



Orsett

NATIONAL CURRICULUM 2014 Parent's Guide

**MOTIVATING AND INSPIRING OUR CHILDREN TO ACHIEVE ...
...IN A CREATIVE, CARING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY**

NATIONAL CURRICULUM 2014

A Guide for Parents

Introduction

In September 2014 the primary school curriculum is to get a radical shake-up. So why the big change, and how will it affect your child?

The National Curriculum defines the programmes of study for key subjects in maintained/ state primary and secondary schools in England (Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have their own equivalents). Basically, it sets out what your child is supposed to learn and when.

In 2013 the government announced plans to overhaul the National Curriculum. For most children, these changes will take effect from September 2014, but children in **Years 2** and **6** will follow the existing programmes of study until September 2015 in English, maths and science. From September 2013, schools had the option of either continuing to teach the current curriculum or gradually transitioning to the new curriculum.

Why the big curriculum change?

The main aim is to raise standards and has been inspired by what is taught in the world's most successful school systems, including Hong Kong, Singapore and Finland, as well as in the best UK schools. The Government believe that it has been designed to produce productive, creative and well educated students.

Although the new curriculum is intended to be more challenging, the content is actually slimmer than the current curriculum, focusing on essential core subject knowledge and skills such as essay writing and computer programming.

It also follows on from similar curriculum revisions in Scotland and Wales, which were implemented in 2010 and 2008 respectively and have a similar focus on excellence and core skills.

Do all primary schools follow the new curriculum from 2014?

Academies and free schools are exempt. This is partly because these schools need more flexibility in what they teach (for example, in the case of faith schools that have a strong emphasis on religious education).

However critics think that the government is using the lure of not having to follow the national curriculum to encourage more schools to become academies.

Academies and free schools do, however, still have to teach a balanced and broadly based curriculum that includes English, mathematics, science and RE.

What are the key facts about the new curriculum?

- ⇒ Schools are free to choose how they organise their school day, as long as the content of the National Curriculum programmes of study is taught to all pupils.
- ⇒ By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programmes of study.
- ⇒ The new National Curriculum identifies what to teach but not how to teach.
- ⇒ The new National Curriculum does not have levels of attainment, but expectations at each banding.
- ⇒ “Literacy” title has been replaced by ‘English’.
- ⇒ ‘ICT’ title is replaced by ‘Computing’
- ⇒ No PSHE or RE contained within the Curriculum 2014 (but still to be taught).
- ⇒ An Act of Daily Worship is expected in all schools.
- ⇒ In Maths there will be a greater emphasis on arithmetic, and the promotion of efficient written methods of long multiplication and division. There will also be a more demanding content in fractions, decimals and percentages.
- ⇒ In Science there is a stronger focus on the importance of scientific knowledge and language and a greater emphasis on the core scientific concepts underpinning pupils’ understanding. For the first time primary aged children will learn about evolution and inheritance.
- ⇒ The English programmes of study will embody higher standards of literacy. Pupils will be expected to develop a stronger command of the written and spoken word. Through the teaching of phonics pupils will be helped to read fluently.
- ⇒ The study of languages is compulsory in Key Stage 2.
- ⇒ The current ICT curriculum is replaced with a new computing curriculum with a much greater emphasis on computational thinking and practical programming skills.
- ⇒ It is essential to distinguish between the statutory National Curriculum and the whole school curriculum. All schools must provide a curriculum that is broadly based, balanced and meets the needs of all pupils.
- ⇒ Academies and Free Schools have the freedom to depart from the National Curriculum. All schools must teach religious education at all key stages and secondary schools must provide sex education.
- ⇒ **In other subjects and key stages there is a greater amount of time and flexibility for schools and teachers to design their curriculum and lessons by focusing only on the essential knowledge to be taught in each subject.**

What are the main changes?

The new curriculum has basically been divided across the three phases in primary schools i.e. Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2 and Upper Key Stage 2.

There are no specific times during each phase where topics have to be taught nor how long it should take. This is left to the discretion of individual schools and teachers as it is dependent on how quickly children grasp the specific area being taught.

In terms of the content that now has to be taught there are also changes. The table below summarises the main changes in the core subjects covered by the National Curriculum.

