

**CURRICULUM, LEARNING
& TEACHING POLICY**



BOWER PARK
ACADEMY

September 2023

Rationale

At Bower Park Academy, our vision is to strive for excellence in order to transform the life chances of all. We provide a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum which meets the needs of, and develops, every student into a well-rounded, valued citizen who is ready and equipped for the future world. Our curriculum underpins all that we do; it is delivered by subject specialists, and aims to increase autonomy, promote independent learning and develop knowledge, curiosity, interests and skills.

Our aim is to minimize gaps in understanding for all groups of learners in the academy, through quality-first teaching, enabling them to become active citizens of a democratic society by developing their knowledge of history, the world, science, and the arts. To improve the attainment and progress of all students, our curriculum is implemented to ensure students will know more, remember more and be able to do more, as a consequence of the teaching they experience and the environment in which they learn.

This policy is supported by 4 appendices:

1. Curriculum Plan 2022/23;
2. Presentation of Learning Guidance;
3. Home Learning Guidance;
4. Assessment, Recording and Reporting Guidance.

Core Principles:

Curriculum

Our curriculum will:

- Ensure that all students have access to a broad, balanced, challenging and knowledge-rich education, matched to individual needs.
- Provide a foundation that reflects the importance of English, maths and the Ebacc, including a modern foreign language.
- Recognise the value of creative and practical subjects.
- Provide a curriculum that promotes students' personal, social and health education, and British values.
- Ensure that all students understand the purpose of their learning, and can confidently articulate this.
- Provide the majority of students with access to an academic education that culminates in a full set of GCSEs, whilst providing meaningful alternatives for those students who are unable to access GCSE.

Teaching and Learning

Our lessons will:

- Begin with a curriculum slide that articulates the purpose of the lesson
- Provide students with opportunities to develop a substantive knowledge base enhanced by the development of skills and creativity.
- Use strategies that enable students to remember and apply prior learning and learning in other subjects.

- Encourage students to develop subject-specific literacy and vocabulary, and use this effectively (WOW words).
- Have well-planned schemes of work that build on prior learning and provide the structure for future teaching and learning.
- Provide suitable levels of challenge for students of all abilities.
- Encourage students to learn independently.
- Be signposted with the headings: retrieval, independent learning and reflection.
- Include a range of questioning techniques to challenge all learners and encourage that knowledge learned is transformed.

Assessment

To ensure that assessment directly impacts on student outcomes, we will:

- Accurately measure what a student knows and can do, through planning a range of formative assessment strategies into lessons.
- Teach our students how to edit, self-assess and improve their own work (using a purple pen).
- Regularly provide feedback through verbal, written, live marking and whole-class sampling to outline what students need to do and enables them to improve.
- Identify key gaps in learning and conceptual understanding to inform future teaching.
- Provide meaningful information for students, parents, caregivers and subject leaders to ensure that students make good progress.
- Record and monitor the attainment being made by for each student in each subject, and use this data to inform curriculum planning.

Teachers

Curriculum:

- Have well-developed subject knowledge that enables them to adapt teaching to meet different student needs in the classroom
- Know the challenging aspects of each scheme of learning and how they can be delivered effectively
- Use evidence of students' learning to feed into the planning and adaptation of schemes of learning
- Where appropriate, draw links between schemes of learning and the bigger picture, for example: local issues, careers, current affairs, SMSC and British values
- Contribute to the development of schemes of learning
- Know how each scheme of learning can be used to promote literacy and numeracy

Teaching & Learning:

