

Am I on track in April?

By April, you *should* have a fairly clear picture of whether your child is on track for 7+ to 11+ exams – but many parents feel vulnerable and uneasy at this point. Remember there are still 6 months until exams for many, exams are 9 months away. Your child will not be scoring 80% in exams at this point. Being on track does not just mean raw scores in exams - it is about what your preparation routine looks like.

What to look for to judge if your child is “on track”

Look at consistency, not just ability

Being “on track” isn’t about occasional good results – it’s about *reliable performance*.

Your child should be:

- Getting most questions right in practice papers (not just some days)
- Finishing work within time limits
- Making fewer repeated mistakes

A child who *sometimes* does well but is inconsistent may not yet be exam-ready. Anyone can score well once, but is your child consistency getting 50%-60%?

Use practice papers as a benchmark

By April, your child should be working with realistic practice papers. You **MUST** introduce your child to papers. This is most effective if done slowly and gently. Remember the practice papers a school gives on their site are often academically lower than the real paper. They are simply to give a flavour of the style.

As a rough guide:

- **80%+ consistently** → Strongly on track but never be overconfident!
- **50%+** → On track but needs refinement
- **Below 50%** → Needs targeted support



More important than the score is:

- Are mistakes careless or due to gaps in understanding?
- Are they improving week by week?

Check timing under pressure

Many children seem “on track” — until timing is introduced.

Your child should:

- Complete papers within the set time (or very close)
- Maintain accuracy while working at speed
- Know when to move on from a difficult question

If they struggle here, they may not yet be fully prepared. Introduce a timer for shorter tasks - 10-15 minute activities - the more you use a timer the less nervous your child will be around one.

Review how they answer (not just what they get right)

This is where many children lose marks.

Ask:

- Are answers clearly set out?
- Do they show working in maths?
- Do they follow instructions exactly?
- Are they completing in the most efficient way - saving time and in the least number of calculations - remember the more calculations they do, the more opportunities to make mistakes.

Understanding *how exams are marked* is crucial — it often makes the difference between average and top scores.



Speak to the school or tutor

Don't rely only on reports — ask direct questions:

- “Are they working at the expected standard for 11+?”
- “What areas are currently holding them back?” be specific - “what exactly does my child need to be better at?”. If you are told “fractions” then ask - “what can not they do in fractions?”
- “What would a successful candidate be doing differently now?”

Watch confidence and independence

A child who is on track will usually:

- Approach work with confidence (not avoidance)
- Work more independently
- Recover quickly from mistakes

A child who is struggling may:

- Avoid practice
- Become easily frustrated
- Rely heavily on help

Bottom line

By April, an “on track” child is:

- Consistent
- Accurate under timed conditions
- Clear on how to gain marks
- Gradually improving

