Marking the tests

Use the corresponding answer pages in this book to mark the practice tests and **Progress tests**. Note the **Progress test** results on a copy of the **Group record sheet**, allowing you to track the children's progress over time. After completing the **Progress tests**, each pupil can write their own score on the **Results chart** in their pupil book.

You can mark the pupils' work yourself or you could involve the pupils in the marking process. Many teachers organise weekly whole-class marking sessions in which all the tests completed during the week are marked together. If you are teaching an individual child, this process also works on a one-to-one level. The steps for the marking sessions are as follows:

- as you prepare for the session, make sure you have the relevant answer pages to hand
- read through the test questions in turn, ensuring that everyone is focused and understands each question
- work through longer problems, modelling the most efficient method of reaching the answer
- invite one pupil to answer the question
- clearly explain to the pupils whether this answer is correct or not
- tell the pupils to mark their own answers accordingly
- if a pupil gives the wrong answer, model the correct answer on the board.

Rewarding achievement

Times Tables Tests 1 and **2** provide a permanent record of each pupil's work. The pupils are encouraged to monitor their own progress and to take pride in the development of their maths skills.

If you wish to acknowledge and reward those pupils whose achievements – at whatever level – are especially significant, you may download blank editable certificates from the Schofield & Sims website (www.schofieldandsims.co.uk/free-downloads). These certificates are also an effective way to communicate children's achievements to their parents and carers.

Strategies for learning times tables

Repetition is the key to successfully learning the times tables. It is essential, therefore, to make times tables practice a part of your everyday teaching. It is important for the pupils to master the times tables out of sequential order, so time should be dedicated to this once the basic order has been learnt. Be sure to include the various different ways of phrasing a multiplication question: 'two times seven is …', 'two multiplied by seven is …', 'two sevens are …', 'two lots of seven are …', and so on.

Though chanting the times tables individually or as a whole class is a good place to start, there are many additional strategies that will make learning the times tables easier for the pupils. By encouraging the pupils to look for patterns, learn the rule of commutativity and use a range of practical activities and games, you will set them up for success.

Looking for patterns

There is debate surrounding the best order in which to teach the times tables. However, it is generally agreed that it is best to start with 2, 5 and 10, as the patterns within them are easy for young pupils to grasp. In the 2 and 10 times tables the numbers are all even. In fact, any number multiplied by an even number will be even. In the 10 times table all the numbers end in 0 and in the 5 times table all the numbers end in 5 or 0.

Once they have mastered the 2, 5 and 10 times tables, the pupils should find it easier to move on to 4 and 8. Again, point out the patterns. Show the pupils that the answers for the 4 times table are the answers to the 2 times table doubled: for example, **3 × 4 = 3 × 2 × 2**. Likewise, the answers for the 8 times table are the answers to the 4 times table doubled: for example, **5 × 8 = 5 × 4 × 2**. Use the photocopiable **Multiplication square** to illustrate these patterns. With this foundation, the children should find it easier to move on to the rest of the times tables.