- Skilfully deliver and adapt planned sequences of lessons (learning schemes) to enable all learners to acquire and develop subject-specific knowledge
- Make it clear to students what they are learning and what they need to know/do, through use of the curriculum slide
- Use the students' context and prior learning to identify and address gaps in knowledge
- Use spacing and interleaving to regularly revisit prior learning. Boost long-term memory of key subject knowledge and improve retrieval and low-stakes testing
- Enable students to connect new knowledge with existing knowledge
- Maintain and model high expectations
- Provide a suitable level of challenge through what is taught
- Use questioning to develop and deepen students' subject knowledge and vocabulary
- Develop students' learning habits and learning skills
- Encourage students to have high levels of presentation and to use sub-headings to organize their work
- Encourage students to reflect on their learning through a reflective and metacognitive plenary
- Regularly set and mark homework in line with guidance provided
- Effectively manage each class
- Promote and follow the Bower Park 'Lesson Principles'

Assessment:

- Regularly mark students' work for understanding and accuracy
- Regularly provide feedback on what has been done well, and suggest possible improvements or next steps
- Provide opportunities for students to respond to feedback
- Check and encourage effective organisation and presentation of work
- Carry out and mark key assessment tasks identified in schemes of learning
- Review assessments to identify what students know and can do, and act on what they need to improve
- Make sure students are addressing gaps in their learning
- Mark internal assessments and external exam components in line with published deadlines
- Praise academic achievement at the end of every lesson
- Record marks in SIMs as required and complete reports in line with published deadlines

Middle Leaders

Curriculum:

- Lead the design of learning schemes that are subject-specific, knowledge-rich and accessible to all
- Ensure that learning schemes build a foundation of knowledge and skills at each key stage which prepares students for further study
- Know and develop the strengths and weaknesses of their team in relation to subject knowledge and pedagogy
- Lead the development of teachers, subject knowledge and pedagogy, and deploy them effectively
- Ensure that there are opportunities to link subject-specific content with broader learning, for example, British values and SMSC
- Provide courses that are matched to student needs and future destinations
- Identify links between subject knowledge/skills and relevant career opportunities
- Ensure learning overviews are completed and up to date for every scheme of learning
- Update learning journeys and curriculum booklets in line with curriculum sequencing

Teaching & Learning:

- Quality assure teaching and learning by carrying out observations, learning walks, learning reviews and student interviews
- Take steps to address areas in need of further development
- Help teachers develop up-to-date subject knowledge and pedagogy, and use department time to embed academy learning priorities
- Ensure that teachers are supported and have access to the required resources
- Work with lead practitioners to guide, support and challenge as required
- Ensure that prior assessment data is used in the planning and delivery of learning
- Ensure that reading ages, pupil premium and SEND data is used to inform seating plans
- Monitor the setting and effectiveness of homework
- Use knowledge of prior teaching to effectively sequence learning, removing unnecessary repetition and addressing gaps in knowledge
- Use subject-specific pedagogy and best practice to review teaching and learning

Assessment:

- Ensure that each scheme of learning includes suitable assessment to measure the impact on learning
- Ensure that assessments are scheduled, to measure student progress and teacher workload
- Moderate assessments to ensure that teachers complete assessments accurately and in line with the schemes of learning
- Quality assure teachers' marking and feedback
- Use key assessments to identify areas and/or key cohorts for improvement, and plan to how address these accordingly
- Be aware of, and act upon, changes to exam requirements and regulations, ensuring that teachers are doing the same
- Use research to measure the best types of assessments to maximise students' progress
- Review schemes of learning in the light of assessment data

Senior Leaders

Curriculum:

- Oversee the breadth and balance of the whole curriculum
- Ensure that there are opportunities to link subject-specific content with broader learning, for example, British values and citizenship
- Work alongside middle leaders to shape the curriculum and its delivery, according to our context and student need
- Be aware of, and respond to, local and national changes and developments, communicating these to relevant stakeholders
- Work in conjunction with ELAT colleagues, local schools and relevant national bodies
- When planning the school curriculum, take account of the school calendar and staff workload
- Check that curriculum documents are aligned and kept up to date when changes are made

Teaching & Learning:

- Define and promote the school's teaching and learning priorities, including principles for sequenced sets of lessons
- Quality assure teaching and learning
- Provide opportunities for teachers to work individually and collaboratively to develop aspects of subject pedagogy
- Manage colleagues' performance, providing support and challenge
- Provide regular and relevant professional development opportunities

