

## Base Line Assessment and Testing

On entry to Year 7 students take their Cognitive Ability Tests (CATs). These form the basis of the initial attainment level for the Key Stage. CATs are marked externally and used by schools to assess students' general abilities and aptitudes which suggest likely academic potential. At TMWS, we use CATs to assess Year 7 students' potential and help to generate targets for GCSE. Students sit the CATs tests within the first few weeks of their first term.

CATs generally assess students in four areas:

- Verbal Reasoning – Thinking and problem solving with words
- Non-Verbal Reasoning – Thinking and problem solving with shapes and space
- Quantitative Reasoning – Thinking and problem solving with numbers
- Spatial Reasoning – Visualising, picturing and moving shapes around

In addition to the CATs, at TMWS we use a suite of tests produced by GL Assessment in Mathematics, English and Science to measure both the attainment and progress students make over a set period. These progress tests are administered at set points throughout a student's journey; at the start and end of Year 7, and again at the end of Year 8. (Science not at end of Year 7) These are nationally standardised tests and allow individual students and the school's overall performance to be assessed against national benchmarks. GL assessments test ability, attitude and attainment to provide a holistic view of each pupil. This approach provides teachers and senior leaders with the data and insights to:

- Inform teaching and learning
- Track progress effectively
- Provide evidence of progress
- Identify barriers to learning and motivate students
- Diagnose and monitor additional educational needs
- Facilitate whole school improvement.

Rather than testing children's knowledge, the assessments are designed to help teachers understand each child's strengths and areas for development. The results from the assessments help teachers decide about the pace of learning that is right for a child, and whether additional support or challenge is needed. There is no pass or fail and children and young people won't be expected to do any preparation at home.

Both the CATs and the GL Assessments are taken online with externally set and marked questions, allowing students to be given a national benchmark in a similar way to the Year 6 SATs (with 100 being the expected score for that age group).

In Year 9 students complete the Key Stage 3 curriculum and start their GCSE courses. At the end of Year 9 and twice in Years 10 and 11 teachers will assess students against GCSE assessment criteria to provide a current grade. At the end of Year 10 and twice in Year 11 students sit trial examinations based on past GCSE papers. The trial exams play a crucial role in informing students, parents, and

teachers of the level a student is working at and where support / guidance can be offered, giving an early indication of student performance which will be used for an updated report and grades.

The majority of assessing of what students know and can do takes place through the routine daily teaching and learning processes in the classroom. These formative assessments are closely linked to the planning of lessons and intervention for students. The aim of the majority of assessment is to directly influence the learning process.

To evaluate pupil performance and assure high standards, students have regular assessment tasks. These may come in various forms (e.g., an end of topic test or assignment). These have a dual purpose of informing staff about progress and as part of the feedback to students to support them in improving their learning.

#### Summary of formal assessments

Year	7	8	9	10	11
Test	<p><b>September</b> CATs GLs in English and Maths</p> <p><b>July</b> GLs in English Maths and Science.</p>	<p><b>July</b> GLs in English Maths and Science.</p>	<p><b>June</b> Subject assessments completed within departments</p>	<p>June Trial exams - all subjects using GCSE past questions.</p>	<p>November 1st mocks - all subjects</p> <p>March 2<sup>nd</sup> mocks – all subjects</p> <p>May/June GCSE exams</p>

## **Assessment Tracking and Reporting**

Data reports will be sent home to parents after each data collection according to the assessment calendar. Each report will contain information about progress towards target grades, attitude to learning grades and details about attendance and the number of E-Praise points and consequences.

Reading reports from STAR Reader are also shared with each data report giving a recent reading age in years and months and strategies for improvement in reading. STAR Reader is a web-based test that students take 3 times per year in Years 7 to 9 to track their reading age. All students should be reading regularly for at least 20 minutes per day. To encourage this, all students have access to Accelerated Reader which tracks reading progress through an online quiz taken after reading a book. All books in the school Library have an associated quiz as do almost all teenage and young adult fiction titles.

In Years 7 and 8 we have 3 data collections per year. For the first term, the first data collection is an attitude to learning score. These are teacher judgment scores for behaviour/concentration, good work and participation. The key to attitude to learning is shown below. For the remaining two data collections, all subjects will provide a 'working at' indication compared to where the student should be. The key to the 'working at' indication is shown below. Teachers will use similar assessment bands to those used in Year 5 and 6 so that parents are familiar with the terminology being used.

Year 9 have 2 data collections. The first includes attitude to learning scores for all core and option subjects and 'working at' indication for English, Mathematics and Science. The second data collection at the end of the year includes attitude to learning with their first GCSE current and target grades.

In Years 10 and 11 students have 4 data collections that all include attitude to learning scores and GCSE current grade compared to target grade.

