

**PARENT GUIDE TO  
ASSESSMENT-  
HOW CAN I TELL HOW WELL  
MY CHILD IS DOING?  
YEAR 8**

## Assessment system in Year 8

Whilst most subjects are using an assessment system which uses National Curriculum levels to report on current attainment some subjects are trialling the new AA+ model. This guide will focus primarily on the AA+ model as this will be less familiar to you however; it will also reiterate how you can track your child's progress in subjects using National Curriculum levels.

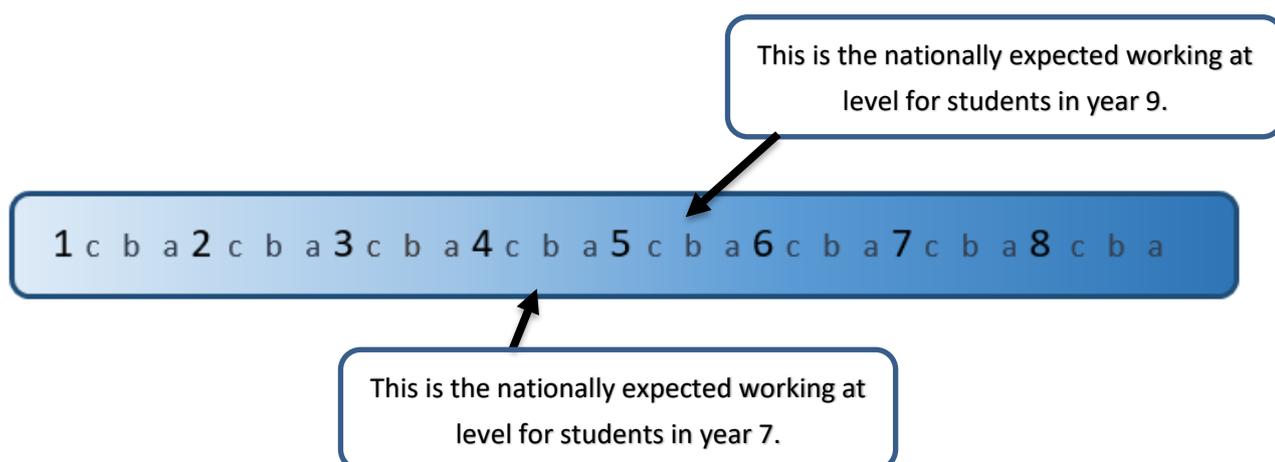
## National Curriculum Levels (Science, Geography, Spanish, Art, Computing/ICT, Drama, Food Technology, Music and PE)

### Grading

- When joining the academy in year 7 students completed a baseline assessment in all these subjects which allowed teachers to give students a National Curriculum level as their starting point. In subjects, which had either not been studied or not studied in much depth previously, teachers assessed a portfolio of work over the first half term to provide a baseline level for each student.
- Every long term, students do an assessment which is marked using National Curriculum Level.
- Where subjects do not have detailed National Curriculum level guidance, Heads of Department have created their own criteria for each level.

### Targets

- Our default target is for students to make 6 sublevels of progress over the first 3 years of secondary school, and to achieve a minimum of a level 5b-whichever is highest. 6 sublevels of progress are 2 full national curriculum levels of progress and represents higher than nationally expected progress (1 full national curriculum level or 3 sublevels).
- Research has shown that, to be best placed to achieve a good pass at GCSE, children need to reach these levels by the end of year 9.
- The senior team moderates these targets for individual students to ensure that whilst the targets are challenging and aspirational, they are also achievable.



### Each National Curriculum level is divided into sub-levels:

- C means that a child is working at the lower end of the level
- B means that a child is working comfortably at that level
- A means that a child working at the top end of the level

## Assessment at Ark-AA+ (English, Mathematics, History and RE)

With the abandonment of national curriculum levels and the changes to the way the government assesses children in KS2 (Year 6 SATs) and KS4 (GCSEs), the Ark network has created a new assessment system which allows teachers, students and parents/carers to easily track progress from year 7 to year 11.

