

PARENT GUIDE TO
ASSESSMENT—
HOW CAN I TELL HOW WELL
MY CHILD IS DOING?
YEAR 9

Assessment system in Year 9

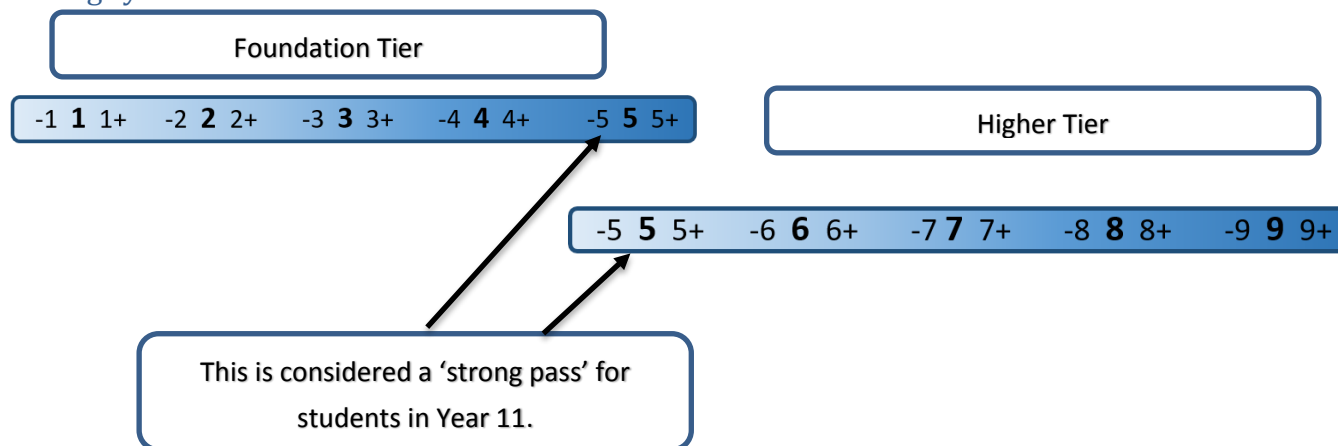
With the abandonment of national curriculum levels and the changes to the way the government assesses children in KS2 (Year 6 SATs) and KS4 (GCSEs), the Ark network has created a new assessment system which allows teachers, students and parents/carers to easily track progress from year 7 to year 11. This new assessment system has been designed with the new reformed GCSE qualifications in mind. Whilst most subjects being studied in year 9 fall into this category there are some subjects which are a GCSE equivalent such as a BTEC. In these subjects, your child's progress will be reported using the grading system for the relevant qualification. Finally English is still being reported using national curriculum levels.

Assessment at Ark-Reformed GCSEs

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.

Grading system for reformed GCSEs



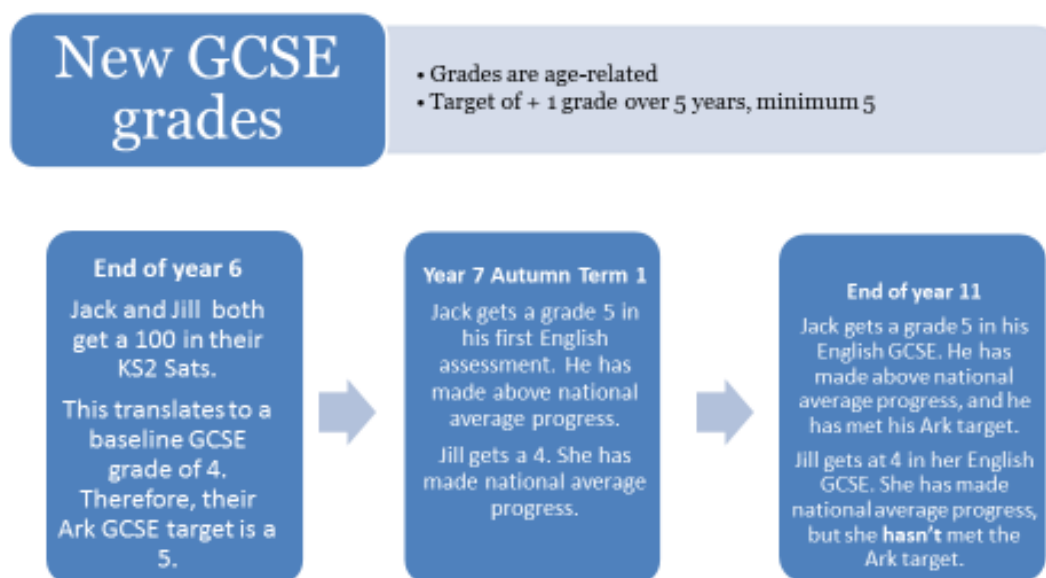
We divide each grade into sub-grades. For example:

- -5 means that a child is working at the lower end of grade 5
- 5 means that a child is working comfortably at grade 5
- 5+ means that a child working at the top end of grade 5

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 'strong 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.



