

Changes to Curriculum and Assessment at KS3

Castleford Academy | Care Aspire Succeed





KS3 Curriculum and Assessment at Castleford Academy

As you may be aware, new GCSEs introduced by the government have been sat in all schools across the country for the first time in the summer of 2017. The new GCSEs will be graded on a scale from 1-9: grade 9 being the highest, grade 1 being the lowest.

This new system has been phased in with English and maths and will include most other subjects for the summer of 2018:

- Our Current Year 10 and 11 will be sitting new GCSEs in the vast majority of subjects;
- Current Years 9, 8 and 7 will be sitting new GCSEs in every subject.

For now, the BTEC courses will continue to be graded using Pass, Merit and Distinction, although this may change to come in line with the 1-9 system.

New GCSE Grades	Legacy GCSE Grades
9	A**
8	A*
7	A
6	B
5	B/C
4	C/D
3	D
2	E
1	F/G

Grades 4 and 5 are a grade C. A grade 4 is a standard pass and a grade 5 is a good pass.

Assessment in Year 7 and 8

The government has now removed National Curriculum levels and all secondary schools are free to develop their own systems to use with students and report to parents. To bring our system in line with the new GCSE grading system, all pupils in Year 7 and 8 will be assessed using 'steps' on a scale of 1-9. The steps are linked to the skills, knowledge and understanding needed for each pupil to reach the same grade at GCSE. This means that if a pupil is predicted to leave with a grade 6 at GCSE, they should be working at a step 6 in Year 7 and a step 6 in Year 8.

The skills and knowledge needed to reach each step is shared with pupils and parents through a series of 'can do' statements. This will allow pupils to see what they need to be able to 'do' to move on to the next step and will allow parents to support learning at home.



Target Grades:

In Year 7, our pupils arrived with a score or a level that gave us an indication of the progress they made in primary school. This score/level allows us to predict the minimum grade that each pupil should achieve in their GCSEs. Based on this information, all pupils have been set a minimum step that we expect them to reach at the end of this year and an aspirational target step that we encourage them to strive towards.

The target steps are designed to challenge each pupil to reach their full potential and to acquire the skills, knowledge and understanding to achieve the very best grade they can at GCSE. It is possible that some pupils will achieve beyond their expected grade at every stage of their learning journey. These high aspirations and drive for success are something that we encourage at Castleford Academy and as a result, the target steps will be regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure each pupil achieves their full potential.

Can Do Statements and The Learning Journey

Each subject area has developed a learning journey which will allow our pupils to develop the skills and knowledge needed to be a successful learner. The learning journey is shared with pupils at the start of the topic so that they are aware of how their learning will develop over each half term. This is also shared with parents (on our website) along with the can do statements for each subject/topic. This means that parents can see what their child will be taught, how they will be assessed and also how to support them to reach the next step in their learning.

For pupils to do well in a subject, it is essential that they have a good understanding of the basics. For this reason, in some subjects, it is not simply more knowledge that is needed to reach a step 7, 8 or 9. In some areas, pupils will be expected to 'master' the basics and will receive a step 7, 8 or 9 depending upon their ability to apply the skills and knowledge they have acquired in a different context.

Reporting

Parents will receive regular reports regarding their children's progress.

In both Year 7 and Year 8, parents receive reports three times per year. The reports show the target step, current step, behaviour and attitude to learning. As an Academy, we place greater emphasis on pupils' final grade, while ensuring they are on track throughout the year. These reports are our most important form of communication with parents and will sometimes raise questions regarding a pupil's progress. We strongly encourage parents to read the reports carefully and if the report raises questions, to contact either the subject teacher, form teacher or, if it is across a number of subjects, the Year Leader.

All learning journeys are available on the website under the curriculum section.