



Autumn 2015

Curriculum and Assessment – a short guide for parents and carers.

A number of key changes to education have been put in place since September 2014. I hope that this short guide will update you on how these changes are being applied at Holy Trinity Primary. If you have any queries, please do contact me. There will be an information session in the second half of the autumn term. Penny Cox

The School Curriculum - From September 2014 the Department for Education published a new National Curriculum which tells schools what to teach (the programmes of study) in individual year groups, each of these programmes of study is broken down into smaller chunks known as key performance indicators. The new curriculum is more demanding and expects some elements to be taught at a younger age than had previously been the case with the old curriculum.

Assessment - Up until the start of this academic year schools throughout the country have been using National Curriculum levels and sublevels to measure attainment and progress, for example, sharing with parents that their child had achieved a level 2b in their writing and in order to progress to a level 2a they need to develop particular aspects of their writing. The government now believes that this use of levels is not helpful in developing consolidated learning. Previously the pressure on schools was to move children through the levels as fast as possible, "depth and breadth of understanding were sometimes sacrificed in favour of pace" (quoted from a government report). In response the government has removed the use of levels from September 2015. Schools should now report to parents and pupils on the child's acquisition of the skills and knowledge for the programmes of study for their year group. The aim is for children to become deeply secure in the expectations for their year group by the end of each academic year.

What does this mean? - When you have your autumn parent/teacher meeting the teacher will discuss;

How your child has settled into the new year, both from a social and from a behaviour for learning perspective

Where your child is on their progress towards acquiring the skills and knowledge that relate to their year's programme of study. This will be either; "beginning", "working within" or "secure". In the autumn term the vast majority of children will be at the "beginning" stage

Your child's next steps. You will still be able to see your child's targets in their books

We will continue to assess using teacher judgment based on the child's day to day learning in class. In some years we are also using diagnostic tests linked to the new curriculum. Children are very much part of the assessment; they regularly discuss their strengths and next steps with class teachers and teaching assistants.

Some children with additional needs will be working on a personalised programme. For our higher attaining children the expectation is that they will work with deeper understanding on the targets for their chronological year group.

Statutory assessment year groups

Reception - in Reception the assessment will remain the same as it has been in recent years, with the addition of a new baseline test at the start of the year

Year 1 – will continue to have the national phonics test

Year 2 – will continue to have national tests and tasks at the end of the year.

Year 6 – will continue to have tasks and tests at the end of the year. Children will receive a score rather than a national curriculum level. This score will enable you to compare your child's attainment against national performance.

If you have a child in year 1, 2 or 6 you will hear more about their tests and tasks later in the year. Senior leaders, and governors, will continue to use this information to monitor the performance of children, classes and the school as a whole.