



# MAIDEN ERLEGH

## SCHOOL

Headteacher: Mr P. Gibson  
MSc (Educational Leadership), BA (Economics)

Silverdale Road, Earley,  
Reading, RG6 7HS  
0118 926 2467  
office@maidenerleghschool.co.uk  
www.maidenerleghschool.co.uk

20 December 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian

### Setting Benchmarks – The Process Explained

Over the past year, I have been meeting with a parent focus group who highlight areas of strength and areas in need of development. In our most recent meeting, parents asked how benchmarks are set and what happens if students have amber or red grades. Below I have outlined information that answers both of these questions and I hope they help you track your child's progress.

#### How are my child's benchmarks set?

In the October edition of the Newsblast, I gave some guidance about the assessment strategy at Maiden Erlegh School. You have asked for further clarification about how benchmarks are set.

The brief guide "What does the report tell me?" stated:

The **Benchmark** (or target grade) is the **aspirational grade** that would put your child one grade above the average for students of their ability in their Year 11 GCSE exams. In order to set a student and subject specific benchmark we use the statistical analysis provided by the Fischer Family Trust (FFT), a non-profit educational organisation that has been working nationally with school assessment data since it was established in 2001.

Using the prior attainment data generated at the end of primary school (KS2 SATS) and looking at outcomes for all students nationally in specific subjects with specific starting points, the FFT generate statistical estimates for students to achieve each grade on the 1-9 GCSE grading system. Schools can choose to use the estimates based on data from other similarly high performing schools. As a school, we use the FFT5 model, which sets benchmarks that would see students make progress in line with the top 5% national for their ability range.

These estimates are shared with students annually in the October student own target setting window. From these estimates, we then determine a median grade, which is the grade that a student with their particular KS2 SATS scores is on average likely to achieve in a high performing school. As this grade is an average, we then set an aspirational target that is one grade higher than this. This is called a benchmark grade on the student reports.

For a fuller explanation with some examples and further detail, please go to the full article on the school website. <http://www.maidenerleghschool.co.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=1312>

#### What happens if my child is not keeping track with their benchmark?

Across Years 7 to 13, we track each student's current attainment and predicted grade against their benchmark. Each individual teacher reviews carefully the progress of their class, and when they feel that a student would benefit from more support, they will consider the following:

- Priority seating to ensure high levels of focus.
- Pairing with a student excelling in the subject.
- Closer monitoring of completion of homework and classwork tasks.
- Challenging the improvement of work to ensure that it is of a high standard.
- An appointment or invitation to a revision session afterschool.

We also meet regularly as Pastoral Teams, Curriculum Teams and as a Senior Leadership Team to review student progress.

Where we identify a trend across more than two subjects, we will then consider offering support in the following ways:

- Positive report card or effort report card.
- Homework report cards.
- Appointment with Pastoral Lead/Curriculum Lead.
- Mentoring.

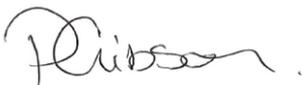
A lot of the time, these interventions may go unnoticed by parents but they are occurring all of the time and revisited after each reporting cycle.

There are also times where a student's progress is impacted by circumstances outside the control of the student, such as health issues. In these circumstances, we work very closely with the family to ensure the best outcome for the student.

I would like to thank the parent focus group for giving up their time to support the school and provide invaluable feedback.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please to contact me via the school office [office@maidenerleghschool.co.uk](mailto:office@maidenerleghschool.co.uk) or speak to your child's Head of Year.

Yours sincerely



Mr P Gibson  
Headteacher