

Life Without Levels – The Oulder Hill Community School Approach.

The Background:

In 2014, the Government removed National Curriculum Levels for Years 7, 8 & 9. Levels have been used for a number of years and although everyone understood them, we feel that we are now moving to a better way of ensuring all students make progress. Schools across the country have been working to develop new ways to assess progress and attainment at Key Stage 3 so that students and their parents know what they know and understand and how they can continue to improve.

Basic Principles:

Formative Assessment and Feedback.

The most important goal of assessment is that it helps students to make progress with their learning. Grades help to tell students how they have done in comparison to others but they do not tell them anything about what they need to do to improve their work or deepen their understanding. To do this, they need feedback based on an assessment of their work.

Formative assessments in each subject are the most important part of our assessment system. We use tests, marking criteria and examples of excellent work to show students the standards that are expected and how to reach them. Feedback to students will be used to guide them through the steps needed to improve.

Progress:

Every child arrives at Oulder Hill having reached a different level of attainment in each subject. It is important that we take account of their starting point in setting targets and measuring progress. In our system, progress grades take account of how well your child is progressing in relation to their starting point. All students have scope to make excellent progress, regardless of where they started.

Attainment:

All children must believe that their learning has no limits; that they can continually improve and reach ever increasing standards. However, in practice, standards in learning are often defined by comparing certain outcomes to the full range of outcomes for all students. 'How good is my writing?' or 'Is 70% good enough?' are questions best answered by comparison with standards set by the cohort as a whole. So, we have decided to use their end of GCSE target grade as their target from Year 7. This will enable us to compare their score within the cohort and also nationally.

To keep it as clear as we can, we have decided to use the new 1-9 grade scale, linked to GCSE grades.

The Process:

We have allocated each student new to KS3 to an individualised 'flight path', this is based on their KS2 outcomes. Five different flight paths suit our student's needs appropriately and your child will be allocated to one of these. We have named the flight path according to their GCSE target number grade, however, this will be kept in the background and used mostly by teachers to inform their planning and not to label your child.

Allocation to a flight path is determined by their KS2 outcomes as shown below, for Maths and English these flight paths will be determined by their individual performance at KS2 for that subject. The flight paths for all other subjects

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will be allocated based on an average of their KS2 English and Maths scores. Where no KS2 data is available, we will baseline test the pupil and look at their reading age to determine an appropriate flight path. Each year, flight paths will be reviewed in order to ensure that students making excellent progress can move up a flight path if they require a greater challenge.

KS2 Start point Level Y8-11 Number Y7	Exceptional progress E	Good progress G	Some progress S	Below expected progress B
6, 5a (115-120)	9 9	8/9 8	8 7	7 6
5c,5b (110 – 115)	8	7	6	5
4a Y11 (105-109)	7	6	5	4
4b(95-104)	6	5	4	3
4c, 3a (90-94)	5	4	3	2
3b, <3 (80-89)	4	3	2	1

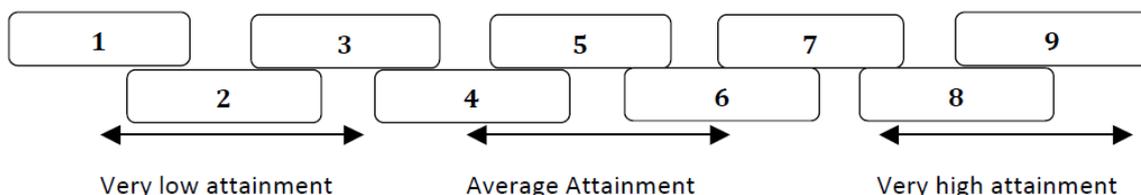
For reference to old GCSE grades: 9~A**, 8~A*, 7~A, 6~B, 5~C+/B-, 4~C/C-, 3~D, 2~EFG

We expect that the G grade will be awarded to those students completing work to a good standard routinely. E indicates work pushing the top end of the grade range and will be reserved for genuine excellence; E means exceptional. This means for flight path 8+ generating an E will be rare. This is A** - truly exceptional.

