



Fulford School

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Dear Parent / Carer

As you may be aware a new National Curriculum has come into force as of September 2014 which, in addition to changes in content, includes the removal of National Curriculum levels. This offers us a fantastic opportunity to create a more cohesive system which allows students to measure their progress across a consistent scale of assessment throughout Year 7 to Year 11.

Consequently, we have taken the decision to assess at Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 and 9) using GCSE-style grades. In reaching this decision, we consulted widely with students and it was resoundingly clear that this would be their preferred approach to assessment. This will allow similar assessment criteria to be used from Year 7 until Year 11 and will ensure a greater degree of continuity between Key Stages 3 and 4. Students will now be able to see how the progress they make in Key Stage 3 is related to GCSE. Previously, Year 9 students were limited to a Level 7 in most subjects; however, using the new grading system will ensure that there is no cap on attainment at this stage. This, in turn, will further raise the aspiration of students in Key Stage 3.

The table below shows the approximate conversion from levels to GCSE-style grades. For example, a student achieving a Level 5 under the previous system of assessment is broadly working at a grade E at GCSE under the new framework.

Level	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Grade	N*	G	F	E	D	C	B	A	A*

*N is nearly equivalent to a GCSE grade

Split grades will be reported in a similar way to sub-levels under the previous system. For example, a grade E would be split into E-, E= and E+. A split grade of E+ would indicate the student has mastered the assessment criteria at this grade, an E= would indicate a secure understanding at this grade and an E- would reflect an understanding of some elements of this grade.

As a result of this change in assessment, teaching staff will now be referring to grade descriptors during lessons and in assessed tasks. School reports will now include current working grades which broadly indicate the grade a student may achieve if s/he sat the GCSE examination in that subject at that time. A Year 8 student, for example, may have a current working grade of a D but it would be anticipated they would gain a significantly higher grade once they sit the GCSE at the end of Year 11.

In order to monitor the progress of students, reports will still include the codings A, E and B which represent:
A - working above the previous half yearly grade in the subject
E - working equal to the previous half yearly grade in the subject
B - working below the previous half yearly grade in the subject

Should you have any queries regarding the change in reporting at Key Stage 3, do not hesitate to get in touch with me at school.

Yours faithfully

Mr J Brookes

Assistant Headteacher (Progress and Intervention)