

**We endeavor to keep you informed and to help you understand any changes in school.**

**You are therefore invited to an information evening on 'Assessment without Levels'.**

**On Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> November at 6pm.**

**In addition, the information below attempts to explain how assessment without levels has been put in place at Aqueduct Primary School.**

### **Assessment Without Levels**

From this September, the Government has made a huge change in the way that children in schools are to be assessed. This is to tie in with the New National Curriculum that started to be used by all schools at the beginning of September 2014. This is a new way of thinking for schools, and assessment will look very different to how it has done for the past 20 years. The aim of this guide is to hopefully give you some clear information about all the changes and what that means for the children here at Aqueduct Primary School.

### **The End of Curriculum Levels**

So why are levels disappearing?

The DfE want to avoid what has been termed 'the level race' where children have moved through the old National Curriculum levels quickly to achieve higher attainment. The old National Curriculum was sub-divided into levels, but these were not linked to their National Curriculum year group. For example, a child in Year 4 could be a Level 3 or even a Level 5. Children were achieving Level 5 and 6 at the end of Key Stage 2, but the DfE thought that a significant number were able to achieve a Level 5 or 6 in a test—but were not secure at that level. The feeling from the DfE was that the old National Curriculum and the levels system failed to adequately ensure that children had a breadth and depth of knowledge at each National Curriculum level.

### **Assessing Without Levels**

The DfE announced last year that there would no longer be National Curriculum levels and that schools would have to set up their own way of assessing pupils. We have spent a long time researching various different methods of assessing pupils. Almost all of the systems used the same format, which was similar to the system used in the Early Years, Foundation Stage. This was to take the end of year expectations for each year group and to split this into 3 categories as follows:

- **Entering**— Yet to be secure in the end of year expectations.
- **Developing**—Secure in the majority of the end of year expectations.
- **Secure**—Secure in almost all or all the end of year expectations and is able to use and apply their knowledge and skills confidently.

Under the old levels system children who were exceeding might have moved into the next level. The DfE now want children who are in the exceeding bracket to add more depth and breadth to their knowledge, and to have more opportunities to develop their using and applying skills. They are calling this phase of learning **Mastery**. Similarly, children who are unlikely to be emerging at the end of the year may work towards the expectations from the year below. So how will this look at the end of each Key Stage?

### **Reporting Attainment and Progress**

The biggest difference is how we will talk to you about how your child is progressing during the year. With the old National Curriculum levels, each year children were given a target for the end of the year, and during the year we would tell you what National Curriculum level your child was at.

During the year, when we have conversations with you about your child's progress you won't be given an actual definitive position of where they are on this scale. Instead you will be told whether your child is on track to meet their end of year target. It may well be that they are above or below where they need to be.

We hope that you find this guide useful to help you understand why and how assessment has changed. As mentioned at the top of this letter we would like the opportunity to explain the new system of assessment with you and show you some examples of the assessment criteria for each year group. You would be very welcome to attend the meeting and we hope to see you there.

**Mrs. J. Clarke (Acting Headteacher)**