



Standards
& Testing
Agency

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Prof S Sparks
ACME
The Royal Society
6-9 Carlton House Terrace
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30 September 2014

Dear Professor Sparks,

I write with reference to your letter of Friday 5 September 2014 addressed to Ian Todd, Chief Executive of the Standards and Testing Agency. I have been asked to reply on his behalf as Head of Test Development Research.

As you know, the sample materials are intended to help teachers understand the changes to the tests and they were chosen to focus on areas that are new to the curriculum (such as fractions). Given the stage we are at in the test development process, we were unable to provide a full sample test as part of the released materials and so the limited amount of material released could not cover the full range of content or range of difficulty that the final test will assess. We have therefore stated very clearly that they should not be used for assessment purposes on our GOV.UK pages.

The sample materials are the first of a number of areas of support that we will provide before the new tests are administered. We have published the draft key stage 1 and 2 test frameworks on GOV.UK to outline how the new curriculum will be assessed. In addition to this we are planning to release the following materials in the summer period of 2015:

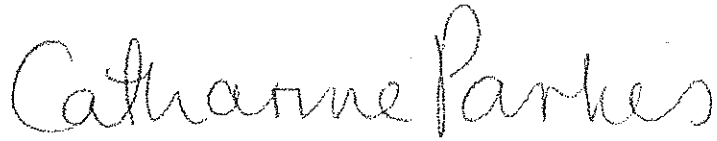
- final test frameworks
- a full set of sample tests and mark schemes for each of the national curriculum tests at key stages 1 and 2
- guidance on how the results of national curriculum tests will be reported, including an explanation of scaled scores.

The sample tests released next summer will meet the test specification in the final test frameworks for each subject. This will give teachers a better idea of the range of questions and the difficulty of the final tests. Where possible, the questions in tests will be placed in difficulty order to increase accessibility.

We appreciate your suggestion of a meeting and our mathematics test development team would be very pleased to meet with you. Please contact Michael Soong at Michael.soong@education.gsi.gov.uk who will assist in making the necessary arrangements.

Thank you for taking the time to raise your concerns. I trust that you have been reassured that schools will receive guidance as soon as we are able to provide it.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Catharine Parkes".

Catharine Parkes

**Head of Test Development Research, Test Development
Standards and Testing Agency**