



WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

ST MARGARET'S C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

ARUNDEL ROAD, ANGMERING, WEST SUSSEX. BN16 4LP

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3rd March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

You may have heard announcements about the Multiplication Tables Check (MTC) coming in for Year 4 children. Here's what you need to know:

1. We love maths. It's an awesome subject to learn and to teach.
2. Maths is a big subject and we appreciate there is more to it than times tables and there is more to times tables than learning them off by heart. However, a lot of the rich, interesting maths is all about the multiplicative relationships and these are hard to fully grasp without fluent recall of the tables. For that reason, learning the tables is fundamental – they are a key facilitator to the maths that sits on top.
3. We are not worried about the checks and this was not a surprise. In fact, we are in favour of the checks because it is always good to sharpen practice across the education sector and this is a useful lever to get schools to do that. We are already in a good place with learning the tables and the expectations are in line with the National Curriculum.
4. The checks became compulsory in 2020.
5. They will be done within a three-week-long window starting on Monday 8th June.
6. The results of the test are not published publicly, they are not going to end up on a league table and they are not to worry about. There is no pass or fail, there is just a score out of 25 marks. They are not to be used to compare children but instead are for us to reflect on so that we make the most of our provision. We are looking forward to seeing how well we do.
7. The checks consist of 25 questions. The questions will only be multiplication and they will go up to 12×12 . It is an expectation that by the end of year four children know all facts up to 12×12 .
8. The checks are all about remembering the multiplication facts. That does not mean we will forget all about the concepts, patterns, structures and relationships in multiplication. We are going to be learning those too, partly because they go hand in hand with excellent recall.
9. There are concerns shared in the public domain that this is "yet another test". The government has been careful to call it a "check" and that is important. It signals their intention to keep it low-stakes and we should remember that the data could prove useful to us.
10. Given that the questions are relatively simple, age appropriate and the length of the check, which is carried out on a computer, is no more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ minutes, we do not think the checks are onerous.



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11. Tests in themselves do not cause anxiety. It is the perceived cost of not doing well. For that reason, we will actively downplay the checks with the children. The only thing that will stress the children is if we repeatedly refer to the checks in class or at home, even casually in front of them when they are not supposed to be listening.
12. So we will not ever be saying, "Remember you've got the multiplication checks coming up." or "We must practise because you've got the checks this year." We just will not mention them. Please be supportive of that and refrain from referring to the checks at home too.
13. As far as the children are concerned, when it comes to the day itself, they are going to have the computers or iPads out so it will just seem like the teachers have chosen to do something slightly different today.
14. You may notice us taking even more initiative when it comes to learning the tables with more options for home learning. If you are practising with your child, remember you are practising for the benefit of their wider maths education, not for them to get a high score on the tests so please enjoy the opportunity to work with your child and remember to hold back on comments about the checks. We hope that clarifies any questions that you might have about the MTC. If the government releases any further key information, we will let you know.

We have been delighted about the way that the children in Years 3 and 4 have embraced the Times Table Rockstar website and we have definitely seen an improvement with the children's knowledge of multiplication facts and the speed at which they can recall them. This is such a key area that links to so many other parts of the maths curriculum.

If you have any questions about the MTC or anything to do with the TTRS website, then please do not hesitate to talk to your child's class teacher.

With many thanks for your continued support,

Mrs Patterson and Mrs Terzian