Atlantic Academy
Assessment & Setting Policy

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July 2026	KS3 grade bands revised and explained Introducing GL assessments twice a year from Yr 7 to Yr 10
July 2026	Setting systems amended
July 2025	Wording amendments
July 2024	Amendments to Summative Assessment and KS3 & KS4 report

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Introduction

Assessment is the process of obtaining, analysing and interpreting evidence for use by both students and teachers to enable the review, planning and improvement of learning. It is fully integrated with the delivery of the curriculum and is an essential component of effective classroom practice.

The assessment process and the data it generates should be valid (they measure that which they were intended to measure and data are appropriate for the interpretations intended to be made from them) and reliable (consistent over time) for the purpose intended: a poor-quality assessment may give misleading results and lead to poor-quality decisions.

By using high-quality data efficiently as a tool to help inform practices in the academy, three positive consequences occur:

- Leaders and teachers make conscious decisions about the specific uses of each piece of assessment data they will collect. This enables productive conversations about ensuring these are appropriate and useful for the intended purposes.
- Leaders consider the opportunity costs of assessment. They recognise that the time and effort spent on assessment must be as valuable – if not more so – than other 'opportunities' (such as more teaching time) which could have been taken up.
- Assessment data informs decisions about teaching and learning. Lessons and interventions are planned proactively in response to purposeful assessments.

(Adapted from the Education Endowment Foundation)

Characteristics of Strong Practice in Assessment

Promote and support learning • Identifies what students know, understand and can do • Enables consistent monitoring of students progress • Identifies individual learning strengths and weaknesses • Encourages progression in learning	**Inform teaching** • Assists lesson planning • Informs review of content and skills • Promotes a variety of teaching strategies • Enables consistent monitoring of teaching progress • Encourages self-reflection	**Foster a shared involvement and responsibility between Academy and Home** • Shared responsibility in motivating student to achieve • Creates a shared ownership and collaborative aligned support network • Families have an indication of student's most likely outcomes in public examinations
Use appropriate and diverse strategies • Is both formal and informal • Tests a range of skills • Encourages effective and standardised marking procedures • Is both quantitative and qualitative • Is carried out in a range of contexts	**Recognise student progress and achievement** • Rewards progress, effort and achievement • Fosters motivation and promotes a commitment to learning • Creates opportunities for self-direction • Fosters self-esteem and social development	**Develop the capacity for self-assessment** • Shares learning outcomes and assessment criteria • Gives sensitive and constructive feedback • Supports students in self and peer assessment activities • Engages students in realistic target setting

Are both formative and summative
• Promotes a shared learning culture
• Provides clear and regular feedback
• Diagnoses learning difficulties
• Measures student performance
• Identifies clear and shared targets for student progress
• Informs subject choice and career decision making
• Provides effective and progressive student records
• Informs regular reporting to parents/carers

Understanding Our Assessments

Assessment at Atlantic comprises of four types of assessments:

- Low stakes, ongoing assessment for learning that takes place in every lesson and is not recorded
- Regular Knowledge Retrieval Tests
- End of Unit/Topic Assessments
- Mock Examinations

Knowledge Retrieval Tests

- This is a low stakes test, identifying gaps in a students knowledge and to embed the knowledge learnt through teachers targeting areas for immediate improvement and celebrating areas of strength. These will always be peer/self-marked and questions that are frequently incorrectly answered will prompt a review of the teaching of that content. They should also form areas of focus for the next lessons to develop the students capacity to store and retrieve accurate information. This knowledge will inevitably be based upon the students' knowledge organiser, within that subject for that unit. Outcomes will be recorded internally to help direct student interventions.

End of Unit/Topic Assessments

- Each subject will assess students at regular intervals throughout an academic year. The timings of these assessments will be appropriate for that subject curriculum, and taken at the end of each unit/topic in line with a subjects assessment journey.
- Each assessment will assess what has been taught within the current unit/topic and a smaller percentage will assess content from previous units/topics to promote retrieval. This will help to provide a more accurate attainment and projected grade that will be reported.
- These assessments will support the development of students examination skills over time and subjects will pause their curriculum delivery in preparation to focus on personalised learning checklists (PLCs) and effective revision techniques beforehand.
- Outcomes will be recorded centrally by subject leads in an academy template stored in a shared Google file to help plan and monitor student interventions.

