



Marches Academy Trust

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Secondary Assessment Policy

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1. Setting minimum expected grades and assessment policy



A system-wide focus on achievement for all

*AboveOnNot yet (for full details see page 7)

** Assessment for Learning

1.1 Our philosophy

Pupils should know what their minimum target grade is.

Feedback from **teachers** makes them aware of how they can improve their work and achieve/exceed their target.

Parents/carers are informed of their child's targets. They have regular opportunities to talk about their child's progress towards his/her target.

Our grade setting is ambitious, placing no categories, barriers or ceilings on any pupil. The assessment and grade setting process is designed to support this belief.

Our aspiration is that all learners should leave Key Stage 4 with level two qualifications in English, Maths, Science, and at least three additional subjects, with the majority of pupils studying the English Baccalaureate, and all pupils monitored to achieve at least eight qualifications.

2. Grade setting

2.1 Rationale for setting grades

Grade setting is a strategy for improving achievement with the pupil at the heart of the process; our grades are set to ensure pupils are appropriately challenged and that all pupils, of all abilities, aspire to excellence.

2.2(a) The grade setting process for GCSE

In the Autumn term, grades are set for all Year 7 pupils, and confirmed for Year 10 pupils. In the Summer term, adjustments can be made in all year groups, if necessary, where a pupil is regularly performing above the minimum GCSE grade.

Grades are set using KS2 assessment data processed by the Fischer Family Trust charitable foundation – through the online portal, Fischer Family Trust Aspire or teacher assessment where this data is not available. Our minimum GCSE grades are designed to ensure all pupils make AT LEAST expected progress, as far as this can be estimated.

A range of grades are shared with pupils. Our minimum expected GCSE grade comes from the expected grade for the school to be in the top 20% of schools. It is this grade that is used for all internal monitoring of a pupil's performance.

Poor GCSE grade – one grade lower than the minimum grade

Good GCSE grade – one grade higher (where possible) than the minimum grade

Exceptional GCSE grade – two grades higher (where possible) than the minimum grade

2.2(b) The grade setting process for A Level

The Marches School and Sir John Talbot's School

Grades are set using KS4 examination data, processed by the Fischer Family Trust charitable foundation – through the online portal, Fischer Family Trust Aspire. A range of grades are shared with pupils. Our minimum expected A Level target grade comes from the expected grade for the school to be in the top 20% of schools. It is this grade that is used for all internal monitoring of a pupil's performance.

The Grove School

Targets are set using ALPS connect. Minimum expected grades are shared with pupils and this is the grade that is used for all internal monitoring of a pupil's performance.

2.3 Recording grades

For Years 8, 9, 10, 11 and 13, all pupils' up-to-date grades are available to tutors on the first day of the Autumn term. All pupils will have a record of these in their planners by the end of the first week of term and stickers provided for their books.

For Years 7 and 12, grades will be available at the start of the second half of the Autumn term.

2.4 The importance of progress

All subjects should be monitoring the amount of progress each child makes between KS2 and KS4, and from KS4 to KS5. We need to support every child to achieve at least expected progress and a positive progress 8 score overall.

3. Assessment data, monitoring and tracking

3.1 Assessment data

All assessments made will result in a GCSE grade or A Level grade. These will be shared with pupils, and all pupils will be aware of their level or grade of performance as they move through the years.

Grades from summative assessment and assessment against graded department criteria will be kept by the class teacher as a record of the achievements for each pupil.

3.2 Monitoring and tracking

Parents/carers are informed of their child's minimum expected grades. Each term all pupils are monitored against their **minimum GCSE or A Level grade**.

Teachers will use their collection of assessment data to make professional judgments for each pupil.

3.3 Layers of data is our model for curriculum and assessment design and documentation that stands up to scrutiny for delivering progress.

Layer 1 – Whole school summary (the single ‘where are they now’ grade held on SIMS) measuring the totality – the pillar data.

Layer 2 – Subject data collection – the results layer. All the individual assessments in different skills that make up the judgments for Layer 1. Over time these will be standardised against the outcomes pupils do get in the future.

There must be teacher judgment between Layer 2 and what is reported at Layer 1.

Layer 3 – Content layer – Subject content and the criteria it is assessed against. This layer will show how progression is built into the planning to show how a pupil ‘on target’ from one year to the next has developed towards GCSE mastery.

