



13<sup>th</sup> September 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome Back to a New School Year!

As we embark on a new academic year, we extend a warm welcome back to all our students and families. We hope that you had a restful and enjoyable summer and that you are all ready for the exciting challenges and opportunities ahead.

Having reviewed our current assessment procedures at Key Stage 3 we have refined processes to ensure a more accurate and forensic method of measuring progress and attainment. Having rolled this out across the staff we want to provide you and your children with an accurate and helpful measure of progress.

### **Assessment at Key Stage 3**

To support our commitment to high-quality teaching and learning we have reviewed our assessment procedures and are implementing a new assessment strategy for students in Years 7 and 8.

For each subject at Key Stage 3 staff have produced an assessment grid showing the content that will be covered during the course. For each strand within the subject the grid will consist of "I can" statements that the staff and students can use to measure their progress. All of the progress grids will be published on the school website so that they are easy to find.

For English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities, Languages, IT, PE and Technology students will be placed in one of three attainment bands based on their Key Stage 2 results. There is a separate row on each assessment grid appropriate for the students in that band. The attainment bands are:

- **Developing:** Students with an average Key Stage 2 score of less than 100. These are usually students that require a little more support with their learning.
- **Securing:** Students with an average Key Stage 2 score of between 100 and 110. These are students that are showing more independence in their learning.
- **Extending:** Students with an average Key Stage 2 score that is 110 or greater. These students are confident, independent learners.



The attainment bands are not fixed and as the students progress if they continually demonstrate a greater depth of knowledge then they can be moved to a different attainment band.

For Art, Drama, Music and PSHE each subject will only have one attainment band but they will still be made up of “I can” statements so staff and students can monitor progress.

Throughout Years 7 and 8, students will be continuously assessed to ensure they are acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills to achieve their expected GCSE outcomes. If a student is not meeting expectations, we will provide additional support to help them get back on track. In such cases, more often than not your child’s teacher in that subject – this will in the main be in one of the core subjects - will contact you as parents/carers to discuss any concerns and collaborate on strategies to support your child’s progress.

Our philosophy of high aspirations means we expect all students to make aspirational progress. Those in the Developing band will continue to secure knowledge with significant teacher input, while those in the Securing band will be encouraged to become more independent learners.

### **New Key Stage 3 Home Learning Policy**

In addition to our new assessment system, we are also introducing a new Key Stage 3 Home Learning policy. This policy emphasises short, focused activities designed to reinforce learning through retrieval practice. Retrieval practice involves recalling information from memory, which research has shown to be highly effective in strengthening understanding and long-term retention of knowledge.

These home learning activities will be promptly rewarded and given quick feedback, ensuring that students stay engaged and motivated. This approach not only helps students solidify their learning but also fosters a habit of consistent, effective study that will serve them well throughout their academic journey. Each faculty will be doing this in a slightly different way and so to support you our umbrella policy breaks this down and signposts to each faculty area. A copy of this can also be found on the school website.

### **Our Commitment to Excellence**

We firmly believe that when teachers deliver excellent lessons and students work hard, both in and out of school, positive outcomes naturally follow. We continuously monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school to ensure all students have access to great learning experiences. We also place a strong emphasis on monitoring and rewarding student effort in all areas of the curriculum. Success is the result of hard work, and we are committed to creating a culture where aspiration and effort are celebrated by everyone. Thank you for your continued support as we work together to provide the best education for your children. We are confident that these new initiatives will enhance our students’



learning experiences and contribute to their academic success. As with anything new we will monitor and evaluate and make amendments where necessary.

If you have any questions about the new attainment bands please contact Mr Stanton, and for questions about the home learning policy please contact Mr Fitzgibbon. We look forward to another successful year ahead!

Yours sincerely,



Mr M Fitzgibbon  
Senior Deputy Headteacher



Mr A Stanton  
Deputy Headteacher