Mock Examinations

- Year 7, 8 and 9 students will sit an end of year holistic assessment 'End of Year Examination', assessing the content from that year's academic subject curriculum and will be reported as Assessment point 3. This is in addition to their regular end of unit/topic tests and will have a combination of short and extended answer questions. These will take place during normal timetabled subject lessons, and will be timetabled during a specific fortnight. They will be marked by the class teacher, moderated within the department, and an attainment level will be assigned to the level the student achieved against the subject's Age Related Expectations (ARE). Subjects will pause their curriculum delivery for a week in preparation to focus on personalised learning checklists (PLCs) and effective revision techniques beforehand. Outcomes will be recorded centrally in a standardised academy key stage overview tracking document in a shared Google file to help plan and monitor student interventions and set changes.

- For Year 10, students will participate in two mock examination sittings each year and will be reported at Assessment point 1 and 3. These, where appropriate, will use Vocational and/or GCSE examination material as directed by the trust from the curriculum covered until the point of mock assessment. Subjects will pause their curriculum delivery for a week in preparation to focus on personalised learning checklists (PLCs) and effective revision techniques beforehand. The outcomes will enable us to see how much our students have developed over the full range of skills in each subject and how much they have developed their overall subject knowledge. The outcomes will inform us of what students may benefit from targeted intervention. Outcomes will be recorded centrally in a standardised academy key stage overview tracking document in a shared Google file to help plan and monitor student interventions and set changes.

Diagnostic Assessments

- Key Stage 3 and Year 10 students will sit the New Group Reading/Spelling Tests (NGRT/NGST) twice a year; additionally, Year 7 sit the GL CAT4 Cognitive Abilities Test at the start of the academic year. The Tests are a standardised, adaptive assessment to measure skills against the national average. Our aim is to use it to identify where intervention may be needed, and then to monitor impact and progress made. It is adaptive, responding to a student's ability as they complete the test so more able readers are challenged and others remain engaged. The NGR/ST provides an age which can be compared with a student's age at the time they took the test. The age is provided in years and months for example 14:01 is 14 years and 1 month. This information also supports our teachers' professional judgement on the attainment that is generated through classwork, homework and internal assessments. These assessments form part of a students profile, along with their Key Stage 2 outcomes and feeder school transfer information. Students are encouraged to take these assessments seriously as the outcomes will assist in the identification of those students who require intervention, SEND provision, subject setting, GCSE options and establishing targets for the end of Key Stage 4. ● For new students joining the academy mid-year, a catch-up session will also be held on a termly basis to assess their academic profile, identify any support needs and ensure their smooth integration into the curriculum. This helps maintain consistency in the use of data and supports early identification of any barriers to learning.

Assessment Points and Reporting Overview

AP1 and 2: Academic reports will be generated twice a year after each Assessment Point (AP1 & AP2). Parents/Carers will be notified in writing in advance of every assessment point period to help with preparations at home, access effective revision resources in support and receive key dates. Students will receive a printed copy of their report and parents/carers will be able to access an electronic copy using their Arbor login accounts. There will be a subject parents' evening strategically placed after AP1 for each year group where students and parents/carers can meet with their child's subject teachers to discuss their attainment and agree on targets for improvement. For all year groups, reports will indicate the attainment that the student has made within each of their subjects. Teachers, departments, the Senior Leadership Team and the Academy Trust, will use these outcomes to make informed decisions for student interventions and the Atlantic Academy Improvement Plan.

AP3: There will be an additional Trust AP3 data collection for years 7 - 11.

Assessment and Reporting

Assessment Points and Reporting Overview Academic reports will be generated twice a year for each year group. Parents/Carers will be notified in writing in advance of every assessment point period to help with preparations at home, access effective revision resources in support and receive key dates. Students will receive a printed copy of their report and parents/carers will be able to access an

electronic copy using their Arbor login accounts. There will be a subject parents' evening strategically placed for each year group where students and parents/carers can meet with their child's subject teachers to discuss their attainment and agree on targets for improvement. For all year groups, reports will indicate the level of attainment achieved by the student within each of their subjects. Teachers, departments, the Senior Leadership Team and the Academy Trust, will use these outcomes to make informed decisions for student interventions and the Atlantic Academy Improvement Plan.

Subject Teachers: In addition to a student's attainment in each subject, will use the scale of; Excellent, Good, Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory to measure a student's:
● Attitude to Learning: This looks at a student's work ethic, how well a student is conducting themselves and their approach and engagement in their learning.
● For KS4 Only. Homework completion and quality: This considers all of the work that has been submitted, the standard that is being produced, the capacity to meet deadlines, wider reading and effective revision. Management Information System (MIS): The following pastoral data will centrally be included in each report using our MIS:
● KS4 Only: Target grades for each subject displayed on reports.
● Attendance: Percentage of student's authorised attendance.
● Punctuality: Number of late marks recorded.
● Positive Behaviour Points: The number of positive points awarded by staff.
● Negative Behaviour Points: The number of negative points awarded by staff.
● KS3 & Yr10: New Group Reading/Spelling Tests (NGR/ST) Outcomes.