Assessment:

- Regularly review key assessment data with HODs/HOFs to ensure the correct areas/cohorts are being identified and focused upon
- Use assessment data, including marking and feedback, to quality assure learning and progress
- Cross-reference areas for improvement with assessment data
- Be aware of key performance measures and know how the areas they line manage impact upon these
- Encourage collaborative working within departments, across departments and across the trust
- Ensure that staff know and understand the principles of assessment and feedback

Students

Curriculum:

- Use the learning journey to understand what they are learning and why
- Be able to make links between lessons and schemes of learning
- Be able to make informed choices about their future at key points in their education
- Appreciate the need for, and benefits of following, a broad and balanced programme of study for as long as possible
- Further develop their skills and interests by participating in extra-curricular activities

Teaching & Learning:

- Approach each lesson with a positive frame of mind and be ready and equipped to learn
- Be inquisitive, confident and prepared to learn through trial and error
- Develop a resilient approach to learning; “If I can’t do it yet, I will be able to in the future”
- Play an active role in learning, developing self-discipline and independence, in order to get the most out of every lesson
- Organise work neatly and take pride in the presentation of work
- Use student reflections as a tool for communicating with the class teacher
- When absent from a lesson, be proactive in addressing gaps in learning
- Complete homework to consolidate knowledge or prepare for new learning

Assessment:

- Link prior learning to current learning, and know what they are trying to learn
- Respond positively to test results and feedback, acting upon it to improve learning. For example, revisiting, redrafting or improving work.
- See assessment as an opportunity to show what they have learnt and can do
- Maximise opportunities to edit and improve their work
- Be proactive in addressing gaps in their knowledge and skills

Governors

Curriculum:

- Oversee and agree the curriculum strategy, understanding its links to the school ethos and student outcomes
- Question leaders about the strategic intent of the curriculum in relation to the local context of the school
- Support the work of the school
- Ensure that the curriculum and relevant strategic decisions are financially prudent

Teaching & Learning:

- Hold leaders to account relating to the performance of teachers in the classroom, including appraisal
- Ensure that there is a clear vision and strategy to deliver quality-first teaching
- Review evidence that quality-first teaching is being achieved and having the desired impact

Assessment:

- Agree the strategic intent and principles for assessment and reporting
- Know the strengths and weaknesses of the school, as well as what strategic plans are in place, in relation to GCSE outcomes and the IDSR
- Use assessment data to hold leaders to account in relation to the impact of quality-first teaching on student outcomes

Lesson Principles

At Bower Park Academy, we believe that all our teachers can excel in the classroom, and we expect our teaching staff to be reflective practitioners who engage with opportunities to develop their practice and work collaboratively to improve the practice of others. To aid this process, we have identified six '**Bower Park Lesson Principles**' that we believe underpin excellent teaching and that we expect our teachers to think about when delivering their subject-level curricula. These lesson principles will typically be seen over a period of great teaching rather than in every individual lesson and include key thinking around subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge (including Rosenshine) and an understanding of how we can best ensure that our learners know more, remember more and are able to do more. Our departments are given the freedom to deliver these core principles in the best way for their context, but they will always link directly to the learning of our students.

Our principles are:

- 1. Explicit Teaching: Lessons are driven by a challenge question, which sits within a coherent sequence of learning**, so that lessons build depth, breadth and accuracy in knowledge and its application.
- 2. Memory and Feedback: Lessons draw on subject-specific and wider approaches to teaching, including memory and retention**, so that learning time is maximised, and students can unlock and apply prior learning.
- 3. Knowledge and Practice: Lessons include well-planned explanations, modelling and independent practice (knowledge, understanding, application)**, so that students know more, remember more and can do more.
- 4. Adjusted Learning: Lessons consider every learner, every lesson**, so that all students have high expectations of what they can achieve, and are supported in doing so.
- 5. Curriculum: Lessons connect learning to the wider curriculum through literacy, oracy, numeracy, SMSC and careers**, so that learning is strengthened and supported by wider learning goals and students' schemata are developed.
- 6. Assessment: Lessons use approaches to assessment to check the understanding of all students and respond appropriately**, so that students can always move forward in their learning.

