

More than a Score – New Campaign

We don't need standardised times tables tests

Knowing your times tables is one of the key foundations to understanding maths. It introduces children to an exciting world of numbers, patterns and problem-solving techniques.

Every teacher and parent knows how well each child can do their tables; which ones they have mastered and which ones they're working on. Teachers already conduct informal tests to measure progress.

So why is the government spending over £5 million to introduce standardised times tables tests for year 4 pupils?

It's another unfair and unnecessary way to use pupils to measure schools, and the latest in the assembly line of standardised testing which, from next year, will see pupils sitting tests in reception, year 1, year 2, year 4 and year 6.

The new Multiplication Tables Check (MTC) is being piloted in schools in June 2019. Children will be given 25 questions and will be given just six seconds to answer each one. After that, they will be out of time and marked 'incorrect'.

Schools will be provided with the scores for each pupil and these will be shared with Ofsted when schools are inspected. The DfE will also provide information on how many pupils achieve full marks. Some experts believe this means the 'pass mark' will be set at 25 out of 25.*

It's madness to pile yet more pressure on our eight and nine-year-olds, especially as this test won't provide any information that teachers won't already know.

It's madness that teachers will have to use valuable teaching time to prepare their pupils for the test and will have to focus on one aspect of maths teaching ahead of others. The Association for the Teaching of Mathematics points out that the test 'emphasises rote learning and rapid recall over understanding of mathematical structures, and that introducing a separate test on multiplication facts is highlighting one aspect of mathematics over many other important ones'.

It's madness to judge schools on this and other standardised tests, instead of the overall quality of education they provide.

If you are a headteacher, please order our pledge, committing to putting children's well-being and overall education ahead of high-pressure testing.

*Source TES.com

www.morethanascore.org.uk