Accuracy of Projections

To improve our accuracy of projections, staff will focus on the following raising standards areas:
● Data and projections from previous cohorts
● KS2 Scaled Scores
● FFT20 - P8, 4+, 5+, 7+ numbers to reach target
● Robust and regular assessment - follow policy
● Robust and regular tracking - centrally stored
● Standardisation & Moderation in line with Atlantic Academy's calendar:
    - Subject Quality Assurance (QA) pre data drop
    - HOD checks and questions deviations from previous data drop
    - Evidence to support deviations from previous grades
● Hand over meetings for teacher/group changes
● Assessment for Learning (AfL) in every lesson

Assessment and Reporting at Key Stage 3

At the start of Year 7, students will be categorised as one of three prior ability categories:
1. High Prior Ability (Greater than or equal to 110 scaled score)
2. Middle Prior Ability (Greater than or equal to 100 scaled score)
3. Low Prior Ability (Below100 scaled score)

Age Related Expectations (ARE) at Key Stage 3

Subject teams will continuously assess what students are attaining within their own subject, with respect to their subject specific ARE. We use ARE to identify what is expected of a student by a specified age or year group. In the national curriculum, there is a set standard of expectation which is defined by threshold descriptors indicating what a student should be able to do by the end of each key stage. Each subject has a bespoke ARE criteria for KS3 using the standardised academy template. Please see Appendix 1 for an example of a subject ARE (English)

Below is a table summarising how these ARE is related to the students chronological age. KS3 Band descriptors are further explained in detail in Appendix 2.

Band	Description	Typical GCSE Equivalent
DEV – Developing	Working below age-related expectations	Grades 1–3
SEC – Secure	At age-related expectations	Grade 4
STR – Strong	Above age-related expectations	Grades 5–6
ADV – Advanced	Well above ARE	Grade 7
EXC – Exceptional	Significantly above ARE	Grades 8–9

Subject teams will use summative assessments throughout a student's Key Stage 3 provision following their subject's assessment journey. Each subject team will track how each student has performed in these assessments, in relation to age related expectations. The outcomes will allow subject teams to plan and monitor bespoke academic interventions to improve a students attainment in relation to their ARE. These summative subject assessments will be quality assured, ensuring that they are fit for purpose and robustly moderated post marking to ensure the gradings are accurate.

Subject teams will use their summative assessment data for that academic year, to give a holistic subject grade for each student, when reporting their data for each Assessment Point.

Key Stage 3 Assessment Point data will generate an 'Attainment' grade for each student within each subject, which will be reported to the student and their parents/carers in relation to the subject's ARE.

Students that achieve 'exceptional', 'advanced', 'strong' or 'secure' are considered to be working in line with Atlantic Academy's and the Key Stage Age Related Expectations. Please be mindful that a child's attainment may change over time due to a number of factors. Please see Appendix 1 for an example of a subject Age Related Expectations.

Assessment and Reporting at Key Stage 4

All of our subjects at Atlantic Academy will be set as an Academy target for GCSE and vocational courses. It is an aspirational target, derived by the Fischer Family Trust (FFT), which uses national statistical data. These targets equate to a student making exceptional progress, placing them nationally within the top twenty percentile for progress, compared to children with the same Key Stage 2 outcomes. Mock Exam Grade - Mainly GCSE Subjects or Vocational where applicable:

- The level of attainment that the student achieved in their most recent mock examination.
- This is represented in a fine grade.
- Mock grades will be used to target raising achieving (RA) interventions.
- If a student has missed a mock exam they will receive an 'Ab' mark Current Grade - All Subjects:
- These grades reflect the student's most consistent level of performance at the time of reporting and are not predictions or target grades.
- This needs to be a combination of the classwork, practical tasks, homework, end of unit/topic

assessment results, low stake or knowledge retrieval test results, most recent mock exam result and other examples of assessed work including controlled assessments.
● This is represented in a fine grade.
● Current grades will be used to target RA interventions.