### Grading

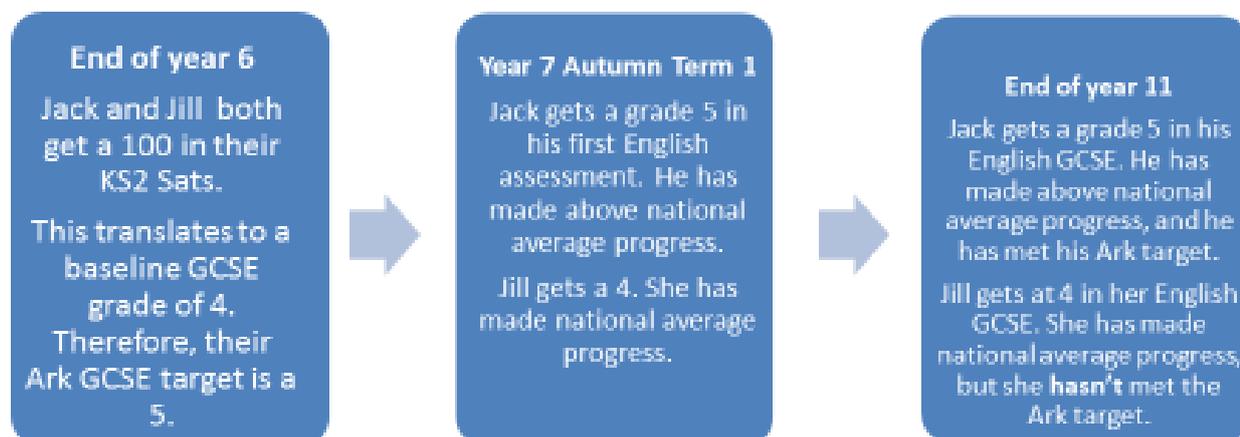
- Students' baseline KS2 scores are converted to a predicted new GCSE number. This conversion is based on the proportions of students who achieve each grade at KS2 compared to the proportions at GCSE.
- In KS3 and KS4, every long term, students do an assessment which is marked using GCSE number grades.
- These grades are **age-related grades**. They refer to a student's position in the performance distribution for their age group. These grades do not tell you what a student would get if they took a GCSE at that moment in time. So, for example, if a student gets a grade 9 in Year 7 Summer 2, it means we think they are performing as well as could be expected for their age group. It does not mean that they could get a 9 if they sat a GCSE English paper at that point.

### Targets

- Our default target is for students to make + 1 grade of progress over the 5 years of secondary school, and to achieve a minimum of a grade 5 – whichever is the highest. A target of +1 means that the students are achieving a grade higher than their peers with the same starting points across the national cohort.
- As a grade 5 is considered the new 'good pass' at GCSE, we believe that every child should be striving to achieve this standard.
- The senior team moderates these targets for individual students to ensure that whilst the targets are challenging and aspirational, they are also achievable.

## New GCSE grades

- Grades are age-related
- Target of + 1 grade over 5 years, minimum 5



## Implications of this grading system

- Staying at the same grade **is** making progress. Moving up one grade may not sound that impressive, but it is.
- You can get a grade 9 in year 7 – but it means something different from a grade 9 in year 11.
- Assessments get harder from term to term and year to year, so that a grade 6 in year 11 represents a higher standard than a grade 6 in year 8.
- When we are awarding these grades from term to term, we are making claims about how our students are doing against their national cohort. In order to make sure these claims are as robust as possible, we have to moderate within the network, use shared assessments, and reference externally wherever possible. We have three moderation days a year which help us do this.

## How will you report my child's progress?

After each long term we will send home a report which shows how your child is performing in relation to their targets. The report will also show whether a teacher has concerns about your child's attendance in their subject, your child's effort in class, your child's behaviour in class and your child's homework.

Once a year you will receive a full written report from every subject teacher which explains in more detail how your child is progressing. This report is shared as part of our parents' evenings and can be discussed with your child's individual teachers either as part of a meeting during parents evening or at another point.

We also believe it is important that our students understand their progress and so every child has a planner card which shows their most recent assessment data in every subject. Currently, as year 8 students have not completed any assessments this year, this planner card shows information about their base grades.

## Example of Year 8 student planner card –

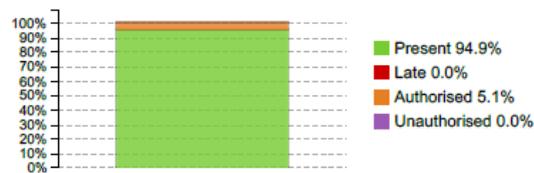
The subjects listed on the planner card have been separated depending on whether they are assessed using National Curriculum Levels or the AA+ system. These sections have been explained separately over the next two pages.

Ideally your child's reading age would be the same as their actual age. You can support your child by asking questions about their current reading book and encouraging them to read for pleasure.

This graph shows attendance and the breakdown of lates and any absences. Ideally the green proportion of the bar will be 95% or above.

This is your child's tutor and tutor group.

Ms R White  
08-Dickens  
  
Reading Age: 08:00



Your child's teacher is listed under the subject heading.

Ark Assessment Plus Subjects	KS Base	Yr Base	EOY Target	KS Target	On Track?
English <i>Ms R White</i>	2	2	3	5	●
History <i>Miss R Lines</i>	3	2	4	5	●
Mathematics <i>Mr T Beaumont</i>	3	3	4	5	●
Religious Education <i>Miss G Duffy</i>	3	2	4	5	●

**KS Base**-this grade is based on how your child achieved in the KS2 SATs compared to the performance of the national cohort.

For subjects which were not assessed in the KS2 SATs, the child's average performance in English and Mathematics has been used to create the KS Base.

**Yr Base**-this grade is based on how your child achieved at the end of year 7.

**EOY Target**-the grade your child is expected to achieve by the end of the year.

**KS Target**-the grade your child is expected to achieve by the end of year 9

### How am I doing?

- I'm on track to exceed my target - amazing!
- I'm on track to meet my target - could I exceed it?
- I'm not on track to meet my target - what can I do to change this?

