

**“A Home for Learning, Laughing, Caring and Trying”**



**Banks Road Infant and Nursery School**

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Dear Parents and Carers,

In September 2014, the new National Curriculum was introduced. At Banks Road our staff have been working very hard to deliver this new curriculum and I am sure you will agree that the children have shown a genuine excitement for learning.

**Assessment levels – how do you know how your child is progressing?**

This academic year the Government removed the former national curriculum assessment levels (1c, 2b, etc) because the new curriculum has much higher standards and expectations. However no new levels for assessment have been introduced nationally. Levels no longer exist and from September 2015 all pupils are being taught and assessed against the new National Curriculum skills.

We are therefore in a new era of ‘assessing without levels’. There is now no national requirement from the government as to how schools should assess and record progress. It is therefore up to each school to develop its own system. As a team, and alongside Bispham Junior School, we have considered a number of different systems and we have agreed to adopt a system of how we are going to track progress and attainment. The method chosen best suits the needs of our children. We have purposefully kept it simple since the message from the ‘powers that be’ is that it should take 2/3 years to bed down. We will continually review and amend when necessary.

During the parent information evening on ‘Assessment without Levels’ (Wednesday 30 September), parents were informed on how the system will work. The power point from the evening is available on the school website [www.banksroadschool.co.uk](http://www.banksroadschool.co.uk).

The assessment process is, and always has been, primarily to support and motivate children’s learning. It will continue be used to inform next steps in learning and key school improvement priorities. Our system will be accessible, manageable and meaningful for all stakeholders. We will focus on moderation exercises, both in house and with other schools, to compare internal teacher assessment, developing agreed interpretation of the new expectations of ‘National Standards’.

The New National Curriculum is harder and the Age Related Expectations (ARE) at the end of each year are ‘stretching’, especially so in English and Mathematics. The statements (or elements) in each subject have no ‘weighting’ and for a child to achieve the ‘National Standard’ by the end of each year group they must demonstrate that they have consolidated their understanding of the majority of the statements in Reading, Writing and Mathematics. Teachers must refer to a range of evidence drawn from classwork and independent

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work and this bank of evidence will be used by teachers to make decisions on whether statements have been achieved. The emphasis will now be on progress towards achieving the end of year expectations.

We have done much work on ensuring there is a consistent and accurate understanding amongst staff of the end of year age related expectations across year 1 and year 2. We have also defined a common school terminology to describe whether pupils are ‘at’, ‘above’ or ‘below’ age related expectations at each assessment point. These will be called ‘achieving’, ‘deep’ or ‘beginning’. There is a grid on slide 17 that explains each one of these terms and what pupils will demonstrate through their learning, understanding and application of skills.

It is extremely important that parents understand that a child must demonstrate the majority of statements to be assessed at (achieving) National Standards by the end of the year. As such, many of the end of year expectations will be achieved during the summer term.

### **What does this mean for you?**

Rather than sharing the old levels, we will share with you the statements for end of year expectations for the Autumn term pupil progress report. This will allow you a clearer understanding of what will be covered throughout the year. Any statements that teachers already feel have been evidenced will be highlighted. Throughout the year you will receive three further progress reports. Under the new National Curriculum, children must only work on the objectives for their year group and cannot be taught skills from a higher year group. For those pupils who reach their end of year expectations later in the year, the teachers will provide a range of learning opportunities that offer a greater depth and breadth of understanding specific to their year group (deep).

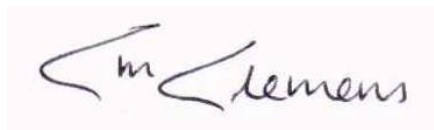
Can we please remind you, at this time, that the new curriculum and the new assessment tool, expects children to be working at a higher level at an earlier age, therefore as expected more children will be working below Age Related Expectations than before. It is our job as a school to increase the number of pupils who are working at this standard by the end of the year. We predict that most children will be ‘beginning’ and working towards the National Standards until the summer term.

Please find information regarding how we are covering the new National Curriculum on the school website. Our skills based curriculum, fully focuses on what the children can do (attainment), rather than what they have done (coverage). All learning objectives allow the children to meet them regularly over the school year, therefore allowing them to become familiar with them to provide a deep level of learning.

As always, you will be able to discuss your child’s progress during the parent consultations evenings on Tuesday 10 November and Wednesday 11 November.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Carole Clemens



Head Teacher  
Banks Road Infant and Nursery School.