Projected Grade - All Subjects for Internal and Trust use only

● This is the grade that a student is currently expected to achieve at the end of the course and must be higher than the current grade.
● The projected grade is based on a teacher's professional judgement, using the following factors:
- Data and projections from previous cohorts
- The increasing level of course content/difficulty of what is still to be delivered ○ The student's previous assessment outcomes
- The student's current level of attainment
- The student's standard of classwork
- The student's standard of homework
- Evidence of independent learning and effective revision

- This is represented in a fine grade.
- Subjects are expected to make use of the 'KS2 scaled scores' and 'Atlantic 2 Year Distribution' in the table on the previous page when projecting grades.
- Projected grades will not be reported home.

The fine level grading is broken down into three categories based on how secure the grade is.

Fine Grade A Level	Fine Grade BTEC	Descriptor
B+	Merit+	Almost working at the grade above
B	Merit	Secure at this grade
B-	Merit-	Insecure at this grade

Explanation of GCSE and Vocational (e.g. BTEC/RSL) Level 2 grading:

GCSE	Vocational (e.g. BTEC/RSL)	Old GCSE Equivalent
Grade 9	-	-
Grade 8	Level 2 Distinction* (L2D*)	A*
Grade 7	Level 2 Distinction (L2D)	A
Grade 6	Level 2 Merit (L2M)	B
Grade 5	-	B/C
Grade 4	Level 2 Pass (L2P)	C
Grade 3	Level 1 Distinction (L1D)	D/E
Grade 2	Level 1 Merit (L1M)	F
Grade 1	Level 1 Pass (L1P)	G

U	U	Unclassified

Setting at KS3 and 4

Following an extensive staff consultation process and evidence based research the academy has developed the following timings and subject structure of setting across key stages 3/4 after each assessment point data drop.

Subject	**Year 7**	**Year 8**	**Year 9**	**Year 10**	**Year 11**
English	Mixed ability in tutor groups	Mixed ability groups	Mixed ability groups	Mixed ability groups	Mixed ability groups
Maths	Mixed ability in tutor groups	Sets	Sets	Sets	Sets
Science	Mixed ability in tutor groups	Sets	Sets	Sets	Sets
Humanities	Mixed ability in tutor groups	Mixed ability in tutor groups	Mixed ability not in tutor groups	Mixed ability groups	Mixed ability groups
MFL	Mixed ability in tutor groups	Mixed ability in tutor groups	Mixed ability not in tutor groups	Mixed ability groups	Mixed ability groups
Core PE	Mixed ability not in tutor groups	Mixed ability in tutor groups	Mixed ability not in tutor groups	Mixed ability groups	Mixed ability groups

All other subjects will be taught in mixed ability groups.

Set changes will only be authorised during the dates set out in the Atlantic calendar post assessment point data drop. Middle leaders must meet the setting deadline set. Any set change requests from subject middle leaders or HOH between the dates set, must be authorised by the Assistant Principal responsible for assessment.

Accountability

KS4 Subject Progress Reviews on the Subject Improvement Plan (SIP) are completed after each Assessment Point and the Summer Public Examinations. The system is designed to direct the maximum support to the areas of greatest need, to ensure that all students in each year group make rapid progress, key students are targeted for academic/pastoral intervention and that all teachers are supported to facilitate this.

Whole Academy Accountability

- These reviews will form a part of the whole academy Self Evaluation (SEF) judgement(s). The SIP will draw together trends across the years/subject, looking at subject and specific group variation.

- This forms part of our whole academy monitoring and quality assurance systems. Areas of additional support and training will be identified and become actions of the Academy Improvement Plan (AIP).

Subject Accountability

- Subject analysis of the AP1 & AP2 report cycle will take place for each year group as calendared on our Atlantic Academy Assessment Calendar, using the Assessment Point Subject Progress Review Proforma.
- It will focus upon variation in the progress of groups, classes, teachers and areas of the curriculum.
- This analysis will also identify those students who are persistently underachieving in a subject area.
- Findings will inform the subject SEF judgements and Subject Improvement Plan (SIP), with updated actions relating to the curriculum; staff training and student's needs.

Heads of School Accountability

- Each Head of School will analyse their cohorts AP1 & AP2 data, as calendared on our Atlantic Academy Assessment Calendar.
- It will focus upon variation in the progress of individuals and groups of students across subjects and will inform pastoral interventions.
- Findings will inform the Head of School Academic SEF judgements and AIP objectives.