Your child's teacher is listed under the subject heading.

**KS Base**-this grade is based on how your child achieved in their baseline assessment in Year 7.

**Yr Base**-this grade is based on how your child achieved at the end of year 7.

National Curriculum Subjects	KS Base	Yr Base	EOY Target	KS Target	On Track?
<b>Science NC (Secondary)</b> <i>Mr C Reilly</i>	4c	4b	4a	5b	●
<b>Art NC (Secondary)</b> <i>Miss K Frost</i>	2b	3b	4b	5b	●
<b>Drama NC (Secondary)</b> <i>Mrs K Claxton</i>	3b	4c	4a	5b	●
<b>Food Technology NC (Secondary)</b> <i>Mr T Cushion</i>	3a	4c	4a	5b	●
<b>Geography NC (Secondary)</b> <i>Miss E Pritchard, Miss G Duffy</i>	1a	4c	4c	5b	●
<b>ICT NC (Secondary)</b> <i>Mr R Morrison</i>	2a	5c	4b	5b	●
<b>Music NC (Secondary)</b> <i>Miss N Steaggles</i>	3b	4c	4a	5b	●
<b>Physical Education NC (Secondary)</b> <i>Mr M Ozanne</i>	3b	4c	4a	5b	●

**EOY Target**-the grade your child is expected to achieve by the end of the year.

**KS Target**-the grade your child is expected to achieve by the end of year 9

### How am I doing?

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## National Curriculum Levels-Frequently asked questions

### Why are all the targets the same when my child has strengths in particular subjects?

At the moment the targets are based on your child making at least +2 levels from their base level or achieving a level 5b (whichever is higher) by the end of year 9. At the end of each term, the senior leaders, Heads of Departments and teachers will look at each child's performance to check that the targets are appropriate. If a child is particularly good at a subject and is consistently performing at a grade higher than their target we can moderate their target accordingly. Similarly, particularly for students who need to make more than +2 levels from their base level in order to achieve a 5b, we can review targets if we feel they are too challenging for a child.

### My child didn't join the school at the beginning of year 7, how are their targets set?

When your child joined Charter, they will have completed a reading test and baseline assessments in English, Mathematics and Science. These were used to create baselines and targets. In the other subjects, your child's first assessment since joining the academy was used as their baseline and their target was created using this.

### Are the national curriculum levels consistent with those used in other schools?

There can be differences between the national curriculum levels given by our teachers and teachers in other schools. This is because, in many subjects, there isn't detailed guidance and so our teachers have created their own criteria. Often this criteria will relate to GCSE grade criteria as a National Curriculum Level 7 equates to a Grade C in the legacy GCSE system.

## AA+ Frequently asked questions

### Why are all the targets the same when my child has strengths in particular subjects?

At the moment the targets are based on your child making at least +1 grade from their base grade or achieving a grade 5 (whichever is higher) by the end of year 9. At the end of each term, the senior leaders, Heads of Departments and teachers will look at each child's performance to check that the targets are appropriate. If a child is particularly good at a subject and is consistently performing at a grade higher than their target we can moderate their target accordingly. Similarly, particularly for students who need to make more than +1 grade from their base grade in order to achieve a 5, we can review targets if we feel they are too challenging for a child.

### My child didn't do well in the KS2 SATs, does this mean that teachers do not expect them to do well now?

We know that some children may not have done well during their SATs and so use a range of information including reading ages, CAT tests and subject specific assessments to help us identify students who may have a target which may need moderating. If students work consistently hard they will have the opportunity to exceed their targets and/or change sets as appropriate. Targets are reviewed after each long term and any target changes will be highlighted to you and your child.

### My child didn't do the KS2 SATs, how are their targets set?

If your child had teacher assessments from their KS2 SATs these will be used to create their baselines and targets. If we don't have any information regarding your child's prior performance, we will use information from a range of internal assessments to decide your child's baselines and targets.

My child's current working at grade is staying the same. Does this mean they aren't making progress?

No-staying the same grade is making progress as it means your child is keeping up with their peers. If your child makes accelerated progress their grade will increase and this represents more than nationally expected progress.

Can I compare my child's performance in AA+ subjects with subjects reported using National Curriculum Levels?

As the AA+ grades relate to the new GCSE system and age-related expectations, they are not equivalent to National Curriculum Levels and so a direct comparison cannot be made. You can easily compare whether your child is on track to meet their targets by using the traffic light system. A Blue circle means that your child is on track to exceed their target, a green circle means they are on track to meet their target and a red circle means they are not currently on track to meet their target.

I still have questions, what should I do?

Year 8 Parents Evening is on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> January from 5pm-7.30pm. You will have an opportunity to read your child's report, have an appointment with your child's individual subject teachers to discuss their progress. Mrs Morey and the Data Team will be available throughout the evening to answer any questions about the assessment system.

If you have any questions and/or queries regarding the assessment system and would like to discuss them before the parents evening please email [info@charteracademy.org.uk](mailto:info@charteracademy.org.uk) and the most appropriate member of staff will respond.