Teachers give a current grade for data collections. Current grades must be based on evidence such as topic tests, past papers or controlled assessment tasks. It is what teachers believe the student is achieving based on the work completed so far. It is NOT a prediction based on IF they improve work ethic etc. However, predicted grades will be collected as the final data collection of Year 11. This is the best estimate of what the student will achieve based on all the evidence of how effectively they are revising for the exams.

For all data collections each data report will include intervention codes that the subject teacher wants the student to improve on. This key is shown below.

## Key to attitude to learning scores

	1	2	3	4
<b>Behaviour/ concentration</b>	Show exceptional behaviour and concentration	No real behaviour issues.	Sometimes negative and poorly behaved	Poor behaviour that can distract others
<b>Good work – relative to expectation.</b>	Completes work to the best of their ability.	Usually completes work set to a high standard.	Produces work at a poor standard or sometimes fails to complete tasks	Minimal work done in class.
<b>Participates</b>	Uses initiative to take an active role in learning and contributes extensively and productively in lessons	Does what is asked of them willingly. Contributes more to the lesson.	Sometimes reluctant to learn and follow instruction.	Fails to follow instructions.

## Key to 'working at' indications.

EXS – Working at the expected standard

GDS – Working at greater depth within the expected standard

WTS – Working towards the expected standard

PKS – Working at pre-key stage level.

## GCSE Grades

The GCSE grading system has changed from alphabetical grades to numerical grades as part of Government's move to make the system more rigorous and raise standards. The new 1-9 grades do not line-up with the old grades. The graphic below shows the equivalents. **N.B. , Grade '4' is a low 'C' but the high 'C' is a '5'.**

9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U
A*		A		B		C		U	

## **Key to Improvement codes**

These are decided by subject teachers as an indication of what the student needs to improve on in that particular subject.

**B = Behaviour/concentration in lessons.** The ability to behave and concentrate in lessons is a strong predictor of success. Students who concentrate and sustain attention on all kinds of tasks helps memory retention, which leads to self-confidence and positive self-esteem.

**H = Homework.** Homework encourages students to use their time wisely, work independently and engage better with the subject matter. It will also improve student's memory and critical thinking.

**O = Organisation of equipment and bookwork.** Being organised is particularly important to help students learn how to prioritise activities, set and achieve goals and reduce stress. Having good organisational skills also makes it easier to collaborate with others and helps increase productivity and efficiency.

**P = Participation, motivation and resilience.** Students who participate well in lessons are generally well motivated and never give up to the challenges set. These are skills for coping with life's inevitable obstacles and one of the key ingredients of success.

**R = Revision for assessments.** Students need to establish good study habits to support and deepen their learning. We also want to foster a culture where students are proactive in thinking, questioning and developing independence in their learning.

**W= Written communication.** Writing is a means of students expressing their ideas and learning clearly and directly. A major part of communication is good spelling, punctuation, and grammar. This also includes correct mathematical notation, graph plotting and drawing clear diagrams.

## **Assessment Intervention**

### **Wave 1- Class teacher driven classroom intervention, including the work of tutors.**

This might include changing seating plans, providing scaffolded support, reviewing key learning, contacting home, increased frequency of monitoring of individuals, targeted questioning to challenge or support during teaching, changes in types of task and explanations, etc

The majority of intervention takes place as a result of the Wave 1 intervention that the teacher does on a daily basis. This is part of the everyday good practice to assess progress and adapt teaching in response.

### **Wave 2a – Small group or individual intervention.**

We implement many effective intervention sessions that support students to close learning gaps with the aim of ensuring that no child is left behind their peers in terms of learning.

### **Guided Reading intervention and small group reading**

In library lessons in Year 7 and Year 8, selected students work in smaller reading groups with a teacher and use strategies from the Guided Reading programme to support them to make rapid progress. These groups are updated on a termly basis.

**STAR Reader and Lexia.** Termly STAR Reading tests are used to measure progress in reading. Where students would benefit from support with this, they are given access to Lexia, a computer-based programme that helps children develop their literacy skills. Students work independently at their own pace through individualized learning paths to develop fundamental reading skills in a structured, sequential manner. Teachers are notified when students require support or intervention and are provided with the resources for face-to-face instruction.

**STAR Maths assessments** are used to monitor student growth throughout the year and to help teachers determine appropriate intervention area skills that students need to learn. This allows students to be placed in small intervention groups. These run during registration time and in some timetabled maths lessons. STAR maths is an on-line assessment that students sit 3 times per year, in a similar way to STAR Reader. Gaps in knowledge that are identified are addressed by the maths teacher in the weekly Dedicated Improvement Time (DIT) lesson.

**Concentration intervention.** The ability for students to behave appropriately and concentrate in lessons is a strong predictor of success. Students who concentrate and sustain attention on all kinds of tasks have better memory retention, which leads to self-confidence and positive self-esteem. Students who are identified to have concentration issues from the A2L data are requested to join a session during form periods to evaluate their own concentration data and plan how to improve it in lessons.