Sources of Guidance

- https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/assessing-and-monitoring-pupil-progress/developing-whole-school-assessment/
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/764174/NFER_AWL_report.pd

Appendix 1 – Atlantic Academy National Age Related Expectations (ARE) - English

English Curriculum

EYFS-KS2

	Spoken Language	Reading- Word Reading	Reading Comprehension	Writing transcription	Writing - composition
EYFS	Listen attentively in a range of situations. Respond appropriately to what they hear with relevant questions or comments. Hold back-and-forth conversations and take turns. Use recently introduced vocabulary during discussions. Articulate thoughts in well-formed sentences. Express ideas using past, present and future forms appropriately. Retell stories and narratives using their own words and story	Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs. Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by blending sounds. Read aloud simple sentences and books that match their phonic knowledge. Begin to recognise some common exception words (e.g. *the*, *to*, *go*). Understand the concept of a word and track print from left to right.	Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives in their own words. Anticipate key events in stories. Use recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems. Answer simple questions about what they've heard or read. Begin to infer meaning from illustrations, expressions, and context. Engage in storytime	Write recognisable letters, most correctly formed. Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with letters. Use some known common exception words (e.g. *the*, *to*, *go*). Begin to form lowercase and capital letters correctly. Hold a pencil effectively using the pincer grip. Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.	Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others. Use talk to organise, sequence, and clarify thinking, ideas, feelings, and events. Use some key features of narrative in their writing (e.g. characters, settings). Re-read what they have written to check that it makes sense. Begin to compose by saying out loud what they are going to write.

	language. Use conjunctions (e.g. and, because) to explain thoughts.		and show an interest in books.		
Y1	Listen and respond appropriately to others. Ask relevant questions to extend understanding. Use spoken language to develop understanding through imagining and exploring ideas. Speak audibly and fluently with an increasing command of Standard English. Begin to participate in role play and simple performances. Describe events or experiences using complete sentences. Take turns when speaking in discussions.	Apply phonic knowledge and skills as the route to decode words. Respond speedily with the correct sound to graphemes (for all 40+ phonemes). Read accurately by blending sounds in unfamiliar words. Read common exception words (e.g. *said*, *are*, *was*). Read words containing taught GPCs (grapheme-phoneme correspondences) and –s, –es, –ing, –ed, –er, –est endings. Read words with contractions (e.g. *I'm*, *we'll*) and understand the apostrophe. Read aloud accurately books that are	Listen to and discuss a wide range of poems, stories and non-fiction at a level beyond independent reading. Link what they hear or read to their own experiences. Become very familiar with key stories, including fairy stories and traditional tales. Recognise and join in with predictable phrases. Learn to appreciate rhymes and poems and recite some by heart. Discuss word meanings, linking new meanings to those already known. Check that the text makes sense and correct inaccurate reading.	**Spelling** Spell words containing each of the 40+ phonemes already taught. Spell common exception words (*the*, *said*, *you*, *they*). Spell days of the week. Name the letters of the alphabet in order. Use letter names to distinguish between alternative spellings of the same sound. Use prefixes and suffixes: *–s, –es, –ing, –ed, –er, –est*. Apply simple spelling rules and guidance from Year 1. Write from memory simple dictated sentences including GPCs and common exception words.	Say out loud what they are going to write about. Compose a sentence orally before writing it. Sequence sentences to form short narratives. Re-read what they have written to check it makes sense. Discuss what they have written with the teacher or other pupils. Read aloud their writing clearly enough to be heard by peers and adults.

		consistent with their developing phonic knowledge. Re-read books to build fluency and confidence.	Make simple inferences (e.g. how a character is feeling) based on what is said and done. Predict what might happen next based on what has been read.	**Handwriting:** Sit correctly and hold a pencil comfortably and correctly. Begin to form lowercase letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place. Form capital letters and digits 0–9. Understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (e.g. letters formed in similar ways).	
Y2	Sustain attention and contribute ideas during discussions. Ask questions to clarify understanding. Retell stories or recount events coherently. Build on what others have said and stay on topic. Use expanded noun phrases and a	Continue to apply phonic knowledge and skills to decode words until secure. Read accurately by blending sounds in words, especially those with common suffixes. Read common exception words (including *door*, *floor*, *because*, etc.). Read most words	Listen to, discuss and express views about a wide range of texts, including contemporary and classic poetry, stories and non-fiction. Discuss the sequence of events in books and how items of information are related. Become increasingly familiar with and retell a wider range of	**Spelling:** Segment spoken words into phonemes and represent these with graphemes. Learn new ways of spelling phonemes for which one or more spellings are already known. Learn to spell common exception words (e.g. *because*, *beautiful*, *every*).	Develop positive attitudes towards writing. Write narratives about personal experiences and those of others (real and fictional). Write for different purposes (e.g. instructions, reports, letters). Plan or say out loud what they are going