Subject	What's new?
English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Stronger emphasis on vocabulary development, grammar, punctuation and spelling (for example, the use of commas and apostrophes will be taught in KS1) ⇒ Handwriting – not currently assessed under the national curriculum – is expected to be fluent, legible and speedy ⇒ Spoken English has a greater emphasis, with children to be taught debating http://www.theschoolrun.com/how-debating-can-benefit-your-child and presenting skills
Maths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Five-year-olds will be expected to learn to count up to 100 (<i>compared to 20 under the current curriculum</i>) and learn number bonds to 20 (<i>currently up to 10</i>) ⇒ Simple fractions (1/4 and 1/2) will be taught from KS1, and by the end of primary school, children should be able to convert decimal fractions to simple fractions (e.g. $0.375 = 3/8$) ⇒ By the age of nine, children will be expected to know times tables up to 12x12 (<i>currently 10x10 by the end of primary school</i>) ⇒ Calculators will not be introduced until near the end of KS2, to encourage mental arithmetic
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Strong focus on scientific knowledge and language, rather than understanding the nature and methods of science in abstract terms ⇒ Evolution will be taught in primary schools for the first time ⇒ Non-core subjects like caring for animals will be replaced by topics like the human circulatory system
Design & Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Afforded greater importance under the new curriculum, setting children on the path to becoming the designers and engineers of the future ⇒ More sophisticated use of design equipment such as electronics and robotics ⇒ In KS2, children will learn about how key events and individuals in design and technology have shaped the world
Computing <i>Formally ICT</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Computing replaces Information and Communication Technology (ICT), with a greater focus on programming rather than on operating programs ⇒ From age five, children will learn to write and test simple programs, and to organise, store and retrieve data ⇒ From seven, they will be taught to understand computer networks, including the internet ⇒ Internet safety – currently only taught from 11-16 – will be taught in primary schools
Languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Currently not statutory, a modern foreign language or ancient language (Latin or Greek) will be mandatory in KS2 ⇒ Children will be expected to master basic grammar and accurate pronunciation and to converse, present, read and write in the language

Will the 2014 primary curriculum involve any new tests?

The Department for Education is currently in the process of reforming KS2 tests, but details have not yet been published.

End of Key Stage 1 testing (at Year 2) has been left much as it was with external tests that are internally marked and moderated but with the addition of a new Grammar, Spelling and Punctuation Test. There has, as yet, been no specific mention of whether the Year 1 Phonics Test will remain.

There will be some form of assessment either when children first join the school in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) or at the end of the first year but this has not yet been decided. This is being changed so that the DfE has some way of measuring progress of children from the start of their primary education to the end.

At present state schools must use a standard system of assessing and reporting pupil's attainment and progress in all year groups but this is being scrapped too. Consequently, National Curriculum Levels e.g Level 2, Level 4b etc. will cease to exist. There has been no nationally agreed new system.

Therefore, at this point in time, schools will be able to choose their own arrangements, although they will still have to track progress and report it to parents.

What changes are being made at Orsett CE Primary?

The Curriculum

As we are a state maintained school it is expected that we will implement the new curriculum. Therefore, all staff have been working on considering how we can incorporate the changes to the curriculum **without** losing what we know already works.

To that end, staff have attended national and local training so that we all had a clear understanding of the requirements for September 2014. We have used our INSET training days and staff meetings to look at our existing Schemes of Work and are in the process of adapting these to include the new requirements so that we fulfil our statutory obligations.

As you are aware our Mathematics and English Schemes of Work are already 'fast-tracked' and included a large proportion of Year 7 curriculum. This has meant that many of the changes were already in our curriculum.

However, in some cases there were areas that now **do not** need to be taught (particularly in Maths) but we have decided that we will keep these in and also maintain a high focus on giving the children the opportunities to use and apply their knowledge as this will ensure that our children continue to work at a level that is above national expectations.

In all subjects we have also included elements of the new Year 7 National Curriculum so that we continue to fast track our children.

The new curriculum is in many cases far more **knowledge** based, whereas here we tend to focus on teaching transferrable skills through Learning @ Orsett Through Skills (LOTS). We believe that not only does this teach our children skills that can be transferred to other situations but also it ensures that the learning is both relevant and meaningful to the children. This ensures that they **enjoy** their learning too.

Consequently, we have decided that we will continue with LOTS, linking the skills wherever possible to the new curriculum requirements.

