

Understanding National Curriculum Levels at Primary School.

Children in England are required by law to study the content of the National Curriculum. The rate at which they progress and the attainment they make is measured using levels which are numbered, and move from the lowest level: Level 1 through to the highest level: Level 6.

The progress of every child is tracked and the levels allow us to compare how well they are achieving against others of their age and how they are progressing individually. The level at which a child is working relates directly to the work they are doing in class and their personalised learning targets.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage follow a separate curriculum and progress is measured differently against age related development bands.

The Primary Curriculum is organised into blocks as follows:

1. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) – children up to compulsory school age, nursery and Reception classes.
2. Key Stage 1 - Year 1 and Year 2 of Primary School
3. Key Stage 2 - Years 3 to 6 of Primary School

It is a requirement for the school to report the level at which children are working at the end of each of the above stages but it is also useful to report this throughout your child's school career to enable parents, as well as school, to keep track of their child's progress and attainment.

More about levels:

Reception

Children are initially assessed against an age related development band across 17 different areas when they enter Reception and again at the end of Reception at which stage they will be assessed as working at one of three levels in each of the 17 areas: Emerging, Expected or Exceeding. These judgements form the starting point for the National Curriculum levels as explained below.

Key Stage One and Two

Once the children are judged ready to access the National Curriculum (usually at the end of Reception or during the first term of Year 1) their level will be assessed for each of the Core subjects (Mathematics, Reading, Writing); Level 1 is typical for Year 1 and level 4 is typical for Year 6. Levels are then divided into 'sub-levels' using the letters a, b or c (e.g. 1a, 1b, 1c). An 'a' means a child is performing very consistently and securely within the level and is ready to begin working within the next level up, 'b' means they are 'secure' and a 'c' means they are less so and just starting on this stage. So, for example, a child achieving **1a** would be working strongly within the level 1 criteria and be ready to start accessing level 2 work.

The '+' sign allows for another points progress to be shown and indicates more security within the sub-level. So a child working at '2a+' is working at one point higher than '2a'.

At St. Alban's the minimum expected levels for the end of each term for each year group are as follows:

End of	Reception	Y1 Level	Y2 Level	Y3 Level	Y4 Level	Y5 Level	Y6 Level
Aut		1C+	1A+	2B+	3C	3B+	4C
Spr		1B	2C	2A	3C+	3A	4C+
Sum	Expected (low level 1C)	1A	2B	2A+	3B	3A+	4B

Some children will exceed these expectations, gaining a level 3 in Year 2 or a level 5 or 6 in Year 6. Others will be working at a lower level than those given above.

Progress should be evident whether a child is working above or below age related expectations. In Reception this is measured from beginning of year baseline assessments. In Key Stage 1 this is measured from their end of Reception results and in Key Stage 2 it is measured from end of Key Stage 1 results (end of Year 2). This is being closely measured and monitored by school.