	growing range of conjunctions. Begin to adapt talk for different purposes (e.g. storytelling vs. explanation). Speak with increasing confidence in group and class discussions.	quickly and accurately, without overt sounding and blending. Read aloud books closely matched to improving phonic knowledge, sounding out unfamiliar words automatically. Re-read books to build fluency, confidence, and understanding.	stories, including traditional tales. Recognise simple recurring literary language in stories and poetry. Discuss favourite words and phrases. Continue to build vocabulary and understanding through discussion. Make inferences on the basis of what is said and done. Answer and ask questions about texts. Predict what might happen from the details given. Participate in discussion about books, taking turns and listening to what others say.	Spell more words with contracted forms (*can't*, *won't*). Use the possessive apostrophe (singular nouns) (*the girl's book*). Add suffixes to spell longer words (*–ment, –ness, –ful, –less, –ly*). Apply spelling rules and patterns taught so far. **Handwriting:** Form lowercase letters of the correct size relative to one another. Start using some diagonal and horizontal strokes to join letters. Write capital letters and digits of the correct size and orientation. Use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.	to write about. Write down ideas/key words, including new vocabulary. Encapsulate what they want to say, sentence by sentence. Make simple additions, revisions and corrections to their own writing. Proof-read to check for errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation. Read aloud what they have written with appropriate intonation.
Y3	Articulate and justify	Apply growing	Develop positive	**Spelling:**	Plan writing by

	answers, arguments, and opinions. Maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations. Use appropriate vocabulary for different subjects and topics. Begin to use formal language in some contexts. Present ideas and information in logical sequence. Perform poems and play scripts using tone and intonation. Demonstrate understanding through relevant responses.	knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes to read aloud and understand the meaning of new words (e.g. *dis–*, *mis–*, *in–*, *–ly*). Read further exception words, noting the unusual correspondences between spelling and sound. Maintain fluency in reading longer words and texts. Use dictionaries to check the meaning and pronunciation of unfamiliar words.	attitudes to reading and understanding of texts. Read a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks. Use dictionaries to check the meaning of unfamiliar words. Identify themes and conventions in a wide range of books. Perform poems and play scripts aloud, showing understanding through intonation and expression. Discuss words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination. Recognise different forms of poetry. Check that the text makes sense and ask questions to improve understanding. Draw inferences (e.g. characters' feelings,	Use further prefixes and suffixes (*dis–, mis–, re–, –ation, –ous*). Spell words with more complex phonemes and spelling rules (e.g. *possess*, *famous*, *occasionally*). Use the first two or three letters of a word to check spelling in a dictionary. Write from memory simple sentences dictated by the teacher including words from statutory word lists. Learn to spell homophones and commonly confused words (*there/their/they're*). **Handwriting:** Use joined handwriting consistently. Ensure writing is legible and maintains consistent spacing. Increase the speed and fluency of joined	discussing the structure, vocabulary, and grammar of similar writing. Discuss and record ideas. Draft and write by organising paragraphs around a theme. In narratives, create settings, characters, and plot. In non-fiction, use organisational devices (e.g. headings, subheadings). Evaluate and edit by: ● assessing the effectiveness of their own and others' writing, ● proposing changes to grammar and vocabulary. Proof-read for spelling and punctuation errors. Read aloud their writing using

			thoughts, motives) and justify with evidence. Predict what might happen from details stated and implied. Identify main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph and summarise. Identify how language, structure, and presentation contribute to meaning.	handwriting. Understand which letters are best left unjoined.	appropriate intonation and volume.
Y4	Use Standard English confidently in formal situations. Ask relevant questions to extend and build on ideas. Use spoken language to develop and organise thinking clearly. Participate in debates or discussions, offering reasoned opinions. Show awareness of the listener by	Apply growing knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes to read aloud and understand the meaning of new words (e.g. *dis–*, *mis–*, *in–*, *–ly*). Read further exception words, noting the unusual correspondences between spelling and sound. Maintain fluency in reading longer words and texts.	Develop positive attitudes to reading and understanding of texts. Read a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks. Use dictionaries to check the meaning of unfamiliar words. Identify themes and conventions in a wide range of books. Perform poems and	**Spelling:** Use further prefixes and suffixes (*dis–, mis–, re–, –ation, –ous*). Spell words with more complex phonemes and spelling rules (e.g. *possess*, *famous*, *occasionally*). Use the first two or three letters of a word to check spelling in a dictionary. Write from memory simple sentences dictated by the	Plan writing by discussing the structure, vocabulary, and grammar of similar writing. Discuss and record ideas. Draft and write by organising paragraphs around a theme. In narratives, create settings, characters, and plot. In non-fiction, use organisational devices (e.g. headings,

