

Appendix 2

THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

The National Curriculum is divided into a Foundation Stage and four Key Stages:

- Foundation Stage for pupils up to age 5 (Nursery and Reception)
- Key Stage 1 for pupils aged 5 to 7 (Years 1 and 2)
- Key Stage 2 for pupils aged 7 to 11 (Year 3 to Year 6)
- Key Stage 3 for pupils aged 11 to 14 (Year 7 to Year 9)
- Key Stage 4 for pupils aged 14 to 16 (Years 10 and 11)

Children take National Curriculum tests (SATs – Standard Achievement Tests) at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. At KS1 they take tests in Writing, Reading and Maths, which are marked internally. At KS2 they take externally marked tests in Maths and English. They may take optional tests during the Key Stages (at QMS we do the optional tests during KS2, at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5).

There are eight National Curriculum levels, covering the ages 5-14 years. The lowest is Level 1, which describes the achievements of children at around the age of 5. Level 2 is divided into 2A, B and C. The highest is Level 8 (but only in Maths; English and Science no longer test to Level 8) which is attained by the most able pupils at the age of 14. Children move up through the levels at an average rate of approximately one level for each two years of school (some move more quickly, some more slowly). Children at the end of Year 2 are expected to achieve at least Level 2, and children at the end of Year 6 are expected to achieve at least Level 4. At Year 9, the expected level is Level 5 or 6. After this, pupils start on their GCSE courses in Year 10, and the National Curriculum levels no longer apply.

National Curriculum levels may be used by teachers in the non-core subjects to make their own assessments of children, based on their ongoing work rather than on a test. The National Curriculum includes level descriptions for each level, for each subject, and the teacher makes a judgement as to which level is the best overall description of the child's achievement.