

Dear Parents and Carers of Year 4,

As you might be aware, Year 4 children will be completing the Multiplication Tables Check later on in the school year. Here's what you need to know:

1. At Engayne we love maths. It's an awesome subject to learn and to teach.
2. Maths is a big subject and we appreciate there's more to it than times tables and there's more to times tables than learning them off by heart. However, a lot of the rich, interesting maths is all about the multiplicative relationships and these are hard to fully grasp without fluent recall of the tables. For that reason, learning the tables is fundamental – they are a key facilitator to the maths that sits on top. We've always believed that.
3. We're not worried about the checks and this wasn't a surprise. In fact, we're in favour of the checks because it's always good to sharpen practice across the education sector and this is a useful lever to get schools to do that. We're already in a good place with learning the tables and the expectations are in line with the National Curriculum so it's business as usual for us.
4. The results of the test are not published publicly, they're not going to end up on a league table and they're not to worry about. There's no pass or fail, there's just a score out of 25 marks. They're not to be used to compare children, they're for *us* to reflect on so that we make the most of our provision. We're actually looking forward to seeing how well we do.
5. The checks consist of 25 questions. The questions will only be multiplication and they will go up to  $12 \times 12$ . There's nothing novel about the questions and they don't require problem solving so there's nothing to trip them up.
6. The checks are all about remembering the multiplication facts. That doesn't mean we'll forget all about the concepts, patterns, structures and relationships in multiplication. We're going to be learning those too, partly because they go hand in hand with excellent recall.
7. You may notice us taking even more initiative when it comes to learning the tables with more options for home learning. If you can, please ensure your child/ren continue to practise their times tables for the benefit of their wider maths education, not for them to get a high score on the tests.

It would be really helpful to your children if you could try some of the following at home with your child/ren.

- TT Rockstars Soundcheck Arena – This arena has a similar format to the end of year MTC check. There are six seconds to answer each of the 25 random multiplication questions. Once completed a graph shows how much progress has been made with results of the score the child gets each time.
- [www.timestables.co.uk](http://www.timestables.co.uk) – This website has a Multiplication Tables Check option on the right hand side of the home page. Again, the children have six seconds to answer 25 different multiplication questions. This page is very basic which closely matches what the official MTC test will look like. Scores cannot be tracked on this website.
- When practising times tables at home, please can you ask your child/ren to practise the full times table, for example,  $1 \times 6 = 6$ ,  $2 \times 6 = 12$ ,  $3 \times 6 = 18$  rather than repeating the multiples of the times tables such as 6, 12, 18, 24, 30, 36 and so on. Repeating the whole times table will help your children to learn which times table gives the answer, whereas when repeating the multiples, they will have to double check which times tables gave them that answer which they will not have time to do during the six seconds given for each question.
- There are lots of ways to play games to practise times tables for example:

Using Die: Roll a dice twice and multiplying the given numbers together. You could add an extra challenge by asking your child to roll the dice three times and add the first two numbers together and then multiply by the third number.

Playing cards: Remove the Ace, King, Queen and Jack and take a playing card each from a pile and multiply the numbers together.

If you have a question on any of the above, please direct them to your child's teacher.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Nash and Year 4 Teaching Team