



**CHANGES TO
UK SECONDARY EDUCATION:
A GUIDE FOR PARENTS**

LAURA PRIME
GLOBAL CONNECTIONS
TCK FORUM 2 NOVEMBER 2016
BIRMINGHAM

Key Stage 3 (Aged 11-14):

- Removal of compulsory National Curriculum levels and what to expect from schools
- Changes to National Curriculum 2014

Key Stage 4 (14-16) :

- GCSEs: changes from A*-U to 1-9
- Introduction of new syllabuses for all courses and when they change
- Ebacc/Progress8

Key Stage 5 (16-18):

- Changes to structure of A-levels

Other

- Academies/Free Schools
- Technology and safeguarding: what to watch out for
- “British Values”

CONTENTS

Main changes:

- 2009 – KS3 SATS removed from the national assessment .
- September 2014: New National Curriculum document published, New Curriculum document released, where “most of the previous curriculum has been disapplied”
 - Academies/Free schools do not need to follow NC
- Impact: Schools have greater freedom to teach and assess what they consider necessary.
- A “broad and balanced” curriculum.

KEY STAGE 3:
THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

National Curriculum Levels “removed and not replaced”:

- The idea is schools can measure pupil’s actual progress in ways that best suit the pupils’ learning and makes more sense to parents.

What are schools doing instead?

- A variety of things, depending on what works for their school. Ask your school what the new assessment system is. Some examples:
 - Sticking with NC levels or something similar
 - A completely different system e.g a -/=/+ system or “no progress/expected progress/exceptional progress”

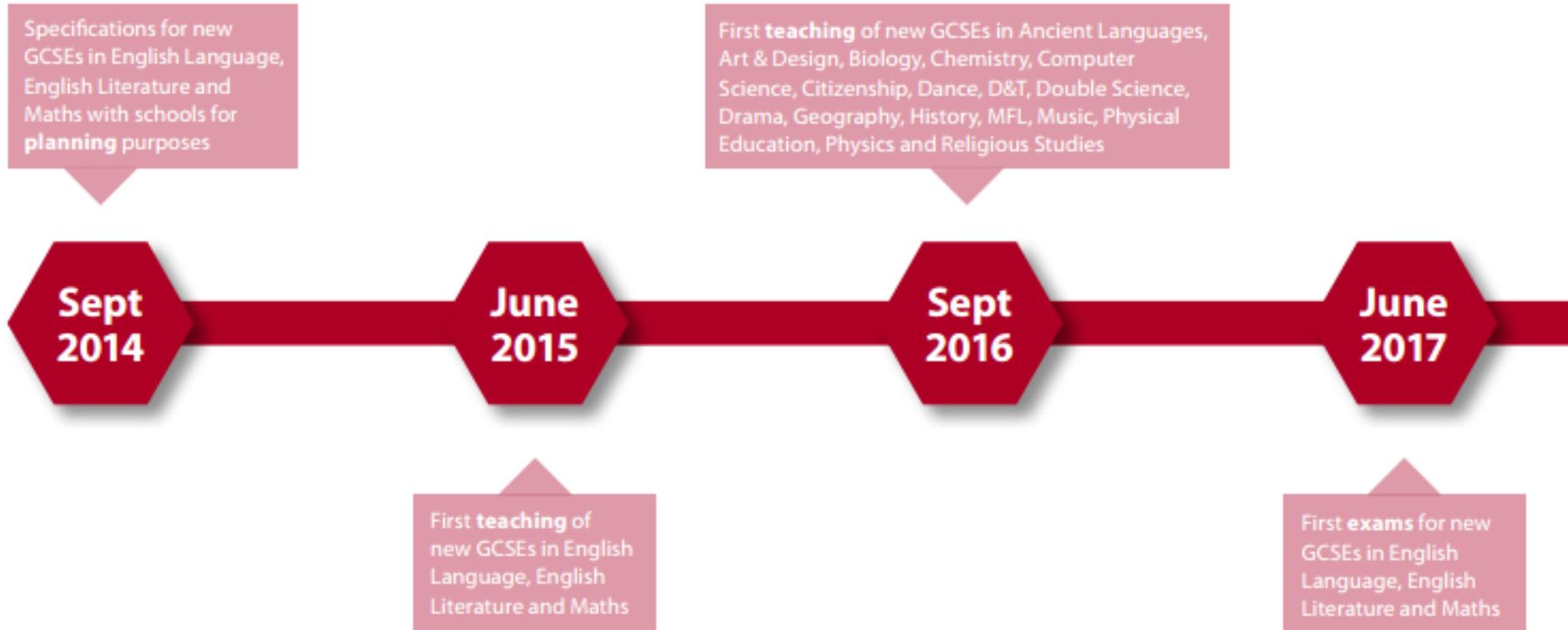
Which comment do you agree most with?