	adapting tone, pace, and vocabulary. Prepare and deliver short presentations or speeches. Begin to evaluate and respond constructively to others' ideas.	Use dictionaries to check the meaning and pronunciation of unfamiliar words.	play scripts aloud, showing understanding through intonation and expression. Discuss words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination. Recognise different forms of poetry. Check that the text makes sense and ask questions to improve understanding. Draw inferences (e.g. characters' feelings, thoughts, motives) and justify with evidence. Predict what might happen from details stated and implied. Identify main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph and summarise. Identify how language, structure, and presentation contribute to meaning.	teacher including words from statutory word lists. Learn to spell homophones and commonly confused words (*there/their/they're*). **Handwriting:** Use joined handwriting consistently. Ensure writing is legible and maintains consistent spacing. Increase the speed and fluency of joined handwriting. Understand which letters are best left unjoined.	subheadings). Evaluate and edit by: ● assessing the effectiveness of their own and others' writing, ● proposing changes to grammar and vocabulary. Proof-read for spelling and punctuation errors. Read aloud their writing using appropriate intonation and volume.

Y5	Speak confidently and fluently in a range of contexts. Select and use appropriate vocabulary and grammar. Plan and deliver formal presentations, using notes to support. Take part in debates, using persuasive language and structured arguments. Use appropriate register depending on audience and purpose. Respond to questions with elaboration and evidence. Reflect on and improve own spoken contributions.	Apply knowledge of morphology and etymology to read and understand new words. Read aloud and silently with fluency and confidence. Use a range of strategies to decode unfamiliar words in more complex texts. Read increasingly challenging texts that include archaic language, technical vocabulary, and abstract concepts. Read and understand words with silent letters, unusual spelling-sound correspondences, and irregular words.	Read and enjoy a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference materials. Recommend books to peers, giving reasons for choices. Identify and discuss themes and conventions across a wide range of texts. Learn and recite poetry by heart. Make comparisons within and across books. Understand figurative language and its impact (metaphors, similes, personification). Summarise the main ideas from more than one paragraph, identifying key details. Draw inferences and justify with evidence from the text. Predict what might happen from both stated and implied	**Spelling:** Use further prefixes and suffixes and understand the guidance for adding them (*–able, –ible, –ation, –sion*). Spell some words with 'silent' letters (e.g. *knight*, *island*). Continue to distinguish between homophones and commonly confused words (*affect/effect*, *advice/advise*). Use knowledge of morphology and etymology in spelling. Use dictionaries and thesauruses to check and explore spellings. Accurately spell all statutory words from Years 5/6 word lists. **Handwriting:** Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed. Choose whether or not to join specific letters depending on the task.	Plan writing by: ● identifying audience and purpose, ● noting and developing ideas, ● drawing on reading and research. Draft and write by: ● selecting appropriate grammar and vocabulary, ● describing settings, characters and atmosphere, ● integrating dialogue to advance action. Use a wide range of devices to build cohesion (e.g. adverbials, pronouns). Use organisational features in non-fiction texts (e.g. bullet

			information. Distinguish between fact and opinion. Retrieve, record and present information from non-fiction texts. Discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, to impact the reader. Participate in discussions, building on their own and others' ideas.	Maintain a personal style that is fluent and accurate. Ensure handwriting is suitable for a range of tasks and audiences.	points, underlining). Evaluate and edit by: ● proposing changes to enhance effect and clarify meaning, ● ensuring consistent tense and viewpoint. Ensure correct subject–verb agreement. Proof-read for spelling and punctuation. Perform their own compositions using appropriate intonation, volume, and movement.
Y6	Demonstrate mastery of Standard English in formal contexts. Express ideas precisely and effectively using a wide range of vocabulary.	Apply knowledge of morphology and etymology to read and understand new words. Read aloud and silently with fluency and confidence.	Read and enjoy a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference materials. Recommend books to peers, giving reasons for choices.	**Spelling:** Use further prefixes and suffixes and understand the guidance for adding them (*–able, –ible, –ation, –sion*). Spell some words with 'silent' letters	Plan writing by: ● identifying audience and purpose, ● noting and developing ideas,

