



Assessment at Key Stage 3

Why have we changed the way we are reporting pupil assessment to parents?

Back in 2014, following the disbanding of national curriculum levels, schools were encouraged to develop assessment systems that best suited their own pupils' needs. At the time we adopted an assessment system based on the new 9-1 GCSE grades. Following more recent consultation with parents and staff, teachers have worked collaboratively to revise our assessment model for Key Stage 3 (the assessment model for Key Stage 4 remains unchanged). It will enable us to track and monitor pupil progress more accurately and effectively across Key Stage 3.

What are the aims of our new assessment model?

The model aims to be more easily understood by pupils, parents and staff. It is focused on ensuring that all pupils develop a deeper understanding of the core knowledge, concepts and skills that are essential for success within a subject. We will continue to challenge all pupils to achieve more than they first think is possible and to provide support to ensure that they are all capable of progressing into the Key Stage 4 curriculum with the foundational learning that they need to be successful.

What will 'Stages' look like?

A series of descriptors are used to measure the attainment of a pupil at different points throughout the three years of Key Stage 3. We have designed a system of assessment that identifies what is expected of a pupil at a particular stage of their learning. The words we have chosen to use for each 'stage' are shown below with a broad definition of the stage, however there are also subject descriptors available for every subject on the school website, which we would strongly encourage parents and pupils to read (www.deerparkschool.net/assessment).

Key Stage 3 Assessment Stage Descriptors Broad Overview

Stage	Description
Acquiring	Beginning to explore some of the main knowledge, ideas and skills.
Establishing	Has grasped some of the knowledge, ideas and skills but some of this needs developing when applied to different contexts.
Consolidating	Has grasped most of the main knowledge, concepts and skills and can frequently apply these to familiar contexts.
Securing	Has a secure understanding of the main knowledge, concepts and skills when applied to familiar contexts.
Extending	Demonstrating a strong understanding of all knowledge, concepts and skills and can extend these to new contexts.
Excelling	Demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of all knowledge, concepts and skills and can apply these adeptly to changing contexts.

Effort, Behaviour and Homework Indicators

In addition to the stages awarded by your son/daughter's teachers, the report also has feedback about effort, homework and behaviour. These are marked as EX (Excellent), GO (Good), IN (Inconsistent) and CFC (Cause for Concern). Where the homework grade is blank it means the subject does not set homework (e.g. Core PE) or has not set enough homework at a point in the year to give a grade. The descriptors for these grades are tabled on the next page:

Indicator	Description
Excellent (EX)	This is for pupils who go beyond our expectations of what is reasonably required of them on a day-to-day basis. It is reserved for those who drive forward their own learning and do all they can to support and encourage the learning of others.
Good (GO)	This is for pupils who, consistently and without exception, do all that is expected of them in regard to the given criteria.
Inconsistent (IN)	This is for pupils who in the main do what is expected of them, but fail to do so consistently: there are still areas where they can make improvements.
Cause for Concern (CFC)	This indicates that there are some significant concerns that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

What else should I consider when looking at my son/daughter's report?

When considering your son/daughter's attainment, you should be aware of the following points:

Progress is not the same as effort. Although there may be times when a lack of attainment and/or progress in a subject area can be attributed to a pupil not making enough effort, this is not always the case. Sometimes pupils can be trying incredibly hard but for some reason they struggle to grasp the necessary understanding or skills in order to progress.

Learning is not linear. Pupils will progress at different rates in different subject areas at different times. It is more important that pupils secure the basics rather than accelerating ahead when they still have fundamental gaps in their knowledge, understanding and skills. Therefore, pupils may well remain within the same threshold for a long period of time but this does not mean that they are not making progress. Equally, pupils can move down as well as up on the stages.

Teachers will use their professional judgement about how pupils learn in a particular subject area when determining their expectations and assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Their knowledge of the strengths and learning needs of individual pupils will inevitably increase as the academic year progresses and they have a greater range of assessment information to inform them. This may sometimes account for changes from one report to another. Our aim is always to give you the most accurate and up-to-date information that we possibly can on the evidence that we have available to us. We would also encourage you to look at your child's books as these provide insight into their learning.

Reporting Frequency

Parents can expect to receive **three reports each year** and these will be sent home with pupils over the course of each year's study.

In Key Stage 3, two 'interim' reports each year will show stages achieved by pupils. The third report for each year will also include written comments by the teacher, indicating what the pupil has done well and what the pupil needs to do to continue to progress in each subject. The order and timing of these reports will vary depending on the year group.

In addition to the regular reports, there is at least one **Parents' Evening** each year for all pupils. These provide an opportunity for parents to meet their child's teachers and discuss any aspects of their progress.