Good idea - It makes sense for the school to decide how to assess their children, they know what’s best for them.

Bad idea - What if I transfer my child from one school to another? How can the new school figure out where my child fits into their new system without a national standard?

**KEY STAGE 3:
NO MORE
NATIONAL CURRICULUM LEVELS?**

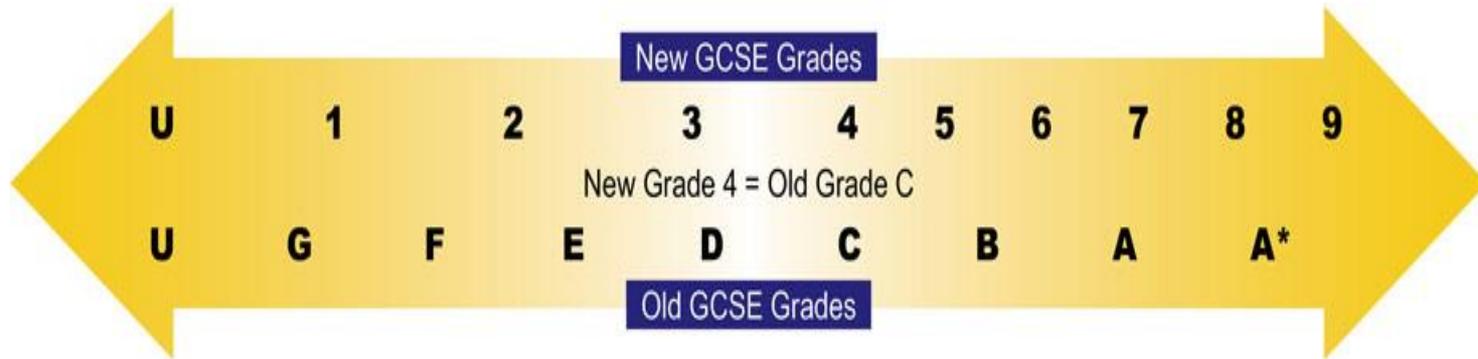
GCSE TIMELINE



<http://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/168454-mathematics-summary-brochure.pdf>

**KEY STAGE 4:
CHANGES TO
GCSES**

- **September 2015:** New GCSE Maths and English courses started
- **September 2016:** other subjects (including GCSE Science) will start new courses
- Some will start in **September 2017.**
- For each subject, the old and new courses will run **in parallel for one year** — in the first year, Year 10s will be studying the new courses while Year 11s finish the 'old' courses.
- Further reading https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/gcse_grades_9_1_explained



KEY STAGE 4:
CHANGES FROM
GCSE A*-U TO 9-1

- **Summer 2017:** The first new exams for GCSE Maths and English
- **Summer 2018:** The first new exams for GCSE Science

- **2 GCSE Science options:**
 - **One combined Science** course (worth two GCSEs)
 - Three separate GCSEs in **Biology, Chemistry** and **Physics**.

- All GCSEs are less coursework based, with all/most exams at the end of year 11



KEY STAGE 4: CHANGES TO GCSE MATHS, ENGLISH AND SCIENCE

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc)

A school performance measure that allows people to see how many pupils get a grade C or above in the “core academic subjects” at KS4:

- **English**
- **Mathematics**
- **the Sciences**
- **History or Geography**
- **a Language**

If the school your child will be attending is a government-funded school they will be promoting the Ebacc.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-baccalaureate-ebacc/english-baccalaureate-ebacc>

Progress 8

Another school performance measure based on students’ progress across eight subjects from Year 7 to Year 11.

