

Dear parents and carers

Now that students have completed their first two weeks at school we thought it important to share how we will be assessing and reporting your young person's progress over the coming year. I also include information on how we group students for their learning.

Learning Groups

In all year groups, students have been placed into two bands called X and Y. These bands are made up of an equal number of students with a mix of ability and gender.

Year 7:	Until October half term students will be in tutor group learning groups. From October half term, after they have completed CATs testing, reading and spelling tests, we will have one fast track group in each band and then 3 mixed ability groups for core subjects (English, Maths and Science). These groups are flexible and blocked separately so you won't necessarily have the same students in all three core subjects. Ability is measured for each subject separately. The remaining subjects are taught as mixed ability.
Years 8 and 9:	Each will have one fast track group and 3 mixed ability groups in each band for core subjects (English, Maths and Science). As for year 7, groups are determined by ability in each subject. The remaining subjects are all mixed ability.
Years 10 and 11:	<p>In the X band we have one fast track with the remaining groups set with: a) two middle and one support group or b) all three mixed ability (decided by subject leaders based on cohort and needs)</p> <p>On the Y side, we have Stream 10 for those that need extra support / intervention and then two mixed groups as well as one fast-track group.</p> <p>All option groups are mixed ability.</p>

Assessment

Setting meaningful targets in schools is a complex issue as multiple external factors can affect student outcomes. In order to ensure that we are ambitious for our students, and recognise that learning is not a straight forward journey, we have moved to a banding



system whereby students will be given a target range, with a baseline that is in line with their minimum expected goal. This is linked to our school values of 'Ad Astra' (meaning reach to the stars).

Year 7 - 10 Assessment

All students from Year 7 will be placed in their expected band from October half term and will work with the band system until the summer term of Year 10 when they have sat their end of year exams. The results of these end of year exams will support us in identifying the minimum GCSE grade we believe they should be expected to reach. This is a grade between 9 – 1, with 4 being a pass and 5 being a 'good' pass.

Students in years 7 to 10 will be placed into the band where we expect them to achieve at each year.

A	Accelerated
S	Soaring
T	Tuning
R	Rising
A	Acquiring

After each assessment ~~Student(s)~~ First Name will be graded using the criteria below:

Working beyond	This student is working over and above their expected goal – their work is secure and exceeding expectations and would be at the top of the band it is being marked against. If the student continues to work at the same level, they are likely to exceed their current ASTRA Expected Range
Working at	If this student continues to work at the same level, they are likely to achieve in line with their ASTRA Expected Range. This is the minimum expectation of where we expect all students to be working.
Working towards	In order to reach their ASTRA Expected Range, this student needs to act upon advice and guidance from their teachers to develop their understanding in key topics. They are working at the bottom end of the band and would need to do more or seek help and guidance.



**Requires
Intervention**

This student will need further intervention and guidance from their teachers to develop their knowledge and understanding in identified areas of the curriculum or they risk not reaching their ASTRA Expected Range.

If a student is consistently working above, they may be able to move up a band after a consistent high level has been achieved.

Students will know their bands and will have a coloured sticker on their exercise book or folder.

In reporting to you, we will also refer to the attitude to learning based on this:

Attitude to Learning	
Star Learner	<p>As per Motivated Learner but also including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leads learning in the classroom• Works independently both inside and outside of the classroom• Curious and demonstrating a real interest in learning about new ideas and topics• Seeks own solutions to problems and misunderstandings• Completes homework to an exceptionally high standard, often researching beyond or completing the Ad Astra Challenge
Motivated Learner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Active interest in learning and acquiring new skills and knowledge• Learns from own setbacks and demonstrates resilience• Reviews own progress and acts on feedback to improve work• Seeks help when needed in order to improve their understanding• Listens carefully to absorb new knowledge and instructions• Completes homework to a good standard to support and consolidate learning, occasionally completing the Ad Astra challenge



Reluctant Learner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can avoid challenging tasks • Requires supervision to attempt tasks • Can be off task and distracted • Work is often incomplete or not at the level of their Astra Target Band • Does not attempt to act on feedback • Does not complete homework to support learning
-------------------	--

Year 11 Assessment

Until the summer term of Year 10, students will be assessed using the KS3 criteria above, after which they will be given their GCSE target grade and follow the assessment criteria below.

To ensure appropriate challenge and high expectations, every student is targeted to achieve end of KS4 grades in line with the top 20% of similar students nationally. At KS4, these are reported as National Curriculum grades (9-1 for GCSE subjects and Level 2 Distinction Star to Level 1 Pass for vocational subjects).

Standards are reported using current, fine grades. Fine grades use a – or a + to denote how secure students are in that grade. For example, 5- indicates a teacher has awarded a grade 5 but there is doubt whether the student could consistently replicate that standard of work, whereas a grade 5+ indicates that the student is consistently achieving this standard of work.

Progress is based on how Student(s) First Name is performing in each subject, compared to their expected target grade. Progress is identified using a statement grade using the terms – Working Above, Working At, Working Towards or Requires Intervention.

Working beyond	The student is currently working above their target grade.
Working at	The student is currently working in line with their target grade.
Working towards	The student is currently working slightly below their target grade and needs to act upon advice and guidance from their teachers to develop their understanding in key topics.



Requires Intervention	This student is currently working well below their target grade and needs to follow guidance from their teachers to develop their knowledge and understanding in identified areas of the curriculum or they risk not reaching their target.
-----------------------	---

In reporting to you, we will also refer to the attitude to learning based on this:

Attitude to Learning	
Star Learner	<p>As per Motivated Learner but also including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leads learning in the classroom • Works independently both inside and outside of the classroom • Curious and demonstrating a real interest in learning about new ideas and topics • Seeks own solutions to problems and misunderstandings • Completes homework to an exceptionally high standard, often researching beyond or completing the Ad Astra Challenge
Motivated Learner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active interest in learning and acquiring new skills and knowledge • Learns from own setbacks and demonstrates resilience • Reviews own progress and acts on feedback to improve work • Seeks help when needed in order to improve their understanding • Listens carefully to absorb new knowledge and instructions • Completes homework to a good standard to support and consolidate learning, occasionally completing the Ad Astra challenge
Reluctant Learner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can avoid challenging tasks • Requires supervision to attempt tasks • Can be off task and distracted • Work is often incomplete or not at the level of their Astra Target Band • Does not attempt to act on feedback • Does not complete homework to support learning



Homework

We apologise for the delay in sending out the Homework timetables. Please find them attached to this email. Homework is a crucial part of school life and ensures that students become independent learners and embed their learning into their long-term memory, so making it easier for them to recall and retrieve information when required. It is an opportunity for them to extend their learning and for teachers to check understanding. This year we have a Homework club called Betelgeuse (the brightest star in the sky) running every day after school in Antares. Please do encourage your child to attend if they need extra support. All homework will be set on Arbor.

Best wishes

Mrs A Blackwell

Assistant Headteacher of Teaching and Learning

