Dear parent/carer,

In June 2019, a [new Year 4 multiplication tables check](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/multiplication-tables-check-development-process) will be trialled across the UK, becoming statutory in 2020. Abbey Hey Primary Academy has been chosen by United Learning to take part in the 2019 trial, your child will need to take a short online test to make sure their times tables knowledge is at the expected level.

We’ve gathered together everything you might want to know about the times tables check, including what it involves, when it will take place, and how you can help your child prepare. You will also find below all you need to know about this important check including our top tips, activities, and games to help make your child’s times tables practice fun.

**What is the Year 4 multiplication tables check?**

The [multiplication tables check](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/multiplication-tables-check-development-process) is an **online test** for pupils in Year 4. Pupils are asked to answer **25 questions** on times tables from **two to 12**. They are given **six seconds per question**, with three seconds rest between each question, so the test should last less than five minutes.

Questions about the **six, seven, eight, nine, and 12 times tables** are likely to come up most often, as these are the hardest for most children to learn. It’s a good idea to focus on these tricky times tables with your child.

First and foremost, the check is about finding out which children are struggling with their times tables so that they can get extra support. It is not a judgement on what your child can do, but a way for the school to know how their teaching is going and to adjust their focus if needed.

*“Leaving primary school with a fundamental grasp of basic numeracy is as important as leaving being able to read. And just as the phonics check has helped more children learn to read, this will ensure more pupils know their times tables.”*

*Nick Gibb, schools minister*

**When is the check going to happen?**

The times tables check will take place between **10–28th June 2019**.

**How can I help my child prepare?**

The best way to keep the test stress-free is to work some times tables practice into your daily routine. With regular practice, your child will get used to tackling these kind of questions with confidence.

If your child is feeling nervous in the approach to the check, don’t panic. Our top five tips for helping your child learn their times tables will get them up to speed:

**1. Use times table wall charts**  
Wall charts show all the answers for a particular times table. Stick them up somewhere they’ll be seen often. For instance, you could put them over the sink so that your child will see them when they’re brushing their teeth. You’ll be amazed how quickly they learn when they see these number facts every day!

**2. Learn the tricks for difficult times tables**  
There are clever tricks for remembering several of the times tables. For instance, watch Andrew Jeffrey’s method for tackling the seven times table – this can be found on the Oxford Owl Website.

<http://blog.oxfordowl.co.uk/what-is-the-year-4-multiplication-tables-check/>

**3. Play times tables games**  
Games and challenges are a great way to support learning, and a few minutes a day will make all the difference. Why not play snap with some [times tables flashcards](https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/0192744577?ie=UTF8&tag=oxfowl-21&camp=1634&linkCode=xm2&creativeASIN=0192744577), matching the sums to the answers as fast as you can? Or you could surprise your child by asking times tables questions at random times during the day and seeing how quickly they can respond (this works particularly well as a competition between siblings or friends).

Using games keeps practice short and sweet, and makes the process much less of a chore for you and your child. You can find a collection of times tables games and activity sheets attached to this letter.

**4. Make it real**  
If your child can’t see any point in learning their times tables, try showing them how this knowledge is useful in everyday life. Instead of just rote learning their times tables, try to create opportunities for your child to use multiplication in problem solving. For example, ask them to scale up a recipe or calculate whether they have enough money to buy more of their favourite things (such as sweets or football cards). This will help your child see the value of their learning.

**5. Practise on the computer**  
Help your child become comfortable reading and answering questions on a screen. Encourage children to use their **times table rockstars account** to practise interactive activities.

The oxford owl website also has some great interactive activities.

[**http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/kids-activities/kids-activities-age-7-9/**](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/kids-activities/kids-activities-age-7-9/)

Thank You for your continued support,

Mrs Chadderton

Assistant Principal