

## Guidance on Grading – 2026-27.

Understanding the broad range of grades across Key Stage 3, GCSE and A Level can be a challenge. This guide aims to provide you with simple details about what each grade means. You will receive progress updates in line with our reporting programme.

You may also log in to our Go 4 Schools system to access progress information here:

Parents – <https://www.go4schools.com/parents/>

Students - <https://www.go4schools.com/students/>

### How you can support your child(ren)

- Discuss aspirations and set ambitious goals together.
- Explore the world with them; visit museums, art galleries, get out in nature. Discuss what you see.
- Ask them open-ended questions about what they are studying in school.
- Encourage regular reading and writing of different types of texts, both fiction and non-fiction
- Encourage endurance; when they fail, try again.
- Watch, read and discuss the news together to promote critical thinking skills.
- Ask to see their schoolwork regularly. See if they have completed their 'Next Steps' work in purple pen.
- Have a routine and quiet space for homework.
- Encourage a healthy lifestyle; quality sleep, exercise, time away from screens, avoid sugary drinks etc.

All Key Stages (3, 4 & 5) follow the same Approach to Learning grading system:

- **Approach to Learning Grades** – used to represent the approach that your child is showing towards their learning, with a particular focus on '**Classwork & Engagement**' and '**Home and Independent Learning**'.

### Approach to Learning – Classwork & Engagement

#### 1 – Outstanding

#### 2 – Good

#### 3 – Satisfactory

#### 4 – Inconsistent

#### 5 – Poor

Furze Platt students are expected to display:

- Excellent attitude and **ambition**, by always trying their best.
- **Collaboratively** and effective working with others.
- **Happy** and **versatile** approach to learning.
- Sustained learning through **endurance**.
- Unwavering **integrity**.
- High levels of motivation.

### Approach to Learning – Home & Independent Learning

#### 1 – Outstanding

#### 2 – Good

#### 3 – Satisfactory

#### 4 – Inconsistent

#### 5 – Poor

Furze Platt students are expected to:

- Submit home learning **on time**.
- **Complete** homework to the best of their ability.
- Be **organised** with coursework and projects.
- Read around and **research** their subjects.
- Demonstrate **evidence** of independent learning (such as extra notes or through insight shown in lessons).

Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 & 9)

Academic Grades - Age-Related GCSE Grades

Year 7, 8 & 9 students are preparing for GCSE courses using the 9-1 grading system, which replaced the old A\*-G range. Here, for Year 7 & 8 students, 8 is the highest grade and 1 is the lowest. For Year 9 students, 9 is the highest grade and 1 is the lowest.



Grading new GCSEs

| New grading structure | Former grading structure |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| 9                     |                          |
| 8                     | A*                       |
| 7                     | A                        |
| 6                     | B                        |
| 5                     | C                        |
| 4                     |                          |
| 3                     | D                        |
| 2                     | E                        |
| 1                     | F                        |
|                       | G                        |
| U                     | U                        |

Comparing 9-1 grade to the old A\*-G – with 9 grades and only 8 old ones it is not a straightforward fit. There are, however, three matching points: the bottom of a grade 7 is directly aligned to the bottom of an old A grade; the bottom of a grade 4 is aligned to the bottom of an old C grade and the bottom of a grade 1 is aligned to the bottom of an old G grade. OFQUAL have produced this graph to help parents understand the grades.

It is important to note that the Department for Education has stated that a grade 5 is classed as a ‘Strong Pass’ at GCSE. Thus, while the bottom of a grade 4 is the direct equivalent of the old C grade (the old ‘Good Pass’ grade), **your child needs to be aiming for a grade 5. In simple terms, 5 is the new C.**

In Years 7, 8 & 9 two academic grades will be recorded for every subject:

- **Age-Related GCSE Grade** – Your child is assessed throughout Years 7, 8 & 9. Towards the end of Terms 2, 4 & 6 (please note that Year 7 Term 2 reports will only include ‘Approach to Learning Grades’ for each subject and not ‘Age-Related GCSE Grades’), assessments will be set in each subject that are marked against ‘Age-Related GCSE Grades’. These grades refer to your child’s position in the performance distribution for their age group and indicate the grade that they are likely to achieve in Year 11 if they continue at their current level of effort and progress. These grades do not tell you what your child would get if they took a GCSE at that moment in time. Assessments get harder from term to term and year to year, so that a grade 6 in Year 8 represents a higher standard than a grade 6 in Year 7. Staying at the same grade through Year 7 to Year 9 is making progress.
- **Challenge Target Grade** - This is the grade that we think your child should be able to achieve. Depending on their progress and prior attainment (KS2 SATs) or CAT test performance, we may move this grade up or down during the course to provide the most appropriate level of challenge.