Where these do not naturally link, or where specific knowledge needs to be taught we will teach lesson that focus on that specific area *e.g., teaching some aspects of Science separately from LOTS is necessary.*

Assessment

Here at Orsett the tracking of every child's progress is ongoing both in lessons and through teacher assessments and testing. For the most part this will not change as we need to assess what our children understand in order to plan our lessons.

However, the way in which Teacher Assessments and tests are carried out will definitely need to change with the removal of Levels. At the moment when we undertake Teacher Assessments we use APP Grids (Assessing Pupil Progress) which subdivides the knowledge and skills learnt into levels. We will continue to Teacher Assess but will assess against the areas that have to be taught across a Phase e.g. Key Stage 1, Lower Key Stage 2, Upper Key Stage 2.

With regards to testing we will not be able to use any of our current tests in maths or reading as these were developed for the 'old' curriculum and will not include the relevant areas that have been taught for testing. At this point in time we are waiting for further information on what Key Stage 2 SATs will look like as we would prefer to use similar tests if possible (although this will be costly). While we make this decision it is likely that we will undertake additional Teacher Assessments which will be moderated for accuracy.

Obviously all data that comes from either testing or Teacher Assessments is then analysed and this is how we can then report your child's current level and progress to you.

We currently use Target Tracker to support us with this and they are developing a system which we hope will be ready in September. The Local Authority (LA) are keen for all the schools to have the same way of assessing so that parents understand the difference between schools and so that the LA can compare the standards and attainment across schools.

We have been part of an LA Working Party to consider possible options and it is likely that many schools will use Target Tracker as their assessment analysis tool. We certainly will be considering it as we are very familiar with how to use it already.

As yet we have not been informed as to how attainment will be reported. It is likely to be along the lines of a statement as to whether a child is either:

Beginning *working at the level of a specific year/phase with a lot of support to do so*

Within *working at the level of a specific year/phase with some support*

Secure *working at the level of a specific year/phase with very little support*

Once we have more clarification on this we will, of course, update you.

Depending on your child's year group in September 2014 their progress will be calculated based on any testing or assessments that they have already had.

It will not be until 2022 that the whole school will be being assessed in the same way. The table below shows you how, in theory, this will look for each year group.

Timeline

Year Group Sept 14	Primary Schools *	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Year 6	Old KS1 to Old KS2	Old KS2	65% L4+ in RWM or Median % 2LP in either RWM							
Year 5	Old KS1 to New KS2		New KS2	KS1-2 sufficient progress or 85% RWM attainment						
Year 4	Old KS1 to New KS2			New KS2	KS1-2 sufficient progress or 85% RWM attainment					
Year 3	Old KS1 to New KS2				New KS2	KS1-2 sufficient progress or 85% RWM attainment				
Year 2	Old KS1 to New KS2	Old KS1				New KS2	KS1-2 sufficient progress or 85% RWM attainment			
Year 1	New KS1 to New KS2	Phonics	New KS1				New KS2	KS1-2 sufficient progress or 85% RWM attainment		
Reception	New KS1 to New KS2	EYFSP	Phonics	New KS1				New KS2	KS1-2 sufficient progress or 85% RWM attainment	
Nursery	New BL to New KS2 or New KS1 to New KS2		Reception Baseline [^] & EYFSP	Phonics	New KS1				New KS2	KS1-2 / Rec KS2 sufficient progress or 85% attainment
Pre Nursery 3	New BL to New KS2			Reception baseline	Phonics	New KS1				New KS2

* Jnr schools will always be KS 1 to KS 2

** Infant schools are currently being considered

[^] Baseline is optional 2015

Old KS1 to Old KS2	Old KS1 to New KS2	New KS1 to New KS2	New BL to New KS2	Time in school	Floor standards
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Conclusion

Obviously this is a time of change for children, teachers and parents. It is not the first time (nor likely to be the last) that the curriculum has been radically changed.

As we go through next year we will keep you updated so that as parents you have a clear picture of what, when and how your child will learn.

As with all changes there are positive and less positive things about it. However, as a school we have decided that we will focus on ensuring that we incorporate the changes in such a way that our children will continue to thrive and progress not only academically but spiritually, morally and socially too.

For us at Orsett if we ensure that our children remain at the heart of all we do and take on the challenge of change rather than be anxious about it I am sure that by September 2015 (after one year of the new curriculum) it will feel as if we have always taught this way.

PS – Many a true word...

“The most effective way to manage change is to create it.” ~ Peter Ducker