Layer 4 – The learning layer – What have they learnt – the verbs, the key skills.

Layer 5 – Mastery layer – Key concepts and big ideas, assessment objectives from the exam boards. Mastery is about moving down a track without artificial fine details – our AON system delivers this.

Layers 1 and 2 will be evident in SIMS and department databases.

Layers 3 – 5 will need to be evident in SoL and curriculum documentation, as well as in teaching and learning in the classroom – in the class and in books, including the start and end sheets for each unit (what we say is happening in the SoL is really happening in practice).

3.4 KS4 and KS5 – Year 9 to Year 13

Fine level GCSE scores are used alongside the GCSE and A Level grade.

GCSE Fine Grade	A Level Fine Grade	Definition
A	1	Pupil is secure at this grade, with intervention they may move to the next grade.
B	2	Pupil is secure at this grade.
C	3	Pupil is at this grade but it is not secure and without intervention may slip to the grade below.

3.5 Lesson grading

This is a system where pupils are graded on their approach to learning in lessons. It provides a way of both tracking pupil progress across different lessons and also providing praise for those pupils who always display a positive approach to learning.

Lesson grading (Years 7 to 11)

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4
Outstanding use of LORIC*	Good use of LORIC	Negatively affecting the learning of self or others	Severely, affecting the learning of both self and others
Active engagement in learning	Engaged in learning	Not giving best to the lesson	Removed to exit room
Independent learning	Good effort		
Outstanding effort			
Completion of all work – beyond expectation			
2 Reward Points issued	1 Reward Point issued		1 Behaviour Point issued

*Leadership, Organisation, Resilience, Initiative, Communication

Pupils receiving Grade 3s will follow a process of intervention that may include:

- Discussion with class teacher
- Mentoring with Tutor
- Calls home to parents/carers to discuss
- Sanctions issued
- Tutor report
- Department report
- Progress Leader report

Grade 4s will initially be picked up by the Director of subject, and the pupil will not return to the lesson until a restorative meeting has been held, and a plan put in place. Repeated Grade 4s means continued disruption to the learning of other pupils, which cannot be tolerated and a more serious process will be put in place.

Lesson Grading (Years 12 and 13)

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4
All of 2 plus: Independent learning / wider reading around the topic is evident Pupil is completely immersed in the learning and actively participating in the lesson	Classwork is completed to a good standard Homework tasks are completed to a good standard Pupil equipment / folder is organised, everything needed for the lesson is in place, pupil is ready to learn	Pupil is not fully engaged in the learning There are homework issues (incomplete/missing) Pupil is poorly organised and not 'lesson ready' (equipment/folder/ what is needed to learn not in place)	Pupil is completely disengaged Behaviour/attitude is inappropriate Three or more of the Grade 3 behaviours

Pupil is going beyond expected content	Pupil is on time for lesson	Dress / appearance is not in keeping with expectations Pupil is not wearing a lanyard	
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3.6 Motivation

The AON Progress Codes

Code	Meaning
A	Achieving consistently Above minimum grade
O	Achieving consistently On the minimum grade
N	Not yet consistently reaching the minimum grade

3.7 Use of monitoring data within the school each term

AON and Fine scores will be used to track underperformance and plan intervention.

Analysis tools, currently SISRA Analytics and Progress Wall Builder are used each Pillar to support the identification of key groups, pupils and subjects in need of intervention.

Identified pupils will be discussed in **panel meetings**, to allow for systematic intervention where needed to accelerate progress. All involved should be clear on how the identified barriers to achieving targets can be overcome.

Pupils performing below target in a subject will be identified by Directors. Pupils below target for a number of subjects will be identified by Progress Leaders. In both cases intervention will be appropriate and teacher appraisal meetings will allow for discussion of data and intervention plans that are in place.

The leader for standards in the school meets with Directors and the Headteacher to explore the data at key points in the year, notably – GCSE analysis and Mock results data.

Summative external reports on GCSE and A Level performance are used to improve practice – these include ASP, L3VA reports, ALPS analysis for KS5 and Fischer Family Trust.

3.8 Reporting to parents/carers

Each pupil, other than those in national exam years, will receive **three progress sheets** a year. Year 11 and Year 13 will receive **two Progress Sheets** a year. In addition, parent/carer information evenings occur once or twice each year.

