

Roundwood Park School



An overview of whole-school assessment in KS3

Dear Parent/Carer,

As many of you may be aware, there has been much change in education over the past few years. New GCSEs in English and maths were introduced in September 2015, with many more subjects starting their new courses in 2016. Students this summer were the first to sit these new exams in most subjects.

In year 12 and 13, the old style AS/A2 exams have been phased out, and replaced by a two-year A Level. A number of subjects started their new courses in September 2015, with more following in September 2016 and 2017.

In September 2014, a new KS3 national curriculum was introduced. As part of this new curriculum, the government announced that there would no longer be national curriculum levels and that it was down to schools to decide for themselves the best way of assessing students in KS3.

Over the past two/three years we have been working on a new system of assessing students in KS3. This has been in conjunction with a number of local schools, as well as schools at a national level. When designing our system we kept the core principles of the new national curriculum at the centre:

- An assessment system that informs all involved how well a student is doing and what they need to do to improve
- Provides evidence of progress over time, enabling intervention where appropriate
- Informs parents about the progress that their child is making compared to their starting points
- Is inclusive and appropriate for students with SEN and disabilities

We have also used this opportunity to review in depth the curriculum content that is delivered in KS3. The aim of the national curriculum is for schools to provide a curriculum that:

- Develops skills, concepts and knowledge

'The national curriculum provides pupils with an introduction to the essential knowledge they need to be educated citizens. It introduces pupils to the best that has been thought and said, and helps engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.'

When deciding on curriculum content, subject teams have taken into account the new KS2 curriculum and also the new GCSE in their subject.

In September 2016, we moved to our new system for all students in KS3 (years 7-9). This booklet has been written for you to explain the new system.

We will be explaining this new system to the students and will also offer parents the opportunity to attend a KS3 assessment information evening where it will be explained in more detail.



Mrs K Barter
Deputy Headteacher

Curriculum

All subjects in KS3 (Year 7-9) have reviewed and redesigned their curriculum. **The new curriculum has been mapped across each subject, and is published on the school website.**
(Students/Curriculum/ KS3 assessment)

This should support both students and parents by:

- Providing parents with an overview of what is being taught and when
- Encouraging conversations at home about learning
- Enabling parents to make links between any trips/holidays and the curriculum that their child is studying
- Giving students the opportunity to look ahead and research topics that they may be studying in the future

This is what a typical curriculum map for Year 7 looks like:

Year 7 Curriculum Map



Year / term	Unit of work	Core knowledge	Key concepts/skills
YEAR 7 1st HALF TERM 1	1. How to be a good historian? 2. Why did William become King of England in 1066?	Skills based lessons on knowledge & understanding (including chronology, causation and significance), sources, interpretation and change & continuity. Skills based assessment Who should be King? Battle of Stamford bridge	Knowledge & understanding (including chronology, causation and significance), Sources, Interpretation and Change & continuity.
YEAR 7 2nd HALF OF TERM 1	2. Why did William become King of England in 1066 (continued)? 3. How far did the Norman conquest change Anglo-Saxon England?	The Battle of Hastings Why did William win the Battle of Hastings? Why did William win the battle of Hastings? Knowledge and understanding assessment What was Anglo Saxon England like in 1066? How far did William's use violence change Anglo- Saxon England? How far did castles change Anglo-Saxon England? How far did the Feudal system change Anglo-Saxon England? How far did the Domesday Book change Anglo-Saxon England? How far did the Norman Conquest change Anglo-Saxon England? Change and continuity assessment	Knowledge & understanding Change & continuity
YEAR 7 1st HALF TERM 2	4. Church and Crusades	Why was the Catholic church so powerful? Why did men go on the Crusades? The Battle for Jerusalem Richard and Saladin What did the Crusades do for us?	Sources Interpretation

The Mastery curriculum

Instead of using levels or sub-levels to assess achievement and inform feedback, the core knowledge, concepts and skills that underpin each subject will be assigned to a baseband. These basebands correspond broadly to the old National Curriculum levels 3-8, but have been updated to reflect recent change both to Key Stage 2 and GCSE.

Basebands

A new grading system has been developed which will indicate how well a student has done in an assessment, it will show the level that the student has **attained** compared to the assessment criteria.

The terms we will be using are (in brackets is how the terms equate to national standards):

Mastering + (Exceptional performance)

Mastering (Working well above age related expectations)

Securing (Working above age related expectations)

Developing (Working at age related expectations)

Acquiring (Working below age related expectations)

Key skills and concepts

Each subject has identified the key skills and concepts that students will need to develop in order to succeed in that subject, as well as preparing them effectively for study at a higher level in that subject. For most subjects this is four or five skills and concepts. These skills and concepts will be developed through each of the projects/topics that are covered in KS3.

e.g. in French, students will develop skills and concepts over three years in the following areas:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing
- Vocabulary and Grammar

A lesson, series of lessons, or an end of unit test may develop or assess one or more of the skills/concepts. This can be seen in the curriculum map example on the previous page, where a skill has been attributed to each lesson, and then one or more to an assessment.

