

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
PARENTS / GUARDIANS

FOR THE

END OF PRIMARY BENCHMARK 2022



The End of Primary Benchmark 2022

The End of Primary Benchmark is an assessment for Year 6 students which is designed, implemented and reported on in such a way as to inform students, parents/guardians, schools and other stakeholders about the achievement of learners in the different skills and subjects.

The different components of the Benchmark are:

Maltese and English have four components each:

Component	Marks	Duration of Component
Speaking / It-Taħdit	20	10 minutes
Listening / Is-Smigh	20	30 minutes
Reading / Il-Qari	30	50 minutes
Writing / Il-Kitba	30	60 minutes

Mathematics has two components:

Component	Marks	Duration of Component
Mental / Mentali	20	15 minutes
Written / Miktuba	80	1 hour 30 minutes

All the papers, recordings of the listening comprehensions, and marking schemes for the Benchmark are available at <http://www.curriculum.gov.mt>.

The Benchmark Reports are available on the same website. These give information about the Benchmark, together with statistical data and recommendations to enhance teaching and learning.

The following are some suggestions that can be adopted by parents/guardians in assisting children to improve their educational performance.

English

- The use of English at home is encouraged. Parents/guardians should give their children opportunities to practise both speaking and listening. Encouraging children to speak in English will help them to refine their listening skills, and enrich their knowledge of vocabulary and sentence structures. Parents/guardians should use appropriate and accurate language when conversing with children.
- Children should be encouraged to follow and talk about educational listening and viewing texts in English, such as news, weather reports and documentaries.
- Parents/guardians can encourage children to use a range of vocabulary and idiomatic language to express themselves better in English. They can also practise with them different functions of language such as asking questions, requesting information, comparing and contrasting, describing and hypothesising.
- Children need to read more in English. Parents/guardians can help by providing age-appropriate books at home, encouraging visits to public/regional libraries and setting a good example themselves by reading. Children should engage in a range of reading material, including fiction and non-fiction texts.
- Discussion about books and other written texts, including online educational texts, they have read in English is ideal for children to show their ability to understand, interpret, retell and evaluate. It encourages visualising and enhances ideas.
- Children improve their English writing skills by engaging in different writing experiences. Parents/guardians could provide writing opportunities at home for children to write with a purpose and for an audience, for example by asking their children to write an invitation, a short note or letter to another family member; keep a diary and write about a book they have read. Constant and dedicated support and encouragement from parents/guardians is vital.
- Parents/guardians should encourage their children to plan their writing. They should also encourage them to revise, proofread and edit their writing before presenting their work to the teacher.
- The use of a children's English dictionary and thesaurus at home would help increase the children's range of vocabulary. Parents/guardians should encourage their children to look up meanings of new words they encounter while listening or reading texts and to find alternative words to enhance the quality of their spoken and written English.

Maltese

- Parents/guardians are encouraged to use proper spoken Maltese in all situations and use suitable expressions, avoiding the use of foreign words or phrases when Maltese words can be used.
- Words like chewing gum and roundabout are being used by Maltese speakers as their equivalent in Maltese is not available. However, parents/guardians should encourage their children to use Maltese words when available before resorting to foreign words.
- Children are to know the numbers, colours and shapes names in Maltese and use them properly and regularly. Parents/guardians should lead by example.
- The Maltese alphabet should be taught and written correctly. Maltese words should be spelt using the Maltese alphabet sounds.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to use Maltese idioms and proverbs in everyday contexts so that children learn and understand their meaning in the appropriate context.
- Children should be encouraged to discuss and talk about different issues using the Maltese language to practise the language in different contexts and increase their vocabulary.
- Precision is very important. So if students are asked for a one-word answer, the markers will be looking for one word and not a sentence or phrase. Accuracy in spelling, writing and punctuation should also be checked from an early age. Parents/guardians should try to find time to check their children's homework and ensure that instructions are being followed.
- At home, exposure to different writing mediums in Maltese such as books, newspapers, magazines, notices and advertisements is recommended so that children get used to different genres of writing.
- For further assistance, parents can visit the website <http://malti.skola.edu.mt> and use the available resources.

Mathematics

- Parents'/guardians' attitudes towards mathematics may have an impact on their children's attitudes. Therefore, parents/guardians are encouraged to be positive and enthusiastic about mathematics.
- Parents/guardians can be great teachers of mathematics in their own home. There are many everyday situations that involve mathematics. They can:
 - Look for numbers on monuments, door numbers, car registration plates, newspapers and books.
 - Help their children to read and use a calendar, read analogue and digital clock times, discuss duration of events such as television programmes, and keep track of how their child spends time in a 24-hour period.
 - Play games involving matching, recognizing numbers, shapes, counting and also strategic thinking games such as Sudoku, Dominoes and Mastermind.
 - Record their child's weight (mass) and height and discuss changes. Estimate, weigh, measure capacity and time when shopping and cooking.
 - Offer the opportunity to children to handle amounts of money when shopping and estimate totals and work out prices of sale times, for example 20% off.
 - Point out the ways in which different members of the family use mathematics in their jobs.
- The internet can also be a useful tool. The Primary Maths Support Team within the Directorate for Learning and Assessment Programmes maintains its own website <http://primarymaths.skola.edu.mt> on which there are many useful tips for parents and tasks for children.
- Parents/guardians should encourage their children to be persistent if a problem-solving task seems difficult. Every effort should be rewarded and mistakes are to be treated as opportunities for the child to learn.
- When solving mathematical problems, parents/guardians should point out that there is usually more than one method to a solution and at times there may not even be one solution. Various problem-solving strategies can be explored such as: finding patterns, making tables, working backwards, guessing and checking, drawing pictures, making a list, writing a number sentence, and using logical reasoning.
- Parents/guardians are further encouraged to practise the multiplication tables up to 10×10 with their children. When practising tables, it is important to remind children that for every division sum they can write corresponding multiplication sums, and vice versa.

Other General Points

- Parents/guardians need to monitor their children's homework and ask about what they did at school. Parents/guardians are encouraged to show interest in all school activities and try to participate as much as possible.
- Parents/guardians need to teach their children to organise their tasks, stick to them and manage their time well.
- Parents/guardians should encourage their children to read from a very young age. Parents/guardians should set an example themselves and find time to read. Reading material can vary from a simple pamphlet to a thick novel. Parents/guardians need to practise different forms of reading with children, for example loud reading, reading silently and bedtime reading. The National Literacy Agency (tel. 25982990) organises courses for parents/guardians to help them assist their children in reading and writing.
- Parents/guardians have a very important role in exposing their children to opportunities to hear proper use of both Maltese and English. For parents/guardians who wish to improve their own skills in Maltese, a course is regularly organised by the Directorate for Learning and Assessment Programmes in collaboration with the National Council for the Maltese Language. The course focuses on the orthography aspect of the language.
- Plenty of educational resources are available online. Possible sites to explore are:
 - The website of the Directorate for Learning and Assessment Programmes
<http://www.curriculum.gov.mt> under the heading Benchmark.
 - <https://teleskola.mt/>
 - <http://primarymaths.skola.edu.mt>
 - <http://nrich.maths.org/primary>
 - <http://www.ixl.com/math/>
 - <http://malti.skola.edu.mt>
 - <http://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/en/parents>
 - <https://www.englishprimarymalta.com/>
 - <https://www.teachitenglish.co.uk/searchresults?keyword=year+6+writing+a+story>

Educational Assessment Unit

For further information or to give your feedback contact the:

**Educational Assessment Unit
32, Joseph Abela Scolaro Street
Hamrun**

Telephone Numbers: 2598 2186/2727