Appendix One

Curriculum Plan 2023/24

Subject	Year				
	7	8	9	10	11
	BOWEPAR	BOWEPAR	BOWEPAR	10XYZ	11XY
English	7	7	7	9	9
Maths	7	7	7	9	9
Science	7	7	7	9	9
Food Tech/DT rotation	3	3	3		
Computing	2	2	2		
CPSHE	2	2	2	1	1
Language French	4	4	4		
Art	2	2	2		
Drama	2	2	2		
Music	2	2	2		
Geography	3	3	3		
History	3	3	3		
RE	2	2	2		
PE (core)	4	4	4	2	2
GCSE Option A				5	5
GCSE Option B				5	5
GCSE Option C				5	5
GCSE Option D				5	5
Total					
	50	50	50	50	50

Banding and Setting

- KS3: Classes are mixed ability apart from mathematics in Year 7 and 8.
- Year 9: Classes are set across two bands in English, mathematics and science.
- KS4: Classes are set across two bands. These have set classes. Options classes are mixed ability.

GCSE

- Option subjects include art, media studies, computer science, design and technology, food technology, drama, French, geography, history, music, physical education, religious studies, sociology.
- Vocational subjects include health and social care, creative production, child development, construction, sports studies and dance.

Appendix Two

Bower Park Academy Presentation of Learning Guidance

We value excellence at Bower Park Academy and strive to instill in our students a sense of pride and passion in everything they do. The purpose of this guidance is to ensure a consistently high standard of presentation across the whole school by establishing and maintaining high expectations. It creates clear and consistent guidelines for the presentation of students' learning which all students and staff follow. Application of this guidance is intended to apply to the vast majority of children in our school, however, exceptions will be made on an individual basis according to need.

Staff will ensure that presentation is actively taught and promoted. It should be explicitly spoken about with students.

The following guidelines should be used to support the excellent presentation of learning:

- Written work should be completed using black or blue ink.
- All drawings, diagrams and tables should be done using a pencil.
- Corrections and self-assessment should be completed using a purple pen.
- Dates, titles and challenge questions must be written out in full and underlined using a ruler.
- Errors should be crossed out with a single line, using a ruler.
- Students should be encouraged to take responsibility for their exercise books, and should keep them clean, tidy and safe.
- Sub-headings should be used to signpost retrieval practice, independent work and reflections
- We encourage students to use plastic wallets or similar to store exercise books, in order to protect them whilst in school bags and from inclement weather.
- No doodling or graffiti is permitted in any school book, including rough books and student planners.
- When responding to verbal, written, peer feedback or self-reflection, students should respond using purple pen.
- Loose-leaf work should be glued into exercise books.
- Some subjects may have additional expectations relating to the nature of the learning.

Appendix Three

Home Learning Guidance Guiding

Principles:

- 1.** The principles of homework mirror the Bower Park Lesson Principles. The tasks set may help students prepare for or research new learning, consolidate current learning or revise for an assessment. It might foster confidence through independent practice or connect learning to the wider curriculum. Teachers should consider every learner, every lesson, so that homework is supportive, challenging but achievable. Consideration must be given to the learning needs of individual students.
- 2.** Homework should have a clear purpose which is understood by all. It should focus on acquisition, consolidation or expansion of knowledge. It should help students know more, remember more and be able to do more and allow independent practice.
- 3.** Homework should be set regularly and recorded on Edulink. This may vary depending on the number of lessons allocated to each subject per week. 'Time-filler' homework should be avoided.
- 4.** Homework should consider the resources students have access to outside school, and whether they have the knowledge to complete the homework successfully.
- 5.** Rarely should homework be set for completion by the next day.
- 6.** It should be clear how homework will be used, and whether it is to be written or verbal.

