

The new national curriculum – Mathematics in Year 1

As children begin their compulsory schooling in Year 1, schools will naturally work to build on the learning that takes place in the Reception year. Here are some of the main things your child is likely to be taught during their time in Year 1.

Number and Place Value

Place value is central to mathematics. Recognising that the digit '5' in the number 54 has a different value from the number 5 or the '5' in 504 is an important step in mathematical understanding.

- Count, both forwards and backwards, from any number, including past 100
- Read and write numbers up to 100 as digits
- Count in 2s, 5s and 10s
- Find 'one more' or 'one less' than a number
- Use mathematical language such as 'more', 'less', 'most', 'least' and 'equal'

Calculations

- Use the +, – and = symbols to write and understand simple number calculations
- Add and subtract one- and two-digit numbers, up to 20
- Solve missing number problems, such as $10 - ? = 6$
- Begin to use simple multiplication by organising and counting objects

Fractions

- Understand $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ to explain parts of an object or number of objects

Measurements

- Use practical apparatus to explore different lengths, weights and volumes
- Use language such as 'heavier', 'shorter' and 'empty' to compare things they have measured
- Recognise the different coins and notes of British currency
- Use language of time, such as 'yesterday', 'before', days of the week and months of the year
- Tell the time to the hour and half-hour, including drawing clock faces

Shape

- Recognise and name some common 2-d shapes, such as squares, rectangles and triangles
- Recognise and name some common 3-d shapes, such as cubes, cuboids and spheres
- Describe movements, including quarter turns

Parent Tip

There are plenty of opportunities for maths practice at home, from counting objects to simple games, such as dominoes and Snakes & Ladders. You can also begin to explore using money and clocks both in play at home and when out and about.

The new national curriculum – English in Year 1

During the early years of compulsory schooling, much of the focus is to develop confident readers, mainly using the phonics approach. Many schools will follow a programme of phonics teaching, so it is well worth finding out from your child's school if they have any parent support materials.

Phonics is the relationship between printed letters and the sounds they make. Children will first learn the most common letter sounds, and then look at more difficult patterns such as recognising that 'ow' sounds different in 'cow' than in 'low', or that both 'ai' and 'ay' make the same sound in different words.

Speaking and Listening

The Spoken Language objectives are set out for the whole of primary school, and teachers will cover many of them every year as children's spoken language skills develop. In Year 1, some focuses may include:

- Listen and respond to adults and other children
- Ask questions to extend their understanding
- Learn new vocabulary related to topics or daily life

Reading Skills

- Learn the 40+ main speech sounds in English and the letters that represent them
- Blend sounds together to form words
- Read aloud when reading books that contain familiar letter sound patterns
- Listen to, and talk about a range of stories, poems and non-fiction texts
- Learn about popular fairy tales and folk stories, and retell the stories
- Join in with repeated phrases in familiar books
- Make predictions about what might happen next in a book
- Explain clearly what has happened in a book they've read or listened to

Writing Skills

- Hold a pen or pencil in the correct and comfortable way
- Name the letters of the alphabet in order
- Write lower-case letters starting and ending in the right place
- Write capital letters, and the digits 0 to 9
- Spell simple words containing the main sounds they've learned in reading
- Spell the days of the week
- Learn to write words with common endings, such as -ed, -ing, -er and -est
- Plan out sentences aloud before writing them
- Write simple sentences, and those using joining words such as 'and'
- Begin to use full stops and capital letters for sentences
- Combine some sentences to make short descriptions or stories

Parent Tip

Many schools will offer books to read at home; these will range from a mix of books which your child can read to you, and those which are more complex that they can listen to you read to them – both are important skills. Children can also join the local library service and choose books of their own.