

## National Curriculum: Key Terms Explained

The **National Curriculum** is the guideline given to schools by the government, telling them what information needs to be taught to children. Schools teach the work that is outlined in the National Curriculum.

The National Curriculum is divided into four **key stages**. At key stages 1, 2 and 3 **National Curriculum levels** measure your child's progress. Children move up the levels year by year, starting at level 1. The highest level that can be achieved is 8. A pupil moves up to the next key stage even if they do not achieve the expected National Curriculum level, but teachers use the National Curriculum levels to identify if extra learning support is required.

At the ages of 7, 11 and 14 all pupils in the country will sit tests known as **SATS**. Teachers also assess their progress. The school will then send you a report telling you what National Curriculum level your child has reached in both tests and assessments.

At key stage 4 your child studies for their **GCSEs** (General Certificate of Secondary Education). Throughout these two years your child will be assessed on a combination of exams and coursework. Coursework could include essays, reports, artwork, making products or investigations. GCSEs are graded A\* - G. A\* is one grade higher than A. To stay in education beyond the age of 16, pupils should aim to achieve at least 5 GCSE grades A\* - C.

Some pupils are able to study **Vocational GCSEs**, which are equivalent to two GCSEs. Vocational GCSEs provide a general education as preparation for further study or employment.

Age	School year	Key stage	National Curriculum Levels
5	Reception	Key Stage 1	Children work between levels 1-3. Most achieve level 2 at this stage.
6	1		
7	2		
8	3	Key Stage 2	Children work between levels 2-6. Most children achieve level 4-5 at this stage.
9	4		
10	5		
11	6		
12	7	Key Stage 3	Children work between levels 3-8. Most children achieve level 5-7 at this stage.
13	8		
14	9		
15	10	Key Stage 4	GCSEs
16	11		

Taken from 'The London Challenge' website.