Appendix Four

Assessment, Recording & Reporting Guidance

At Key Stage 3, results of assessments, formative feedback and improvement targets are given to students, in line with the curriculum journey for each subject. Progress is reported to parents twice per year (mid- and end-of-year reports). Each year group will also be offered at least one progress evening, where parents or carers can meet teachers to discuss their child's progress in lessons. In addition, where students in KS3 complete GL assessments, students will receive a detailed report of their child's strengths and weakness in the core subjects.

In order to improve the quality of KS3 assessment, we use the RIVER principle to guide what successful assessment looks like:

- A. Reliability** of assessment (short and long term) is increased through better questions, both external sourced and internally created.
- B. Impact** of assessments (short and long term) is quick, students understand what they need to do next, and parents know how to support learning at home.
- C. Validity** of assessments is (short and long term) increased through department moderation of assessment outcomes, feed-forward stretching to include all year groups, and analysis of the actual assessment through CPD.
- D. Efficiency** of assessments (short and long term) is increased by using challenging multiple-choice assessment, both as low-stakes testing and within long-term assessment.
- E. Relevance** of assessment (short and long term) is increased by making assessment cumulative. Assessments should support the curriculum delivery and be mindful of cognitive science by including spaced practice and retrieval.

This system has the intention of:

- Linking progress in learning specifically to the key points of the curriculum in each subject.
- Providing more detailed information about the learning taking place as opposed to a numerical grade showing current attainment.

Heads of department have a responsibility, supported by members of the SLT, to ensure that effective use of assessment is being used by teachers, and that relevant tracking, curriculum adjustments and, where necessary, both in-class and out-of-class intervention is taking place as a result of the assessments they carry out. Summative assessments are carried out at the end of each scheme of learning, but should be cumulative in nature. Following the assessments, departments should reflect on the curriculum changes that need to be made, and update their retrieval calendar to cover key content.

Low-stakes testing will be used to develop memory of key knowledge, and formative feedback will take place more frequently, depending upon the frequency of lessons for that subject. We would expect this to be every two weeks for a core subject and every four weeks for other subjects (or sooner).

At Key Stage 4, progress is reported twice per year, and gives parents a numerical GCSE grade matched against an estimated grade. The estimate used for students is the FFT 20 estimate based upon their KS2 attainment. These are revised during the key stage, in the light of subsequent GCSE cycles. See the sample report and frequently asked questions at the end of this section for more information.

In addition to progress information, the reports at both key stages also includes information relating to effort. Effort grades are awarded A (always), U (usually), S (sometimes) and R (rarely).

An example of the BPA report is shown at the end of this section.

Marking frequency

In each half-term, teachers should ensure that each student book (practical subjects may use Teams) has:

- 1 piece of work which has **green pen** diagnostic teacher marking and **purple pen** student reflection.
- 1 piece of work which has WCF with **purple pen** student reflection.

In each half-term, core teachers should ensure that each student book has:

- 1 piece of work which has **green pen** diagnostic teacher marking and **purple pen** student reflection.
- 1 piece of work which has WCF with **purple pen** student reflection.
- 1 additional piece of work which has diagnostic teacher marking OR WCF

Diagnostic marking

Work should be marked using **green pen** and with feedback comments which are:

- Meaningful -Are the comments moving students' learning forward? Avoid- 'well done', 'excellent' or ticking work with no comments. Instead, draw attention to misconceptions, SPaG errors or areas of strength linked to marking criteria.
- Manageable-Can students act on your feedback during the time you have planned for feedback/reflection? Don't write a huge paragraph in each book, and, instead, keep your feedback focused and specific.
- Motivating -The purpose of marking should be to help to motivate students to progress. This can be delivered in a range of ways, including short, challenging comments or questions.

Marking examples - yellow box/zonal marking, pre-populated feedback sheets which can be highlighted by the teacher, success criteria grids which can be stuck in and the teacher can tick/cross the various elements, marking symbols/codes etc.