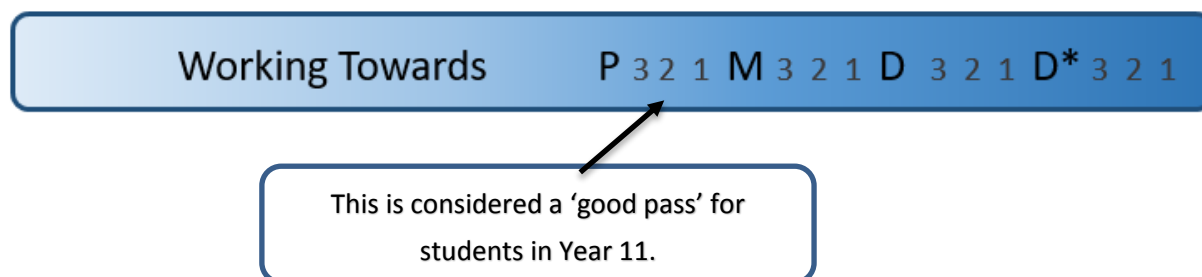
GCSE equivalents

(Business and Enterprise BTEC and ICT BTEC)

Grading

- At the beginning of year 9 students will have completed a baseline assessment in all these subjects which allowed teachers to give students a grade 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 grade for each student.
- At the end of each long term, students do an assessment which is marked using the grading system for that qualification
- 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.

Grading system for GCSE equivalent Qualifications



We divide each grade into sub-grades:

- 3 means that a child is working at the lower end of the grade
- 2 means that a child is working comfortably at that grade

Aspiration for All, Achievement for All, Active Participation for All

- 1 means that a child working at the top end of the grade

For Equivalent Qualifications

- P means a Pass
- M means a Merit
- D means a Distinction
- D* means a Distinction*

Targets

- The targets are generated using the same method as the AA+ system. All students are given a base line which is taken from the average of their KS2 results.
- 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 C/level 2 pass – 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 C is considered the ‘good pass’ in the unreformed GCSEs, we believe that every child should be striving to achieve this standard as a minimum.
- The senior team moderates these targets for individual students to ensure that whilst the targets are challenging and aspirational, they are also achievable.

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. Similarly a B2 in Media Studies in year 10 is different to a B2 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.

National Curriculum Levels (English only)

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.

This is the nationally expected working at level for students in year 9.

1 c b a 2 c b a 3 c b a 4 c b a 5 c b a 6 c b a 7 c b a 8 c b a

This is the nationally expected working at level for students in year 7.

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

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.

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.

We also believe it is important that our students understand their progress and so every child will have a planner card which shows how they performed in their most recent assessment in relation to their target.

The termly reports (interim reports) and student planner cards will not have the grade that your child achieved in their latest assessment.

This is a change from previous years but we have found that students tend to focus on the grade/level they are on without really understanding what this means and more importantly, rather than focusing on the action they need to take to further improve. By sharing with you and your child their performance in relation to their target using the colour coding system only, we feel that our students will spend more time considering the feedback they are given by teachers to help them improve and so will be better placed to act on this. Using the colour coding system, it will still be possible for you to know whether they are on track to achieve their targets which we know is important to you.

Year 9 Parents' Evening is being held on Monday 8th May from 5pm-7.30pm. This will be an opportunity to discuss your child's progress with their individual teachers. In a change from previous years, we will not be sharing your child's written report at Parents' Evening.

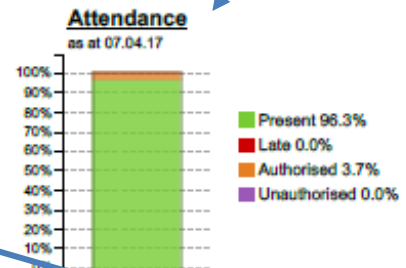
At the end of the year you will receive a full written report from every subject teacher which explains in more detail how your child is progressing. This report will also give you your child's grades in all their subjects and will also indicate whether we plan to moderate their targets in preparation for the following year.

Example of Year 9 interim report

This is your child's tutor and tutor group.

Name: _____
 Tutor: 09-Wells
 Reading Age: 13:06

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



Key Dates:

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.

	Base Grade	Key Stage Target	On Track	Behaviour	Class Attendance	Effort in Class	Homework
English NC (Secondary) <i>Miss E Maddison</i>	6c	7b	●	N	N	N	N
Mathematics <i>Mr R Ainslie</i>	5	5	●	N	N	N	N
Science <i>Mr C Reilly</i>	6	5	●	N	N	N	N
Business and Enterprise BTEC <i>Mr I Stannard</i>	P3	M2	●	N	N	N	N
History <i>Miss E Bennett</i>	3	5	●	N	N	N	N
Spanish <i>Miss S Pratt</i>	4	5	●	N	N	N	N

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

Base Grade: This is the grade your child was at the beginning of the year.

KS Target-the grade your child is expected to achieve by the end of year 11 for all subjects except in English where this is the grade your child is expected to achieve by the end of year 9.

How is my child getting on?

- On track to exceed their target - amazing! Please celebrate with them and support them to maintain this level.
- On track to meet their target - is there anything you could do to support them in exceeding their target?
- Not on track to meet their target - is there anything that you could do to help change this?

Behaviour, Class Attendance, Effort in Class and Homework

N indicates there is no concern in this area.

Y indicates there is a concern in this area.

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/C/Pass (whichever is higher) by the end of year 11. 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.

I still have questions, what should I do?

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 and the most appropriate member of staff will respond.