Generic descriptors which give a holistic overview have been written for each skill/concept that fit with each grade in the new grading system. You will see in the example below that if a student attains a 'developing' grade in both Year 7 and 8, they have made progress, as the expectations for the developing grade in Year 8 are higher than in Year 7.

French – Listening



YEAR 9

		YEAR 8	YEAR 9
YEAR 7	<p>MASTERING + Achieving above Mastering stage.</p>	<p>MASTERING + Achieving above Mastering stage.</p>	<p>MASTERING + Achieving above Mastering stage.</p>
	<p>MASTERING Students understand passages spoken at near normal speed without interference. Passages contain predictable information drawn from several topics, including a range of structures and perhaps including different time frames.</p>	<p>MASTERING Students understand passages, spoken at near normal speed, which may contain a few unpredictable elements. Passages include a range of structures drawn from several topics, including those less recently studied.</p>	<p>MASTERING Students understand longer and more varied passages, spoken at near normal speed, which may contain some unpredictable elements, different time frames and a range of structures.</p>
	<p>SECURING Students understand passages, spoken slowly and clearly, containing predictable information drawn from four-five topics, and can infer meaning of some unfamiliar language.</p>	<p>SECURING Students understand passages spoken at near normal speed without interference. Passages contain predictable information drawn from several topics, including a range of structures and perhaps including different time frames.</p>	<p>SECURING Students understand passages, spoken at near normal speed, which may contain a few unpredictable elements. Passages include a range of structures drawn from several topics, including those less recently studied.</p>
	<p>DEVELOPING Students understand the details in a short spoken passage on a few familiar topics with predictable information contained in simple sentences with mostly familiar language. They respond to a clear model of standard language, but may need items to be repeated.</p>	<p>DEVELOPING Students understand passages, spoken slowly and clearly, containing predictable information drawn from four-five topics, and can infer meaning of some unfamiliar language.</p>	<p>DEVELOPING Students understand passages spoken at near normal speed without interference. Passages contain predictable information drawn from several topics, including a range of structures and perhaps including different time frames.</p>
	<p>ACQUIRING Students are capable of understanding the main points of a short spoken passage made up of a few familiar words and phrases. They understand speech spoken clearly, face-to-face or from a good-quality recording, with no background noise or interference.</p>	<p>ACQUIRING Students understand the details in a short spoken passage on a few familiar topics with predictable information contained in simple sentences with mostly familiar language. They respond to a clear model of standard language, but may need items to be repeated.</p>	<p>ACQUIRING Students understand passages, spoken slowly and clearly, containing predictable information drawn from four-five topics, and can infer meaning of some unfamiliar language.</p>

Assessment

In all lessons, students are continually assessed informally by teachers. This could be through observation, conversation, questioning etc. All these help the teacher to form a judgement on what the student knows and what they need to do to improve.

In most subjects, students work through a module or a topic, which may last for a set period of time e.g. a week, half term, full term. At the end of these modules or topics students will take some form of summative assessment (E.g. test/written assessment), which will give a clear picture of what the student has learned and understood in the project they have just completed.

Student friendly trackers, like the Year 8 French exemplar that follows, provide learners with a clear breakdown of what each descriptor means, detailing precisely what knowledge, understanding and skills are required to attain each baseband.

YEAR 8 UNIT 2: PARIS

	Listening & Reading	Speaking	Vocabulary & Grammar
TEACHER COMMENTS			
STUDENT RESPONSE			
Mastering	Understand a description of a visit to Paris, which may include new vocab. Understand verbs in the present and past tense. Distinguish between time frames. Result: 40/48 and above	Fully respond to the speaking assessment task by producing spontaneous interactions in different tenses, including asking questions. Some hesitation in unpredictable interactions and mostly accurate.	In addition to skills at a secure level, students refer to several time frames with confidence. Students use a wide range of vocabulary including some original words and phrases. A high degree of accuracy and additional structures.
Securing	Understand a description of a visit to Paris. Understand verbs in the past tense. Distinguish between time frames. Result: between 30/48 & 39/48	Respond to the speaking assessment task by producing spontaneous interactions in different tenses, including asking questions. Some hesitation and generally accurate.	Opinions in 2 tenses Reasons for opinions Future tense Wider range of vocab Grammar generally accurate.
Developing	Understand a description of a visit to Paris. Understand verbs in the past tense. Distinguish between time frames. Result: between 20/28 & 29/48	Respond with prompting to the speaking assessment task, including some spontaneous language, including asking questions. Thinking pauses allowed and good pronunciation.	Opinions in 1 tense Time phrases Predictable vocab Perfect tense (avoir) Perfect tense (être) Several inaccuracies in grammar
Acquiring	Understand a description of a visit to Paris. Understand verbs in the past tense. Distinguish between time frames. Result: Up to 19/48	Respond with prompting to the speaking assessment task, including pre-learnt phrases, perhaps including asking questions. Thinking pauses allowed and comprehensible pronunciation.	1 tense Opinions Connectives Frequent inaccuracies in grammar.