Key Stage 4 (Years 10 & 11)

Academic Grades

Year 10 & 11 students are studying GCSE courses with the 9-1 grading system, which replaced the old A\*-G range. Here, 9 is the highest grade and 1 is the lowest. For reporting, we also sub-divide the grades for greater accuracy. 5+ means attainment at the upper end of grade 5, almost reaching grade 6; 5 means working consistently at grade 5; 5- means attainment at the lower end of the grade 5 range, just above a grade 4.

Comparing 9-1 grades to the old A\*-G – with 9 grades and only 8 old ones it is not a straightforward fit. There are, however, three matching points: the bottom of a grade 7 is directly aligned to the bottom of an old A grade; the bottom of a grade 4 is aligned to the bottom of an old C grade and the bottom of a grade 1 is aligned to the bottom of an old G grade. OFQUAL have produced this graph to help parents understand the new grades.

It is important to note that the Department for Education has stated that a grade 5 is classed as the new ‘Strong Pass’ at GCSE. Thus, while the bottom of a new grade 4 is the direct equivalent of the old C grade (the old ‘Good Pass’ grade), **your child needs to be aiming for a grade 5. In simple terms, 5 is the new C.**

In Year 10 and 11, the following academic grades will be recorded for every subject:

- **Challenge Target** – This is the grade that we think your child should be able to achieve. Depending on their progress, we may move this grade up or down during the course to provide the most appropriate level of challenge.
- **Working At** – This is the grade that best reflects their current work. If they sat the exam now this is what we think they would achieve.
- **Projected Grade** - This is the grade that we think they should achieve in their actual GCSE if they work to the best of their ability. Depending on their progress, we may move this grade up or down during an academic year.



Grading new GCSEs

| New grading structure | Former grading structure |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| 9                     |                          |
| 8                     | A*                       |
| 7                     | A                        |
| 6                     | B                        |
| 5                     | C                        |
| 4                     |                          |
| 3                     | D                        |
| 2                     | E                        |
| 1                     | F                        |
|                       | G                        |
| U                     | U                        |

## Key Stage 5 (Years 12 & 13)

### Academic Grades

Sixth Form students are studying A Levels using the A\*-E grading system. For reporting, we also sub-divide A-level grades for greater accuracy. For example, a B1 means attainment at the upper end of grade B, almost reaching grade A, a B2 means working consistently at a grade B. B3 means attainment at the lower end of the B grade, just above a C.

For students studying Applied subjects, (Extended Certificate, Technical Extended Certificate and Level 3 Applied Diploma) e.g. BTEC Level 3, the grading system is descriptive with less tiers than an equivalent A-level (see table).

| Applied Grade       |    | A-level equivalent | UCAS Points |
|---------------------|----|--------------------|-------------|
| Starred Distinction | D* | A*                 | 56          |
| Distinction         | D  | A                  | 48          |
| Merit               | M  | C                  | 32          |
| Pass                | P  | E                  | 16          |

In the Sixth Form, the following academic grades will be recorded for every subject:

- **Challenge Target** – This is the grade that we think your child should be able to achieve. Depending on their current progress, prior attainment (GCSE) and their ALIS test scores (taken at the start of Year 12), we may move this grade up or down during the course to provide the most appropriate level of challenge.
- **Working At** – This is the grade that best reflects their current work. If they sat the exam now this is what we think they would achieve.
- **Projected Grade** - This is the grade that we think your child should achieve in their actual A Level exam if they work to the best of their ability. Depending on their, we may move this grade up or down during an academic year.

Further information about this and other reforms to GCSE and A-Level qualifications can be found at the DfE website: [GCSE & A-Level qualification regulation](#)

## Key Dates for 2026-27

| <i>Year Group</i> | <i>Date</i>          |                                                            |
|-------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7                 | 22.04.27             | Parents' Evening face to face                              |
| 8                 | 11.03.27             | Parents' Evening face to face                              |
| 9                 | 21.01.27<br>28.01.27 | Parents' Evening face to face<br>Options Evening           |
| 10                | 24.03.27             | Parents' Evening face to face                              |
| 11                | 22.10.26<br>15.12.26 | Parents' Evening face to face<br>Year 11 PPE Results Event |
| 12                | 19.11.26             | Parents' Evening face to face                              |
| 13                | 10.12.26<br>10.2.27  | Parents' Evening face to face<br>Year 13 PPE Results Event |