Timing of the release of each form of information is available in the annual school calendar.

3.9 Recording assessment information

In accordance with departmental and school policy, all staff must use an effective method of recording pupils' marks, attainment levels and monitoring information in the provided Teachers' Marksheet in SIMS. This data will then be transferred to a departmental database when needed for future use. Departments need to keep accurate assessment data to demonstrate pupil progress – this will lead to more refined setting arrangements, greater knowledge of long term potential and more effective data for teaching and learning.

Class teachers will need to record for their own purposes, in a form convenient to them, the full range of evidence of performance and attitude through each term to allow for robust reporting; this will come from formative testing, AfL strategies in lessons, observations and marking of criteria-related tasks.

Data is collected for whole school monitoring at the Pillar - every term.

Information given for parents/carers and exam entry use must also be recorded by the teacher as part of the pupil assessment profile.

A consistent approach by all is vital to ensuring the success of effective assessment at all stages. The school attainment levels, GCSE and A Level grades and attitude grades need to be applied in the correct context and at regular intervals to be purposeful and effective.

3.10 Coursework and controlled assessments

Coursework is an important part of many courses. Pupils are made aware of the requirements at the start of their studies. The actual nature (number, length, etc) of each piece is specific to the individual subject. These are completed at various points during the course. A summary of requirements in all subjects is prepared every year.

All work is assessed according to the examination board's assessment criteria. Due to moderation, these pieces will take longer to assess and mark than normal class-based work or homework items.

4. Assessment and feedback

4.1 Rationale

To create an assessment and feedback policy that puts the relationship between pupils and teachers at the heart of it, and that is based on research, provides maximum impact on progress and removes unnecessary workload for teachers.

4.2 Aims

- To provide accurate, useful feedback to our pupils that makes a difference to their outcomes both academically and personally, emotionally and socially.
- To allow pupils to access feedback that supports them in making progress.
- To ensure assessment is reliable and gives all stakeholders a common language to discuss and recognise progress.
- To ensure feedback is provided where necessary and then followed by opportunities for pupils to make improvements.
- To protect teacher workload and ensure that the policy is applied consistently.

4.3 Expectations

- Pupils will respond to feedback, making improvements to their work.
- Directors are free to determine how feedback looks within their individual teams. There is no expectation that verbal feedback will be recorded.
- There is an expectation that feedback will have a direct impact on pupil outcomes and pupils will be able to explain how they obtain feedback from their class teacher.
- It is the class teacher's responsibility to ensure that pupils are clear on how feedback will be given and used in class.
- All adults working with pupils across the school will provide feedback to pupils on their academic, personal, social and emotional development.

- Formal assessments, linked to the scheme of learning, will be used to inform each data collection point to assess progress made.
- Directors are free to determine when formal assessments are completed.
- KS4 and 5 assessments will be linked to the end of course examination expectations.
- Formal assessments at KS4 and 5 are marked within faculty teams and moderated prior to grade predictions being made.

4.4 How the policy is monitored

- All staff are responsible for the effective implementation of this policy.
- The policy will be monitored through conversations with pupils and class teachers. Pupils should be able to both explain how they receive feedback and how it helped them improve their learning.
- Pupils work will form an important part of the monitoring process and this will be carried out alongside the pupils to allow them to provide vital input into the feedback process.

4.5 Responsibilities

- Pupils – to use the feedback they are provided with to make progress and achieve excellence.
- Staff – to ensure that high quality feedback is delivered to pupils, and that assessments are completed in line with the policy.
- Leaders – to ensure high quality feedback is delivered to pupils while also monitoring teacher workload.

4.6 How pupils' work may be assessed:

Assessment can be split into Assessment for Learning (Formative Assessment) and Assessment of Learning (Summative Assessment). Both types of assessment are important and both feed into teachers' overall understanding of where pupils are in terms of their progress. Furthermore, teachers may or may not check pupils' notes from classwork. For the most part, this has low impact on pupil progress. When this is undertaken, it will occur as a spot-check in class to ensure that pupils are taking pride in their work and that notes organised and thorough.

Assessment for Learning (AfL)

Formative assessment is a crucial aspect of pupils' progress to minimum expected grades and beyond. It is a vital process in pupils' preparation for summative assessment as it is during this stage that teachers and pupils can identify what they are doing well and what the next steps must be to improve performance and final outcomes. It requires pupils to reflect on their work and the success criteria.

