

Understanding the Assessment System at Thornton Grammar School

This document has to been written to help parents understand our assessment system. I hope that it helps to make our progress reporting system a little clearer. I would welcome any constructive feedback which would enable me to improve it.

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One of the key aims of the school is for every student to achieve their academic potential. In order to achieve this we consider that it is essential to track student progress at regular intervals and report this to parents. By carrying out the process staff, students and parents will be able to identify and deal with underachievement at an early stage.

All students in Years 7 to 11 are set targets based on Fischer Family Trust (FFT). This is a charitable trust which provides predictions for students in all schools. It is the nationally accepted way of making predictions and is used by DCSF to measure how well schools perform. We use FFT Estimate Type D to set our targets, this is the grade/level that a student would be expected to achieve in a school which adds significant value, specifically, a school which falls into the top 25% of schools in terms of their value added performance. Staff are asked to set their own internal predictions using Estimate D. The prediction must be either equal to or above Estimate D. The target that parents and students see on the “traffic light” report is the internal target set by staff.

On the next page is an example of a “traffic light” report



Thornton Grammar School
Year 10 Interim Progress Report
Autumn Term 2009



Attendance: %

Progress Indicators

- Excellent** indicates performance beyond interim target level
- Good** indicates performance close to interim target level
- Satisfactory** indicates performance slightly below interim target level
- Unsatisfactory** indicates performance well below interim target level



Subject	Current Grade	Current Progress	GCSE Target
English Language	C-	Excellent	C
Maths	C-	Excellent	C
Core Science	E+	Satisfactory	C
Citizenship	C	Excellent	B
ICT (OCR National x 2)	Pass (C)	Good	Distinction (A)
Religious Studies	D=	Good	C
Physical Education	D=	Unsatisfactory	A
Sport BTEC Certificate	Merit	Excellent	Merit

The progress grades are Excellent, Good, Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory progress. We define these as:

Excellent

equal to or above the interim target

Good

within a sub grade/level of the interim target (a sub grade is 1/3 of a grade/level)

Satisfactory

within a grade/level of the interim target

Unsatisfactory

more than a grade/level below the interim target

The KS4 interim target is created by subtracting two grades from the final target and using this as the Year 10 starting point. One third of a grade is added to this at the end of the first term in Year 10 to create the Year 10 Autumn Term Interim Target. This continues throughout the six terms of GCSE.

KS3 interim targets use the average KS2 score as a starting point. The difference between the target and the starting point is divided by nine. This is then the amount by which students are challenged to progress each term.

We recognise that the model of linear progress is somewhat crude, as students don't always improve by a set amount each term. Consequently the model has been refined in some subject areas. The best example is Modern Foreign Languages in KS3. When students arrive in year 7 many are at a relatively low level, therefore level 0 is used as the language starting point. However, students improve rapidly in Year 7, in some cases reaching level 2 by Christmas. The interim targets reflect this; they increase rapidly in Year 7, but the rate of improvement slows down in Years 8 and 9. Some other subjects in KS3 have starting points below the average KS2 score, as students have had only limited contact in primary school, making the average of the KS2 English, Maths and Science levels an inappropriate starting point.

The system used for post 16 students is very similar, the only difference of note being that targets are set on a combination of the "ALPS" prediction (a target set using a nationally accepted system created at Greenhead College, Huddersfield, which uses GCSE results) and the ALIS predictions (two predictions, one based on the ALIS test which took place early in Year 12, and a mathematical ALIS prediction based on GCSE results).

Once again, I would be pleased to receive any constructive feedback which would enable me to improve this document.