

Newlands Girls' School

Courage Commitment Compassion

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Dear Parents and Carers

Last year we informed parents that we have been working on a new way of reporting on progress for pupils in Key Stage 3.

Up until now, Key Stage 3 reports have shown a prediction of what teachers think a student might achieve at GCSE if they continued to progress at the same rate. We then reported these predicted outcomes in bands.

Extensive research shows that progress in learning is not linear and it is challenging to accurately predict a student's future GCSE attainment when they have not been taught the content. Students in Years 7-9 are not being assessed or taught GCSE content. This has resulted in three changes which are the culmination of a year of research and consultation in school.

Firstly, teachers will be reporting using a more accurate and holistic view of how well our students are actually learning the curriculum they have been taught to that point.

On progress reports, this will be shown as a descriptor for each subject. These descriptors take into account summative assessments the students have completed such as tests or practical activities as well as formative assessment in lessons such as quizzing, questioning, observing both practical and written work and looking at work in books.

The descriptors are as follows:

Developing

Your learning is new to you and may feel difficult. Pay careful attention. Ask questions where you don't understand. Practise! You will make mistakes but don't worry. This is part of the learning process. As you develop more, you may still find it difficult to remember everything and you may still make mistakes. Don't give up: respond to feedback from your teacher, keep paying attention, asking questions and practising.

Secure

You are secure enough in your learning to practise independently. Your work is now quite accurate. Keep retrieving your knowledge so that you don't forget it. Act upon feedback from your teacher. You now need to start applying your knowledge to more challenging questions and connecting it to your other learning.

Mastering

You are showing that you know your learning very well and can recall it easily. You are almost completely accurate. You can answer quite difficult questions and connect this to the rest of your curriculum. Keep on retrieving your learning so that you don't lose fluency.

Fluent

You are now fluent in your knowledge, skills and understanding. You are quick and you are accurate. You can remember your learning automatically. You see clearly how this connects to your other knowledge. Keep on retrieving your learning so that you don't lose fluency. Show kindness by teaching others who may not be as fluent as you are.

We expect that students may move from one descriptor to another depending on how well they are learning. For example, a student may learn the curriculum better over time and move from secure to mastering. On the other hand, as a student moves to new more difficult content, they may move from fluent to mastering. This is perfectly normal and if we have significant concerns about your daughter's progress, their teachers will be contacting you as usual.

As we are no longer reporting predicted outcomes in future GCSE exams, the second change we are making is that we will not be reporting or sharing GCSE target grades with Key Stage 3 parents or students. Targets by their very nature are based on a statistical model that does not always reflect the reality of what students achieve. In fact, they can often limit progress or cause undue worry. We believe that students in Years 7-9 should be focused on developing a love of learning and experiencing the wide curriculum on offer rather than worrying if they have met a target grade designed for a 16-year-old sitting terminal exams. Once your daughter starts studying for her GCSEs, we will of course share with students and parents what grades we anticipate students will be likely to achieve.

Lastly, we will now be reporting on attitude to learning rather than effort. This better reflects the actual attitude a student has to learning in each subject rather than how much effort they are making on the surface.

Student reports will be issued on Arbor at 3.10pm on the calendared date. The dates of issue for the first reports this year are as follows:

- Year 7 – Thursday 12th December
- Year 8 – Thursday 28th November
- Year 9 – Thursday 14th November

We believe that these changes will ensure parents and carers have an accurate picture of how well their daughter is learning and progressing across their different subjects and will allow students to be free to aim to be fluent in all their subjects.

Yours sincerely



Miss Jo Capon
Headteacher



We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