How might this be undertaken?

It is expected that all teachers will use a variety of AfL techniques to provide feedback to pupils. There are many tools that can be used. Here are some examples:

Live marking: Live marking takes place within lessons whilst pupils are undertaking a task. Live marking may take different forms.

Verbal feedback: Teachers circulate the classroom during a task and verbally feedback on pupils' performance and progress. In practical subjects, this may be recorded on a live mark book and by pupils in their books or folders but this is not an expectation. This is the

most powerful form of feedback. Asking questions of pupils during verbal feedback prompts increased pupil independence.

Red dot feedback: Teachers circulate the classroom during a task and may put a red dot next to work which could be improved. This encourages pupils to reflect on a specific part of their work and the success criteria and work out the solution to improving the work themselves.

Sampling: Teachers circulate the classroom during a task and sample a selection of pupils' work looking for common misconceptions and mistakes. The task may be interrupted for the teacher to feedback these common issues for pupils to reflect on their work before completing the task.

Yellow-box feedback: Yellow Box marking is an established strategy employed in the Marches Academy Trust whereby teachers assess pupils' work against success criteria or a public examinations mark scheme. The key is that teachers draw a yellow box by the work and give specific feedback for the pupils to improve their work or elements thereof. Pupils are then given adequate time in class to reflect on the feedback and respond to it. This will depend on the subject and the nature of the work. Research indicates that 1-3 yellow boxes to complete per subject per half term has most impact.

Traffic lights and white boards: These have a great deal of potential and can be used in a wide variety of ways to check learning and progress in lessons.

New technologies: It is important to keep abreast of developments in technology that can be used in classrooms as aids to assessment for learning.

Conferencing: Conferencing is an effective method of feeding back to pupils what they need to do to improve their work. This normally involves a small group of pupils being called together by the teacher to discuss a shared misunderstanding or misconception. This has the advantage of targeting pupils most in need of support and of allowing pupils the opportunity to ask questions in a supportive setting to clarify the misconception. This can be done while others are working independently on class tasks. (Conferencing can be challenging in short time frames. A solution could be that after-school revision sessions are replaced with rotated, small-group conferencing).

Peer and self-assessment: Peer and self-assessment are effective and efficient methods of giving pupils feedback on closed responses. Pupils frequently need to show recall of factual information; the time delay involved in teachers marking this reduces the impact. If it is marked within lessons by themselves or by peers this removes the time delay.

There is also an advantage to pupils being trained to mark their own and their peers' open responses. Pupils gain a better understanding of the success criteria and pupils also develop a more critical approach to their work, leading to an enhanced ability to scrutinise their work before submitting it. The use of a marking grid can assist pupils in self-assessment.

Automatic feedback: Many subjects are now setting homework which is done on websites where the work is immediately assessed automatically. This allows pupils to have immediate feedback on their performance and understanding and also automatically tracks

the pupils' progress for teachers, which allows for teachers to adjust their planning to account for pupils' strengths and weaknesses.

Assessment of learning

Pupils' responses to open tasks will always be marked by teachers for summative assessment and tracking purposes. Departments will also discuss mark schemes and moderate the assessment of pupils' work so that a common understanding of grades is established. Moderation can be in school or cross-trust.

Pupils' responses to closed tasks for summative assessment purposes may also be peer- or self-assessed for reasons of expediency to maximise impact.

Before moving on from any summative assessment, pupils will be given feedback and the opportunity to respond to feedback.

4.7 Learning spotlight sessions

Faculty/department learning spotlights

Once per term a faculty or department spotlight session will take place. This will be coordinated by the head of department or faculty director and will comprise:

- A key stage focus
- A key area of learning focus/theme
- Pupil self-review conferences*

**pupil conferences will be faculty/department meetings with just this item on the agenda. Pupils will bring along their books for this area of the curriculum. Staff and pupils will sit together to review learning as a team. Staff will use a series of questions to ask the pupils which will determine the learning experience from the pupil's perspective. Staff will look through pupil books and cross reference this with the pupil's data, the scheme of learning and scheme of assessment for that cohort. Questioning will be used to encourage pupils to discuss their learning. At each conferencing meeting 6 to 8 pupils from a key stage will be invited. The pupils must reflect the key area of focus, for example MAP, gender, EAL, PP. Conferencing will take place after school for a maximum of one hour and pupils must be provided with refreshments. Pupils will be invited by letter/email and reminder texts will be sent. It will be the director/department leader's responsibility to add the spotlight findings to Lessons Learned. Key actions will be shared with the staff team and added to the department/faculty development plan.*