Whole-class Feedback

To inform the planning of WCF, teachers should read and make notes on a set of exercise books/Teams submissions, noting the following:

- What are common misconceptions/ mistakes? (content, assessment criteria and SPaG)
- What are the areas of success which can be shared with the class?
- What tasks should students undertake during WCF which will help to close gaps and promote progress

WCF templates should ensure they follow the BPA Basics:

- Feedback (WWW, EBI, SpAG)
- Feed up (Model answer, exemplar)
- Feed Forward (Next steps and challenge)

Sample Key Stage 3 Report

BOWER PARK ACADEMY



Y9 REPORT – FEBRUARY 2022

TOTAL ACHIEVEMENT POINTS:	110	TOTAL BEHAVIOUR POINTS:	12	ATTENDANCE:	93.2%
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SUBJECT	HEADING 1	HEADING 2	HEADING 3	HEADING 4	ATTITUDE TO LEARNING		
					HOMEWORK	ORGANISATION	EFFORT
Art: Mr R. Browne	Research: Very secure in this area	Reproduce: Very secure in this area	Reimagine: Secure in this area	Recreate: Very secure in this area	S	U	A
Computer Studies: Mr R. Graham	Application: Secure in this area	Knowledge: Very secure in this area	Problem Solving: Very secure in this area		U	A	A
CPSHE: Mrs M. Freer	Knowledge: Secure in this area	Speaking/Listening: Very secure in this area			U	A	U
Drama: Mrs K. Lechmere	Performing: Very secure in this area	Devising: Very secure in this area			N/A	A	A
English: Miss L. O'Neill	Reading Blood Brothers: Secure in this area	Reading Identity Poetry: Secure in this area	Speaking & Listening: Secure in this area		A	A	A
French: Mrs J. Alexis	Describing family relationships: Secure in this area	Using Adjective to describe friends: Secure in this area	Writing Skills: Very secure in this area		U	U	U
Geography: Mrs A. Crawford	Knowledge: Very secure in this area	Application: Very secure in this area	Evaluation: Very secure in this area		A	A	A

ATTITUDE TO LEARNING CRITERIA Quality of Academic Work and Effort in Class

Grade A - Always completes work to the best of their ability and takes pride in presentation. Always proactive and endeavours to work hard in lessons. Always focused in class discussions and in lesson feedback exercises.

Grade U - Usually completes work to the best of their ability and takes pride in presentation. Usually proactive and endeavours to work hard in lessons. Usually focused in class discussions and in lesson feedback exercises.

Grade S - Sometimes completes work to the best of their ability and takes pride in presentation. Sometimes works hard in lessons. Sometimes focused in class discussions and in lesson feedback exercises.

Grade R - Rarely completes work to the best of their ability and needs to improve presentation. Rarely proactive and needs to work in lessons. Rarely focused in class discussions and in lesson feedback exercises.

Key Stage 3 Reports – Frequently asked Questions

What is this report showing me?

This report provides a progress statement for each key learning strand in each subject, and an Attitude to Learning (ATL) grade for each subject. Additionally, it includes a percentage attendance, number of lates, achievement points and behaviour points.

What does the statement actually mean?

Pupils are graded either high, mid or low on the security of learning in each strand. This indicates how well a child has learned the topics and concepts covered this year in each strand. Parents should think of grades as follows:

Very secure - High	This indicates that the pupil has demonstrated a very effective level of learning in a specific strand, based upon the topics studied so far. They are showing excellent retention, recall and application of knowledge and skills.
Secure - Mid	This indicates a pupil who has a sound grasp in a specific strand, based on the topics studied so far. They are able to retain and recall key aspects of their learning and are able to use knowledge and skills appropriately. They are yet to fully grasp the more advanced aspects of the topics being studied.
Unsecure – Low	This indicates a pupil who is developing their learning in a specific strand, based upon the topics studied so far. They need to work on increasing their knowledge and understanding of key concepts and how they apply their knowledge and skills.