You can see from the example that some skills will be graded using a score achieved in a test

When a teacher gives a grade for an assessment, they will use the following terms:

Mastering +	the student has attained a level beyond mastering
Mastering 1	the student has attained a level in the top half of the mastering criteria
Mastering 2	the student has attained a level in the bottom half of the mastering criteria
Securing 1	the student has attained a level in the top half of the securing criteria
Securing 2	the student has attained a level in the bottom half of the securing criteria
Developing 1	the student has attained a level in the top half of the developing criteria
Developing 2	the student has attained a level in the bottom half of the developing criteria
Acquiring 1	the student has attained a level in the top half of the acquiring criteria
Acquiring 2	the student has attained a level in the bottom half of the acquiring criteria

Target setting

Currently, students are given KS3 targets based on their [MIDYIS tests](#). These are cognitive ability tests that are taken by all students on entry to the school. They give a statistical likelihood of outcomes in each subject at the end of KS3. We then adjust accordingly to give students a target for the end of year 7, 8 and 9.

All KS3 students will have a target set that is linked to their estimated outcome at GCSE. This is determined nationally by using their prior attainment, currently KS2 SATS scores. We use a national provider that is used by many schools called '[Fischer Family Trust](#)' (FFT), and we set aspirational targets that compare our students to the top 5% of students nationally. This is the system we already use in KS4 (Years 10 and 11).

By using the GCSE estimate for a student, we can work backwards to identify where they need to be at the end of year 7, 8 and 9 in order to achieve the aspirational GCSE target. We know that progress cannot always be mapped in a straight line, as students will develop at varying rates. However, this systems allows us to identify those students who are working at, above, or below where they are capable of and offer support and challenge when appropriate.

The table below maps out the expected rate of progress, and includes the old National Curriculum levels and GCSE grades, both the new and old grading system.

From the table above it is clear that if a student on entry into Year 7 is a NC level 4, they will be expected to achieve a minimum of B-C grades in their GCSEs (or 5-4 in the new GCSE grading system). They will be on the 'developing' path. In all of their assessments throughout KS3 they will be expected to attain a **minimum** of a 'developing' grade.

The 'pathway' set for a student in each subject may be different, as the estimated outcomes at GCSE for a student is not always the same in each subject. e.g. A student may have a baseband of 'securing' in maths, but could be 'developing' in English.

				OLD GCSE	NEW GCSE
				A*	9
		MASTERING +	MASTERING +	A*-A	9-8
		MASTERING +	MASTERING	A-B	7-6
	MASTERING +	MASTERING	SECURING	B-C	5-4
5a+	MASTERING	SECURING	DEVELOPING	D-G	3-1
5	SECURING	DEVELOPING	ACQUIRING		
4	DEVELOPING	ACQUIRING			
3>	ACQUIRING				
Old NC level on entry	Y7	Y8	Y9	GCSE	

Reporting to parents

In some schools, parents are not being informed of the pathway that their student will be on in each subject. We feel that both students and parents would want to know which pathway they were on in each subject so that they know what the minimum expectations are. It is really important to stress that these are minimum expectations based on prior attainment. We know that not every student is going to achieve 9/8 grades. What is more important is that students achieve the grades that their prior attainment suggests they are capable of achieving.

Parents will be informed of their child's current attainment during the year, as well as at consultation evening. They will also receive an end of year final grade. (*Year 7/8 have two interim reports, Year 9 will have three*)

The following wording will be used:

The current progress rating (= + -) is the most important part of the report as it tells you how your son/daughter is doing compared to what they are capable of achieving.

- (+) If a student is currently working higher than their base band the student would be '***making better than expected progress. On track to achieve or exceed their baseband***'
- (=) If a student is working in line with their base band the student would be '***making expected progress. On track to achieve their baseband.***'
- (-) If a student is working below their base band the student would be '***making less than expected progress. Not currently on track to meet their baseband.***'

E.g. Student A

Subject	Base band	Interim A	Progress
Maths	Securing	=	Making expected progress. On track to achieve their baseband.
English	Securing	=	Making expected progress. On track to achieve their baseband
French	Developing	+	Making better than expected progress. On track to achieve or exceed their baseband.
Music	Developing	-	Making less than expected progress. Not currently on track to meet their baseband.

The 'Progress rating' informs parents how their child is doing compared to what they are capable of achieving. Students who, throughout a year, consistently perform above expectations may be moved up a band for the following year. Students who are working below the expected standard will not be moved down. If it is clear that a base band for a student is totally incorrect, then we will review which band they are on.