

## 2024 SATs Parents' Meeting

Dear Parents,

Many thanks to the parents who attended the Parents' SATs Meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> March.

For those of you unable to make it, here is what we discussed:

### What are SATs?

SATs are tests which all children in Year 6 take across the county at the same time. They are used to assess the progress of children and the performance of schools. The tests are exactly the same for all Year 6 children and are only taken in 2 subjects – English (Reading and Grammar/Spelling) and in Mathematics. The tests are all marked by external markers who do not know the school or the children.

### Timetable

## Monday May 13<sup>th</sup> – Thursday May 16<sup>th</sup>

Monday 13 <sup>th</sup>	Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup>	Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup>
Grammar and Punctuation Test	Reading Test	Mathematics Paper 1 Arithmetic Test	Mathematics Paper 3 Reasoning
Spelling Test		Mathematics Paper 2 Reasoning	

The last time your children were formally assessed was in Year 2, and these tests are to measure how much progress has been made since then. The tests will determine whether the children are:

<b>Below</b>	<b>Working at</b>	<b>Exceeding</b>
Age Related	Age Related	Age Related
Expectation	Expectation	Expectation

### SATs and Teacher Assessment

The children are tested in Reading, Grammar/Spelling and Mathematics and the papers are sent away to be marked by specifically trained markers. The children are given a Test Judgement, according to their scores. There is no writing SAT as this is done by Teacher Assessment and based on all their writing throughout the year.

### Spelling

Parents often ask if spelling matters in the test. Spelling is tested on Monday in a specific spelling test and that is the only time it is taken into account. The only further expectation is that the marker is able to read and understand the children's answers.

### Readers, Writers and Breaks

Some children are given a reader or a writer in some tests. This is because their current reading/handwriting/writing speed may hamper the chance of them showing their true understanding of a question or their ability to express their understanding neatly enough to be read by a stranger. Readers and writers are Teaching Assistants. They are not allowed to explain any of the language. Breaks are given to children who struggle to sit/concentrate for long periods.

## **SATs and Secondary Education**

Secondary schools do look at the results but very few decisions are made with them and they certainly do not make a difference to your choice of school. Sturminster Newton does not set for many subjects in Year 7 but there is a useful discussion with myself and the Year 7 tutor in the Summer term, where we discuss each child individually.

### **Where are the children tested?**

Research has proven that children always perform better when tested in the same room in which they were taught. For this reason, all tests will be held in the Year 6 classroom apart from Mathematics, which will be take place in Mr. Hull's room. Unfortunately, all displays must be covered up!

### **Anxiety**

At William Barnes, we do everything possible to ensure that anxiety is kept to a minimum. There will be many times over the next few weeks to talk though their concerns. Indeed, we have been regularly discussing the subject all year! Obviously, there will be a level of concern not usually present in a normal school week. We do find that once the children have had their first test on Monday/Tuesday, they do relax a little and by Friday some say they actually enjoyed the experience.

Occasionally, children will show higher level of anxiety in the lead up to, or during the tests. Please let me know by letter, phone or a visit if this is the case, as I can talk individually with the children about their worries and hopefully put their concerns to rest.

All children are allowed to bring in small mascots to have on their tables if they wish. At all times, we stress that we can only expect the children to do their best on the day and that whilst the SATs are important, they are not the most important thing in the world.

### **Preparation**

If the children are going to show what they are capable of, it is important that they are well rested during the week – early bed-times are strongly recommended! Hungry and thirsty children do not concentrate well, so please make sure that children have their water bottles.

### **SATs Breakfasts**

For the past 3 years, we have run very successful SATs Breakfasts where children can arrive early to relax with their peers and eat breakfast together. At times, this has been kindly run by parents – if any parents would like to support this, please let me know. The school pays for the SATs Breakfasts.

### **Friday at the Mill**

For the last few years, we have walked down to Sturminster Mill when the tests are over. Teaching Assistants who have been readers also come and join in. As has been the tradition for 26 years, an apple is thrown into the river before we return and it always rains!

Please do come and talk to us if you have any further concerns!

Yours sincerely

Russell Field  
Year 6 Teacher