

Key Stage 3 recent changes

Following the national policy to discontinue National Curriculum levels 2 years ago schools were instructed to devise their own system of assessment which best suits their school circumstances. Our own criteria for the Willingdon system were, firstly, to devise a system that could be easily understood by students and parents; secondly, which is aspirational for students and encourages them to aim high; and thirdly, links very closely with the new grading system for GCSE.

Consequently, in most subjects, all core assessments and tests in KS3 are graded on a 1 to 9 grading system, and students will be given an indicator grade to aim for at the end of Key Stage 3, as well as one for the end of the year they are in. This will enable students (and parents) to see whether they are presently reaching their potential, as well as to see what they are aiming for by the end of Year 9. This latter is important, as we have linked this end of KS3 grade with the grade which national statistics indicate a student should be getting at the end of their GCSE course in Year 11. In other words, if a student is indicated a KS3 grade 5 for the end of year 9, then they should also be aiming for a GCSE grade 5 at the end of year 11. Students, their teachers, and yourselves as parents, will therefore be able to see at every stage whether a student is on track or not, both in the short term and in the longer term.

Design technology, music, drama, ethics and P.E., as more practical subjects, will be assessed differently, using 'working towards', 'working in line', and 'working above' the expected KS3 standard for each of the three year groups. Students will also be given an indication of their expected GCSE grade before they choose their options.

The table below shows how students will be expected to progress through Key Stage 3, and what their expected 'target' GCSE grade will be. These can only be approximations for a few years, as along with every other school in the country, we are working with a new KS3 system of our own devising, and working towards new GCSE standards which are only now being introduced.

And this is not to say, of course, that students can't significantly exceed expectations through hard work and a determination to do well.

KS2 Scaled Score (from 2016)	KS3 Grade Year 7	KS3 Grade Year 8	KS3 Grade Year 9	GCSE (Current)	GCSE (New)
130	6	7	8/9	A*	8/9
	5	6	7	A	7
	4	5	6	B	6
	3	4	5	B/C	5
100	2	3	4	C	4
	1	2	3	D	3
	1	1	2	E/F	2
80	1	1	1	F/G	1