- **English**
- **Mathematics**
- **3 other Ebacc qualifications**
- **3 other subjects e.g the arts**

For all students, not just those in government funded schools.

<http://www.oasisacademyjohnwilliams.org/sites/default/files/files/P8%20Fact%20sheet%20for%20OAJW%20-%2031032014.pdf>

**MEASURING SUCCESS IN
SECONDARY EDUCATION:
SOME NEW PHRASES
YOU MIGHT HEAR**

New courses to be taught from:

- **September 2015** e.g English Language and literature; business; the sciences; computer science.
- **September 2016:** Languages (ancient and modern) ; arts subjects; PE; RS
- **September 2017:** Maths; Law; DT; Accounting; etc.
- Assessment will be mainly by exam, assessing both AS and A2 at the end of the A2 year.
- Courses are not divided into modules
- No exams in January.
- AS results will no longer count towards an A level, in the way they do now.
- The content for the new A levels has been reviewed and updated
- See more details and a full list of when the new Qualifications are taught on gov.uk here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/get-the-facts-gcse-and-a-level-reform/get-the-facts-as-and-a-level-reform>

KEY STAGE 5:
CHANGES TO THE
STRUCTURE OF A-LEVELS
THE MAIN POINTS

- **Academies** are already established government funded schools that choose to operate outside local authority control. They do not have to follow the national curriculum (as long as it is “broad and balanced”) and they have more freedom over finances, teachers' pay and conditions.
- **Free schools** are schools which will be set up by groups of parents, teachers, charities, trusts, religious and voluntary groups. They will be set up as academies and will be funded in the same way - directly from central government.
- David Cameron’s government invited all maintained schools to become academies, and for parents to start up free schools. Many schools went along with this.
- A helpful article from the BBC: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10161371>

ACADEMIES/ FREE SCHOOLS

- Most children these days have expensive smartphones and are on them at almost constantly, at home and school.
- Schools now have to tackle problems in this virtual world just as much as the real world. E.g cyberbullying, dangers of meeting people online can happen on the small phone screen.
- Social Media apps such as Snapchat, WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, YikYak are common places for issues to arise.
- These issues and how to deal with them are taught in Citizenship/PSHE lessons.

Discussion points:

- Are you aware of the social apps your children use?
- Do you know a) what these apps do? b) how much your children use them c) what they see?
- Is it the parents or the school's responsibility to teach safety when using technology?
- How do we respond to apps like Tinder and others that reflect how sexualised our society is becoming? What should we say to our children?

**TECHNOLOGY
AND SAFEGUARDING:
WHAT TO WATCH OUT FOR**

As of November 2014, schools must promote the “fundamental British values”. According to Ofsted, these are:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.

Schools are expected to make these known to the pupils through assemblies, school values, curriculum etc.

- Comes under older “Social Moral Spiritual Cultural Development” (Section 78 of Education Act 2002.)

Useful Links:

[School Inspection Handbook from September 2015](#)

<http://www.doingsmsc.org.uk/british-values/>

**BRITISH
VALUES**

- Department for Education website:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education>
- [Ofsted School Inspection Handbook from September 2015](#)
- TES website – for teachers, but a great place to get detailed resources on most educational topics
<https://community.tes.com/>
- Reading up on British values
<http://www.doingsmsc.org.uk/british-values/>

**OTHER REFERENCES/
RESOURCES**

KS3 National Curriculum changes

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/358070/NC_assessment_questions_factsheet_Sept_update.pdf

<http://www.theschoolrun.com/KS3-sats-scrapped>
(from 2009)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/schools-win-funds-to-develop-and-share-new-ways-of-assessing-pupils>

Changes to GCSEs

https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/gcse_grades_9_1_explained

Changes to A-Levels

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/get-the-facts-gcse-and-a-level-reform/get-the-facts-as-and-a-level-reform>

<http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse-and-a-level-reform/a-level-reform/>

British Values

[*School Inspection Handbook from September 2015*](#)

<http://www.doingsmsc.org.uk/british-values/>

Academies and Free Schools

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10161371>

British Values

[*School Inspection Handbook from September 2015*](#)

<http://www.doingsmsc.org.uk/british-values/>

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf

OTHER USEFUL LINKS