



Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check – June 2021

Monday 23rd November

Dear parents and carers,

As you may be aware, the government has introduced a times table test for pupils in year 4, to be taken in June each year. This is the first year that the assessment will be mandatory for all schools in England – its introduction was planned for last year but did not go ahead due to school closures.

For pupils, the first thing to know about the test is that it is nothing to worry about! However, it would be lovely if children could show their full ability in the test. With this in mind, over the next few months we will continue to have a strong focus on times tables in maths lessons, ensuring that children can take the MTC with confidence.

Hopefully this letter will provide all the information you need about the MTC. All of the information below has been taken from the government website; the government also published an information leaflet for last year's MTC, which you can find by searching online for "mtc information for parents".

Why has the government introduced the MTC?

The National Curriculum states that by the end of year 4, pupils should know their times table facts up to 12×12 . The assessment has been introduced to make sure that schools have a strong focus on this objective, and to help schools identify children who are finding their times tables tricky.

What will the assessment look like?

The MTC is an online assessment, to be taken on a computer or tablet. Children are presented with questions, one after the other, in the form $N1 \times N2 = A$, where $N1$ and $N2$ are given and A is to be typed in, e.g. $7 \times 8 = \square$.

There will be no inverse questions, such as $7 \times \square = 56$.

There are 25 questions in total. Children get 6 seconds to type in their answer; there is then a 3 second pause before the next question. The test should take no longer than 5 minutes.

There will be no questions from the $1 \times$ table. The test will have an emphasis on the $6, 7, 8, 9$ and $12 \times$ tables, as these are judged to be the harder times tables.

How and when will the MTC be carried out?

There is a 3 week window, starting on Monday 7th June, when children can take the assessment in school. We are planning to use the first week to administer the test, using our iPads in school. Children will not take the test all at the same time in the classroom – they will either take the test in small groups, or individually, in a quiet environment.

Can the MTC be adapted for children who may need extra support?

Children cannot be given extra time to complete the test. However, changes can be made which may help some pupils, such as altering the colour contrast and increasing the font size. We will make sure that all children find the test accessible.

If you feel that your child may benefit from these changes, this can be discussed at parents' evening, or please feel free to contact me through the office as normal.

Can pupils practise the MTC before June?

In school, we will be able to practise the MTC in a 'try it out' area, provided by the government, from March.

There is no expectation for children to do lots of extra work at home for the MTC. However, as always, we encourage parents to practise times tables with children at home, through Frog Club homeworks and using the variety of resources available online. Please see the 'Times tables supporting resources' folder in Files on Microsoft Teams, or speak to me if you would like any further guidance.

Purple Mash has an excellent simulation of the MTC. On the website, in Mathematics, under Times tables, click on Multiplication. This activity should also work on tablets, which is what we're planning to use in June.



How will the results be reported?

Children's results will be given to schools once the 3 week window has closed; these will then be reported to parents before the end of term. Children will not see their result when they finish the assessment.

There is no 'expected standard' or pass mark for the MTC, and no major judgement will be made about a child using the results. The assessment results will also not be used in school league tables.

How likely is it that this assessment will go ahead, given that others in 2021 have been cancelled?

The government has not issued any update to schools about the assessment so far this year, although the assessment is listed on the government's test dates website for 2020/21. We are therefore working under the assumption that it will go ahead.

I hope that this will not cause any stress for children or parents (or staff!). If you have any queries about the MTC, or anything else, please do not hesitate to contact me through the school office.

Kind regards,

Mr J Treacy