	Lead discussions, building on and challenging the ideas of others. Deliver well-structured formal presentations with awareness of audience. Use intonation, tone, volume, and gestures to enhance meaning. Reflect critically on spoken performances and discussions. Participate in debates using logic and rhetorical techniques.	Use a range of strategies to decode unfamiliar words in more complex texts. Read increasingly challenging texts that include archaic language, technical vocabulary, and abstract concepts. Read and understand words with silent letters, unusual spelling-sound correspondences, and irregular words.	Identify and discuss themes and conventions across a wide range of texts. Learn and recite poetry by heart. Make comparisons within and across books. Understand figurative language and its impact (metaphors, similes, personification). Summarise the main ideas from more than one paragraph, identifying key details. Draw inferences and justify with evidence from the text. Predict what might happen from both stated and implied information. Distinguish between fact and opinion. Retrieve, record and present information from non-fiction texts.	(e.g. *knight*, *island*). Continue to distinguish between homophones and commonly confused words (*affect/effect*, *advice/advise*). Use knowledge of morphology and etymology in spelling. Use dictionaries and thesauruses to check and explore spellings. Accurately spell all statutory words from Years 5/6 word lists. **Handwriting:** Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed. Choose whether or not to join specific letters depending on the task. Maintain a personal style that is fluent and accurate. Ensure handwriting is suitable for a range of tasks and audiences.	● drawing on reading and research. Draft and write by: ● selecting appropriate grammar and vocabulary, ● describing settings, characters and atmosphere, ● integrating dialogue to advance action. Use a wide range of devices to build cohesion (e.g. adverbials, pronouns). Use organisational features in non-fiction texts (e.g. bullet points, underlining). Evaluate and edit by: ● proposing changes to enhance effect and clarify meaning,

			Discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, to impact the reader. Participate in discussions, building on their own and others' ideas.		• ensuring consistent tense and viewpoint. Ensure correct subject–verb agreement. Proof-read for spelling and punctuation. Perform their own compositions using appropriate intonation, volume, and movement.

Appendix 2 - KS3 Grade band descriptors

Band	GCSE Equivalent	Age-Related Expectations (ARE)	In Practice	Teaching Strategies
DEV – Developing	Grades 1–3	Working below age-related expectations. Students are significantly behind the expected level for their year group. They are not yet secure in core knowledge and skills and require substantial support to access the curriculum.	Difficulty recalling or applying key knowledge. Gaps in fluency and accuracy. Strong reliance on teacher scaffolding. Progress is often inconsistent.	Prioritise core knowledge (facts, vocabulary, key methods). Use short, frequent retrieval tasks. Model tasks in small steps. Provide clear scaffolds, sentence starters and worked examples. Reinforce through repetition and overlearning. Offer targeted small-group or one-to-one support.
SEC – Secure	Grade 4	Working broadly at age-related expectations. Students are generally on track to access the GCSE curriculum and could achieve a Grade 4, though their understanding is not yet consistently deep or transferable.	Understands most key ideas in familiar contexts. Accuracy is developing but not always sustained in more challenging tasks. Responses tend to be correct but basic.	Provide guided practice in applying skills to unfamiliar problems. Use questioning to probe deeper understanding (why/how). Encourage students to explain reasoning verbally and in writing. Reduce scaffolds gradually to build independence. Monitor progress closely to avoid regression.
STR – Strong	Grades 5–6	Working above age-related expectations. Students demonstrate a secure grasp of the KS3 curriculum and are progressing strongly towards higher outcomes at GCSE.	Work is accurate and consistent. Able to link knowledge across topics. Shows resilience in more complex tasks. Can produce extended responses with some analysis.	Provide multi-step problem-solving and reasoning tasks. Introduce GCSE-style questions early. Offer opportunities for independent application (projects, peer teaching). Use feedback to refine precision and sophistication in responses.
ADV – Advanced	Grade 7	Working well above age-related expectations. Students consistently exceed curriculum requirements and demonstrate high levels of depth and independence.	Secure grasp of all core and extended content. Confidently applies knowledge to new material. Evaluates and critiques ideas. Written and verbal reasoning are precise and clear.	Use higher-order questioning (evaluate, critique, compare). Provide enrichment tasks such as academic articles, extended reading or complex problems. Encourage independent inquiry projects and presentations. Promote metacognitive reflection on strategies used. Connect learning to real-world contexts.
EXC – Exceptional	Grades 8–9	Working significantly above age-related expectations. Performance indicates mastery well beyond KS3, with skills already aligned to the highest GCSE standards.	Produces original, detailed and accurate work. Solves complex, unfamiliar problems independently. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking. Explains reasoning with nuance and sophistication.	Set open-ended investigations with multiple pathways to success. Provide bridging tasks that prepare for KS4 study. Encourage student-led activities (seminars, question design, peer teaching). Promote participation in external competitions, enrichment activities or challenges.