- Key Stage 1 teachers mark the tests themselves, with their marking checked by the authority's advisors or inspectors. This is to make sure that all results are absolutely fair.

None of the tests have a set time limit and children can take as long as they need within reason.

Reading

Some time between now and May, some children will read individually to a teacher from a list of approved books. They will share the reading with the teacher for some of the book, then read part of it without any help and answer some questions to show that they understand the story.

Then, during May, some pupils will be tested in written comprehension. The children will have a booklet containing a story and some information or non-fiction writing, which they will read and then answers questions about.

If they are able readers they will be tested with a higher level comprehension booklet. This one will be a harder text to read and have more complicated questions to answer. The teacher will judge which test is the best one for your child and it will depend upon the level at which they are working at the time of the tests.

Spelling

Children have another booklet in which they write spellings of common words as the teacher reads them out. The spelling mark is no longer reported separately but is added to the writing mark.

Writing

Some time during the first half of the Summer term, your child will do two pieces of writing, one short and one longer. This will be used to see how well your child can describe and explain things, use punctuation, spell and plan a piece of work. Handwriting will also be judged. The teacher will talk to the children before the test and explain what is expected, but during the test the children must work independently.

Maths

Children work through booklets of maths questions covering all of the work they have been doing in their numeracy lessons including number, shape, measuring, simple fractions, data handling and problem solving. Your child is allowed to use some equipment for counting and have a ruler, but, as in all the other tests, they are expected to work out the answers on their own. There may be questions for which they will have to write an explanation of their 'working out'. Children can ask the teacher to read the questions to them and the written answers are not judged on spelling or handwriting. There are two separate ones and your child will sit the paper which reflects the level they are working at.

The school will report teacher assessments for Maths, English and Science. This assessment is based upon work done throughout the year.

Frequently Asked Questions

Does my child have to do the tests?

Yes, unless you can give a very good reason why they shouldn't. Severe learning difficulties, total lack of English or serious illness are the kinds of reasons accepted.

Unfortunately, you can't withdraw your child because you don't agree with testing or because you think it might upset them.

In fact, only a tiny fraction of children in state schools miss the national tests.

What happens if my child misses a test?

At Key Stage 1, teachers will arrange for your child to take it at another time.

What happens if my child isn't ready for the tests?

At Key Stage 1 the teacher may decide to begin by giving your child individual tasks instead. These are a little easier than the tests. If they do well on the tasks, then they will have a go at the tests.

How you can help

- Please don't take your child on holiday during term time.
- Please do not buy any commercially produced revision materials but continue to share stories, practise children's words and complete homework. This will be more beneficial to the children.
- Make sure they get plenty of sleep during the SATs period. The SATs week can be tiring for 7-year-olds, and they will need a chance to relax and get some fresh air and exercise when the school day is over.
- Try not to make a big thing of it. Not every child deals with exams well. The tests are used to inform the teacher assessments which take account of your child's work over the whole year. This helps to give a balanced picture of what they can do.

To sum up

National tests are an important milestone in school life. They give useful information to your child's teachers and to the government. But it's important to get them in proportion. They are just one of the ways the school works out how well your child is doing. They shouldn't be stressful, and in fact many children enjoy the change in routine, as long as they know they have your support and understanding.