

3rd March 2017

Dear Parents/ Carers,

We are writing because we are excited to announce that we are launching a brand new Stage 4 Times Tables Award. At the moment Stage 1 – Stage 3 test the children's times tables from 2s through to 12s, including their understanding of the associated division facts. Stage 4 links together multiplication with place value so that the children can use their knowledge of multiplication facts to work out larger or smaller calculations. E.g. If $5 \times 4 = 20$, then $5 \times 40 = 200$ and $5 \times 0.4 = 2$. This stage will be introduced to children from the Summer of Year 4 as this is where it most appropriately fits into the National Curriculum and what the children are being taught in their classes.

After a few recent queries, we also wanted to take this opportunity to clarify our approach towards times tables and the awards available for them. As you are aware, we love to reward the children for their achievements, which is why we have done times tables awards for many years. In many ways, we would love to award children in a similar way for all areas of maths, however this would be impossible and times tables really lend themselves towards this.

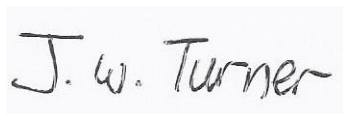
The times table awards by no means stand on their own; multiplication facts and understanding are also regularly taught by all of the teachers as part of their maths lessons as this is part of the National Curriculum, such as mental maths starters, times table races and many other interactive activities. The times table awards are then an extra encouragement and incentive on top of this.

We try to provide the children with opportunities in which to practice their times tables and complete their awards at school but it is only a tiny part of a huge Mathematics curriculum that has to be covered. This is as well as Literacy, Spelling, Reading, Science and all of the foundation subjects which makes it very difficult to provide time every day for the children to complete their times table awards. However, we do seek to provide many opportunities throughout the school day. Both myself and Mr Brown seek to find opportunities each week to allow children from each class to complete some of their awards with us.

We are aware that children will all progress through these tables at different rates and are also aware of how much they love achieving these awards. Our key priority in all of this is that the children have a deep understanding of multiplication, rather than just knowing them for a short period of a few days so that they can achieve an award.

We look forward to awarding our first Stage 4 Times Tables Award in the near future.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. W. Turner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line at the end.

Mr John Turner

Associate Head Of School

On behalf of Middlefield Primary Academy (part of the DLPT)