



Assessment Guidelines

Revised: October 2021

PURPOSE

Generating accurate and robust assessment data is essential to inform all stakeholders of the progress being made by individual students, specific pupil groups, and to predict whole school outcomes.

TARGET SETTING

The basis of all targets are Fischer Family Trust top 50% (FFT-50). The Trust calculates an estimated end of Key Stage 4 (Y11) grade for individual students in every subject. FFT formulates the estimate by comparing the average of Key Stage 2 Standardised Scaled Scores in English reading and Mathematics exams with a national database of GCSE outcomes over the previous 3 years (up to 1.8 million pupils for core subjects). There was no national testing in the primary schools in 2020 or 2021 because of COVID restrictions. For the year 6 cohorts of these two years FFT calculates its end of Key Stage 4 targets on NFER Cognitive Ability Tests (CATS). Every pupil undergoes these test within the first 3 weeks of joining Cardinal Allen (see Appendix 1 for more details).

Target Setting – KS3

On entry to Cardinal Allen, every student will undergo a 'baseline' test in each subject. The purpose of these tests is to establish the level of knowledge and skills acquired in the primary schools that are applicable to the secondary phase. It is NOT to quantify what students have learned in the early stages at Cardinal Allen. Many of these tests are custom made and the outcomes are graded 9 to 0 using the national assessment grading (see Appendix 2). A grade of '0' is totally acceptable where a subject may not have been studied at primary school (possibly drama, Spanish etc). An FFT-50 estimate is also generated for the end of year 11. A "flight path" is then created from the start of year 7 to the end of year 11. The flight path is the 'nominal' target path and a specific target can easily be calculated at any point in time up to the end of year 9.

In practical subjects i.e. Art, Drama, DT, Music and PE, there might only be tentative links between future performance in these subjects and academic performance in English and Mathematics that are used to calculate the FFT estimates. As a consequence, targets at the end of year 9 are based predominantly on a teacher's knowledge and experience with close consideration of FFT estimates.

Target Setting - KS4

FFT estimates can change slightly year on year dependent on recent whole school and National performance. At the start of year 10, FFT-50 estimates are re-calculated for all students in each of their core and option subjects. These become the student's targets throughout years 10 and 11.

Targets are minimum EXPECTATIONS but they are certainly NOT prophecies and they are NOT limits. Many students exceed their targets by considerable amounts.

PERFORMANCE TRACKING

Tracking at KS3

At specified times subject teachers provide a *Working At Grade (WAG)* in every subject. This describes the current grade a pupil is working at and is derived from all aspects of their work over a period of time. These are supported by robust programmes of formative assessments and some summative assessments at key End Points. The grades

are based on the 9 to 0 national system and incorporate sub-increments i.e. X.0 = just attaining the grade X, X.4 = Securely at grade X and X.8 = almost at the next higher grade (X.0, X.4 and X.8 corresponds to X-, X and X+ but the former allows for numerical analyses). At any point in time a specific target grade is calculated from the flight path. A *Value Added Score* is then obtained by comparing the WAG with the time specific target.

$$\text{Value Added Score} = \text{Time specific Target} - \text{WAG}$$

Outcomes are RAG rated and described in accordance with the following:

Result	Description	RAG Rating
On or above calculated target	Working At or Above expected level	GREEN
Within 0.5 of calculated target	Working towards expected level	YELLOW
More than 0.5 below calculated grade	Working below expected level	RED

Tracking at KS4

Three times per academic year all pupils are awarded two grades in every subjects based on the 9 to 0 national system. One is a Working At Grade as described in the previous section and the other a **Projected Grade**.

- **Projected Grade (PG):** is a professional judgement of the most likely final outcome taking into account intervention programmes etc.

All submitted data is in the form of a whole grade e.g. 3, 4, 5 etc. The equivalent grades in 'vocational courses' are shown in Appendix 2.

WAGs are used to advise parents and pupils of current progress and PGs are used to assess whole school performance for improvement and accountability purposes. Once again a Value Added Score is calculated for all subjects.

A positive VA indicates performance beyond expectation and a negative VA, performance below expectation. Comparison of VA scores are used to define individual, subject, departmental, pupil sub-group, and whole school performance.

Approach To Learning score (ATL)

At all data collections in years 7 to 11, subject teachers also provide an ATL score. This is based on attitude to studies and does not relate to ability in any way. The descriptors are given in Appendix 3.

Tracking frequency and reporting

Data is collected three times in an academic year for years 7 to 11. This is typically once a term for years 7 to 10 and slightly more often for year 11.

For each year group one data collection is discussed at the Progress Evening, another is reported in the formal annual written report and the third is reported in a written interim Progress Report.

At KS3 progress reports include WAGs, end of year targets, Approach To Learning scores and a RAG rating. Where applicable there will be the addition of CAT scores and reading age. At KS4 all communications with parents relate to end of KS4 targets, Working At Grades and Approach To Learning grades.

APPENDIX 1

Cognitive Ability Tests (CATs)

Cognitive Ability Tests assess a pupil's potential for learning and highlights how they learn best. There are four elements to the tests that in general terms cover the following areas of learning – Words (verbal reasoning), Numbers (quantitative reasoning), Patterns and Shapes (non-verbal reasoning), Transforming visual images (spatial ability). There is one test for each of the four elements and all of these are conducted 'on-line.' Scripts are marked and graded externally. The range of scores is from 60 to 140 and a score of 100 is regarded as national average based on the outcomes of many pupils.

APPENDIX 2

Comparison of the current national grading system and the "old" GCSE grading system

NEW GCSE Grade	OLD GCSE Grade	Vocational Grade	Equivalent GCSE points
9	(A**)		
		Level 2 DISTINCTION *	8.5
8	A+, A*		
7	A-, A	Level 2 DISTINCTION	7
6	B, B+		
		Level 2 MERIT	5.5
5	C+, B-		
4	C-, C	Level 2 PASS	4
3	E+, D-, D, D+	Level 1 DISTINCTION	3
2	F+, E-, E	Level 1 MERIT	2
		Level 1 PASS	1 to 1.5
1	G, F-, F		
0	U	U	0

APPENDIX 3

Approach To Learning descriptors (ATL)

Approach To Learning Score	Description
1	A pupil with an impeccable attitude to all aspects of their own learning and that of their peers.
2	A pupil with a very positive attitude to their learning who consistently strives to make further progress.
3	A pupil with a positive attitude who could achieve more by adopting a consistently, committed approach to their learning.
4	A pupil with a generally positive attitude but is lacking ambition and too easily satisfied with a mediocre performance.
5	A pupil with an inconsistent attitude to their learning who is lacking motivation and frequently fails to respond to expectations.
6	A pupil with a very negative attitude to learning who shows little or no motivation and lacks respect for the rights of their peers.

Every pupil, regardless of ability, should be scoring 1 for Approach to Learning.