

Cambridge Secondary 1 and the National Curriculum for England

We have reviewed the structure, content and standard of Cambridge Secondary 1 alongside the National Curriculum for England.

The National Curriculum for England is organised into blocks of years called Key Stages. Each Key Stage covers a number of years of education from age 5 to 18. Curriculum content is provided for a whole Key Stage and covers a number of years together. Cambridge Secondary 1 is equivalent to Key Stage 3 (ages 12 to 14).

Learners' progress and achievement in the National Curriculum for England is described in terms of attainment levels. There are eight National Curriculum attainment levels (plus a description of 'Exceptional Performance'). Performance descriptions for each area of learning illustrate the key features of a typical learner's performance at each National Curriculum attainment level. The National Curriculum for England specifies the range of National Curriculum attainment levels in which the majority of learners are expected to work during each Key Stage, and also indicates an expected National Curriculum attainment level for the majority of learners at the end of each Key Stage.

Range of National Curriculum attainment levels within which the great majority of learners are expected to work during Key Stage 3 (ages 12 to 14)	Expected National Curriculum attainment level for the majority of learners at the end of Key Stage 3
levels 3–7	level 5/6

The Cambridge Secondary 1 curriculum is organised differently. The curriculum frameworks provide a set of learning objectives for each of the three years of lower secondary education (Cambridge Secondary 1 Stages 7–9). Learning objectives describe what learners following the Cambridge Secondary 1 curriculum should know and be able to do by the end of each stage, or year.

The table below gives an overview of how the learning objectives in the Cambridge Secondary 1 curriculum frameworks for English, mathematics and science for Stage 7 to Stage 9 cover the range of expected National Curriculum levels.

Cambridge Secondary 1 curriculum	Range of National Curriculum attainment levels covered in the content of Cambridge Secondary 1 Stages 7–9	National Curriculum attainment levels covered in Cambridge Secondary 1 Stage 9 (i.e. the last stage in Cambridge Secondary 1)
English	levels 4–7*	level 7*
Mathematics	levels 4–7	level 6/7
Science	levels 4–7	level 6/7

*Cambridge Secondary 1 English includes some content which covers National Curriculum attainment level 8.

This means that a learner who is successfully achieving many, or the great majority of, learning objectives during Stages 7–9 of Cambridge Secondary 1 could reasonably be expected to be achieving National Curriculum attainment level 6 or level 7 by the end of Stage 9. Following the Cambridge Secondary 1 curriculum allows learners to acquire the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to progress to Key Stage 4 of the English National Curriculum (ages 14 to 16).