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**Assessment at Low Ash Primary School (Year 1-Year 6)**

2 November 2015

Last academic year, the Department for Education (DfE) removed levels in schools as a means of assessing children, except for Year 2 and Year 6.

The DfE introduced the changes because they wanted to ensure that children have a breadth and depth of knowledge, rather than move on too quickly without embedding their knowledge, skills and understanding. Previously, teachers nationally felt the pressure to rapidly move the children up the levels which sometimes restricted the opportunity for the children to have time to have a secure understanding in their learning. Also, the DfE felt that teachers, parents and the children were focusing too much on what level the children were at and needed to attain, rather than the next steps in their learning.

As I detailed in previous letters last academic year, Low Ash was in a transition phase moving from levels to a new assessment regime. The vast majority of children are now being taught a set of objectives for their year group's National Curriculum Programme of Study. By the end of the academic year, the national expectation is that the vast majority of the children will have a secure understanding of their year group's objectives. All the children, but especially those children who in the past have been moved on to the next year group's work, will be given the opportunity to deepen their understanding by making connections in their learning and apply their skills in a variety of contexts.

In the past, teachers have given you details of what level your child is at. The DfE has encouraged schools to move away from this but to provide parents with details about their child's next steps in learning. So during the year, when we have conversations with you about your child's attainment and progress, we will talk about what your child is doing well and especially their next steps in learning. Your child's attitude to learning, persistence, motivation and enthusiasm is of equal importance. All of these will be taken into account when we discuss whether your child is or is not on track to meet end of year expectations. This will also be the case for discussions between the teachers and their pupils.

Children in Year 2 and Year 6 will take their statutory assessments (SATs) as in previous years. The results of whether your child has reached the national standard will appear in their end of year report. More details regarding Year 2 and Year 6 tests will follow later on in the academic year.

I hope this letter goes some way to explain the significant changes which have taken place nationally. The final report by the Commission on Assessment Without Levels, which further explain reasons for these major changes, can be found on our website in the 'Parent Zone' and 'Assessment' or using this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/commission-on-assessment-without-levels-final-report>

Yours sincerely,

Mr Hurst  
Deputy Headteacher

**Headteacher Mr T Woollin**