**Homework intervention.** Homework encourages you to use your time wisely, work independently and engage better with the subject matter. It will also improve student's memory and critical thinking. Students identified with low hand-in rates are requested to join sessions during form periods to identify issues of completing homework, identify the benefits, and plan how to improve their hand-in rate.

**Homework club.** If homework hand-in rate persists to be an issue, students are offered a place to work in a supervised and supportive environment out of school hours.

**Preparing for assessments intervention.** Students need to establish good study habits to support and deepen their learning. We also want to foster a culture where students are proactive in thinking, questioning and developing independence in their learning. Students who are identified in needing more help with preparation join a small a group that evaluate their own revision skills and learn new one to use in all subjects.

**Organisation intervention.** Being organised is particularly important to help students learn how to prioritise activities, set and achieve goals and reduce stress. Having good organisational skills also makes it easier to collaborate with others and helps increase productivity and efficiency. Students who are identified to improve organisation join a small group during form periods to evaluate their own organisation skills and identify area in which they need to improve.

**Participation intervention.** If students participate well in lessons they are generally well motivated and never give up to the challenges set. These are skills for coping with life's inevitable obstacles and one of the key ingredients of success. Students who are identified as needing to improve their participation skills join a small group during form time to evaluate and identify areas to improve.

**Breakfast club.** Students can meet other children in a supervised setting before school. In most cases, breakfast is provided with children brought together to eat and start the day in the best possible way.

### **Wave 2b-Head of Department driven intervention**

This might include set changes, contact with home, support classes, monitoring reports, praise systems, etc

### **Wave 2c- Senior Leader / SENCO intervention**

This might include contact home, monitoring reports, praise systems, mentoring, bespoke interventions to suit individual needs, and consideration of placing on the Special Educational Needs Register.

## Target Setting

Students are no longer given KS3 targets. Core subjects will undertake GL baseline assessments in Year 7 in order to establish starting points for students who may not have any formal assessment at KS2. Students will also complete the Cognitive Abilities Test (CATs). These are usually taken in the first week of the Autumn term and provide a good indication of a pupil's general ability. These are used by subject teachers and are not included on data reports to parents.

Individual subjects will provide an indication of what the student is 'working at' in each subject in Key Stage 3. Students will endeavour to 'work at an expected level' or in some cases 'work at greater depth'. If they continue to work at these levels they will be making suitable progress and be on a suitable trajectory to achieve excellent GCSE grades at the end of Y11.

At Key Stage 4, students in Year 9 receive GCSE targets generated by The Fischer Family Trust (FFT). Current research indicates that targets can have a variable effect on achievement in a number of ways. It is important to reinforce the message with students that there are no ceilings to achievement and to focus them on specific improvements to learning to achieve their required goal.

## FFT Overview

The Fischer Family Trust (FFT) processes the National Pupil Database for the Department of Education and provides data and analyses to all schools in England and Wales. They provide grade predictors for student attainment at the end of KS4 and we use these to inform the setting of ambitious and aspirational targets for students. We set our students targets based on the top 20% of schools nationally.

FFT is based on KS2 scores - the non-profit organisation look at the GCSE scores of all the students who got the same scores as your child when they were in Year 6 and then use that to work out the probability of your child getting particular grades at GCSE.

The purpose of the targets is to:

- Be realistic
- Motivate the student into achieving this result - aspirational whilst remaining realistic
- Be useful for the students, parents / carers and staff to establish progress in a given subject when linked to what is currently being achieved





## **Feedback and Marking**

Both written and verbal feedback are essential to a student's progress in each subject. Both types of feedback can be given by teachers, associate staff and by peers.

Students will also have opportunities to self-asses when provided with a clear mark scheme and/or model answers by the teacher. The main advantage of self and peer-marking is that they both help students to understand marking criteria and to understand how they can improve their own work.

The main advantage of teacher feedback is that the teacher can identify areas of strength and areas of improvement.

Students are given opportunities to act on feedback and monitor whether they have used these opportunities effectively.

These opportunities may take different forms according to the subject area and topic being

- Re-drafting sections of work in light of the feedback
- Correcting misconceptions or errors
- Answering challenge questions that promote greater depth of understanding
- Acting on the targets in subsequent pieces of work

## **Spelling, punctuation and grammar**

Teachers will promote literacy within their subject area. Marking work teachers may identify and give feedback on the following:

- subject-specific spelling.
- explicitly teaching the genre/styles of writing that are relevant for the subject.
- identify where students are making mistakes and address them.

## **Commitment from students**

It is important that students engage with the different forms of feedback and to develop own their self-regulating strategies to aid progression.

- Students display pride in - and commitment to - their learning.
- Work is presented in the manner described by the front sticker.
- Students respond positively to feedback.
- Students positively engage with all tasks asked of them.