Leadership learning spotlights

Once per term the leadership team will perform a leadership spotlight. This will comprise;

- A key stage focus
- A key area of learning focus/theme
- Leadership pupil conferences*

**pupils will be selected by leadership and will be invited to attend a meeting. They will bring all of their books, files and folders. Pupils will be asked a series of questions relating to their learning and will be asked to evidence what they are saying by providing examples from their work. Pupils will be required to discuss how they are challenged. Results from the meetings and key actions will be added to Lessons Learned and actions/notes added to the School Development Plan (SDP).*

On Take and/or Walking for Purpose learner spotlights

Every week learning will be reviewed. A key area of learner behaviour, attitude, conduct or application will be focused upon as needed in each school setting. Pupils will be visited while they are learning and questioned if and when it is appropriate. OT/WFP will be used as a means of reflecting upon pupil learning and a method of self-review. Outcomes will be added to Lessons Learned and where/when appropriate the SDP will be amended to reflect key actions/progress.

Appendix 1

Implementation of the policy in faculties, departments and subjects

Maths

Type	How it will be used
Exit tickets	Marked before subsequent lesson where appropriate
Recall starters	Self-marked to check ability to apply prior knowledge
Whiteboards	In-class checking for misconceptions
Tests and exams	Teacher marked and 'Make a Difference' or 'Dedicated improvement and reflection time' provided in next lesson
Self-assessment	Answers on back of some worksheets to encourage self-checking habits

English and modern foreign languages

Type	How will it be used
Turnaround feedback	Next lesson quick turnaround feedback. Specific aspects will be focused upon – not the entire piece
Deep marking	Extended writing – key focus areas. MAD time to be issued
Peer marking	For the identification of skills (not for structure, content or organisation)
Glance overview marking (in-class)	Check all books quickly with no written feedback in books but plan next lesson to address most common errors seen

NB There is a need to teach pupils proof-reading skills to improve self-regulation and increase independence.

Science

Type	How it will be used
Self-assessment of in-class tasks	Marking own work (different coloured pen is optional)
Deep marking	This will be focused on a piece of work that teacher sets or is highlighted as key piece on the scheme of learning. This will allow pupils to demonstrate understanding of key concepts
Tests and exams	Teacher marked unless multiple choice which can be done via peer assessment

DT, Art, Food, ICT, PE

Type	How it will be used
Checklists	Teacher and pupil checklists BRAG rated against success criteria
Tests and exams	Knowledge and skills tests where relevant and appropriate
Written marking	Only at deep marking points where appropriate. No marking of note-taking or class work

Drama and Music

Type	How it will be used
Written marking	Live in classroom as pupils complete work Deep marking at key points for key pieces of work
Checklists	Teacher and pupil checklists BRAG rated against success criteria
Tests and exams	Mark and yellow box for how to reach next level
Peer assessment	For live practical work
Self-assessment	For live practical work

Humanities

Type	How it will be used
Verbal feedback	Precise and focused where appropriate
Whiteboards and traffic lights	Instant in-class feedback and AfL to check misconceptions
Assessment and exams	Mark and yellow box for how to reach next level
Deep marking	Only to be used for key pieces identified on scheme.

Homework

Self-assessment of homework can be done within class (but at teacher's discretion to feedback more deeply dependent on key stage and task set)

Flipped homework is encouraged. This will develop independence, engagement in wider reading, reading skills, deciphering and summarising skills and self-regulated learning. Flipped learning can be done to prepare pupils for next steps and future topics.

Glossary

ALPS	A Level Performance System
ASP	Analyse School Performance
BRAG	Blue (outstanding) Red (poor) Amber (requires improvement) Green (good)
EAL	English as an Additional Language
L3VA	Level 3 Value Added
MAD	Made A Difference
MAP	More Able Pupils
OT/WFP	On Take/Working For Purpose
PP	Pupil Premium
SDP	School Development Plan
SoL	Schemes of Learning