S means that whilst some progress is being made, it needs to improve to achieve excellence. This sets high standards that may be challenging for some students; we think this a good way to ensure students always aim to fulfil our ideal of their best always, everywhere.

Although we are using discrete numbers 1-9, each number is indicative of a wide attainment range. Teachers are using their judgement based on assessments of different kinds to estimate the best fit grade. As we get to know how the new grades work in practice, we will get better at making these estimates more accurately.

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Assignments: Example Science assessment sheet for a child following pathway 5:

Name:	Date Set:	Date due:	Parent/carer Signature:
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Summary of the unit: In this unit you will learn about light. You will investigate how light behaves in different media and learn how to draw light diagrams. You will also research the similarities and differences between a camera and your eye. You will understand how we see different colours and even consider whether invisibility is possible!

Key words/concepts you must understand during this topic:

vacuum	transparent	reflected	transmitted	absorbed	translucent	Scattered
image	Pinhole camera	Ray box	Plane mirror	Ray tracing	incidence	Normal
Specular reflection	Diffuse reflection	Lens	refraction	interface	Converging lens	Sensor
Rod cell	Cone cell	Primary colour	Secondary colour	shutter	retina	Iris
Pupil	cornea	Optic nerve	frequency	filter	prism	Spectrum

Assignment expectations:	E	G	S	incomplete
Active participation in class discussions and debates				
Excellent and thorough note taking, well detailed books with key scientific language				
All homework completed.				

Specific assignment tasks:	E	G	S	Incomplete
State the meaning of: opaque, translucent, transparent, reflect, scatter, transmit, absorb (3)				
Draw a ray diagram to describe the refraction of light as it passes into and out of air through glass (4)				
Describe what happens when you change the frequency, amplitude or wavelength of a wave (3)				
Compare the ways in which cameras and eyes work. Include appropriate diagrams. (6)				
Describe how to split light into different colours using a prism and correctly use the terms: spectrum, dispersion (4)				
Completed assessment – (30 minutes)	Assessment grade			
Self assessment of unit grade:				
REACT for topic:				

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Parents should find that assignments are stuck in students' books or folders. They should be kept up to date as part of the teaching process. Sometimes teachers check things off and add assessment results; at other times students will be asked to do this for themselves.

If students have not completed an assignment by the deadline, teachers will have the option of referring them to a departmental or teacher catch-up session after school to make sure that they keep up with the work.

REPORTING:

Parents will receive regular reports during the year. We have arranged these so that our key assessments, parents evening, review days and interim reports are spread across the year.

An interim report will include scores for attitude to learning and then progress being made in each subject in relation to their flight path.

You will no longer receive a full written report for your child. Instead, you will be kept fully up to date with your child's progress through the assessment feedback pro formas (shown above) which will be in their exercise books added at regular periods and through review days and parents evenings to ensure pastoral feedback is also addressed.

Attitude to learning (A2L) will be given on a scale of 1-4:

<u>EXCEPTIONAL</u> <u>A2L Score = 1</u>	<u>GOOD</u> <u>A2L Score = 2</u>	<u>REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT</u> <u>A2L Score = 3</u>	<u>SERIOUS CONCERN</u> <u>A2L Score = 4</u>
All homework completed to a high standard and handed in on time; Always arrives with the correct equipment; Always on time and ready to learn; Actively participates in learning in all lessons; Actively responds to teacher feedback; Actively helps the learning of others.	All homework completed to a good standard and handed in on time; Always arrives with the correct equipment; Always on time and ready to learn; Actively participates in learning in most lessons; Actively responds to teacher feedback.	a)Homework is missed on too many occasions; b)Late for some lessons; c)Attendance to this lesson is a concern; d)Behaviour is a barrier to learning; e)Equipment is lacking; f)Passive learning – not actively engaging with the lesson and learning.	More than one of the criteria for below expectations met.