Why are some strands not yet assessed?

Each strand is only judged once enough work has been completed and assessed. In some subjects, those elements may come later in the term or the year.

What are achievement points?

Achievement points are used to recognise when a pupil has done something good. They are based around the key areas of the school values – Respect, Effort, Aspiration, Progress and Kindness. These may evolve as the academy's needs change.

What are behaviour points?

On the occasions where a teacher has to issue a sanction to a pupil, this is recorded as a behaviour point. These are based around the four school rules – be ready to learn, respect learning, follow instructions and respect the environment. There are additional categories based around uniform and truancy. These may evolve as the academy's needs change.

Attendance Thresholds:

Being in school is vitally important to making the expected progress and beyond. The table below shows the thresholds that we use for attendance and how many days/weeks your attendance could translate to.

Excellent	Attendance above 98%	Fewer than four days of absence in an academic year.
Average	Attendance above 95%	Fewer than nine days of absence in an academic year.
Low	Attendance below 90%	Missing four weeks or more of school in an academic year.

ATTENDANCE %	90.6
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Subject	Teacher
Drama	Ms D. Chi
English Literature	Miss F. Pe
French	Miss S. Ke
History	Mr M. Ke
Maths	Mr S. Ahr
Physical Education	Mr L. She
Science	Miss A. Iji

Key:	Attitude to Learning	GCSE
	A = Always	9-1
	U = Usually	X -
	S = Sometimes	U -
	R = Rarely	W -
	<i>Please see overleaf for detailed criteria</i>	Voc
		Cre
		Stu
		D -
		M -
		P -
		X -
		U -
		W -

Key Stage 4 Reports – Frequently Asked Questions

What is this report showing me?

Our reports provide a predicted attainment grade for each subject, matched against an aspirational attainment estimate for your child. Additionally, we include an effort score matched against the highest in the class, percentage attendance, number of lates, achievement points and behaviour points. One report each year will also include a comment from the student's form tutor.

How is a student's attainment estimate worked out?

Estimates are based upon the prior attainment in English and maths, alongside GCSE outcomes of the top 20% of students nationally. We match what students with a similar Key Stage 2 result have achieved in the past, and use this to estimate what each student could achieve.

These estimates also take into account other factors that may impact upon a student's progress, such as attendance, school changes and individually identified learning needs, which is why students with the same prior attainment can have different estimates.

Why aren't students given a target grade?

Whilst estimates are quite accurate for English and maths, they can be less so for other subjects, particularly those that a student may not have studied before. In addition, estimates are revised each year, in the light of each new set of national GCSE results.

Our experience also tells us that target grades often act as a 'glass ceiling' to attainment. Once a grade has been reached, effort can drop, resulting in a reduction in attainment the next term.

Instead, we provide written and verbal targets that give the students specific actions to carry out, to help improve further.

Why has a grade gone red this time when it was white before?

At Bower Park, we operate what is called a 'flight path' for each student. This is the trajectory from their starting point to their end of key stage estimate. As we go through the academic year, we expect students to get closer to that estimate. Therefore, a student who stays on the same grade could see this go from one colour to another.

Why is there more red on my child's report?

It could be the case that a student is really not working well at school and not progressing, but it is rarely that straightforward. There are many factors that affect attainment and progress, including the topics being studied at a particular time, a student's like/dislike of a subject, talent in a particular area, quality of teaching, social/personal issues, etc.

Estimates are based on the English and maths assessments students did in Year 6. These are not always accurate for estimating performance across the wider range of subjects. If a student did well in English or maths, this would lead to higher estimates in other subjects. If the student then did less well in those subjects, they would be further away from their estimate than we would expect at a particular point in the year, causing the grade to go red. This does not necessarily mean that a student is failing in that subject. It tells you that their current prediction falls below where we would want them to be, and, therefore, they are possibly capable of doing better in the future.