

Target Grades

1. How have you set the target grades for my child?

At the beginning of Year 12 we create our target grades for students taking Key Stage 4 (KS4) qualifications and then using a system called ALPS to give us a starting point. ALPS sets grades to match the progress of the top 25% of students nationally, making them aspirational but achievable. These grades are input into our data analysis software – Go4Schools. This allows us to compare grades with national performance indicators to ensure that the grade set is suitable for each individual and ensures that all students are targeted to make positive value added in each subject. Occasionally this has meant increasing the target grade to ensure all students have an aspirational grade for all of their subjects so that they strive to achieve the best possible outcomes that they are capable of. In summary, the target grades set for your child should be considered challenging but achievable for the majority of pupils.

2. Will these target grades ever change?

Possibly, yes, although not by too much. ALPS and Go4Schools regularly update all of their information based upon the most recent cohort of students who have just sat exams. It makes sense, therefore, for us to review our students' targets annually in light of any new information.

3. Why do some subjects not have lettered grades?

Some pupils are studying BTEC subjects (or similar). These are usually graded as follows: Distinction*, Distinction, Merit, Pass, U.

4. What is a 'Current Grade' and how is it used to track progress?

Throughout the year students will complete assessments that are internally moderated and graded using the A-Level / BTEC grading criteria for that exam specification. Here at St Bernard's, we use a 'Fine Grading' system which allows us to show how secure the student's grade is. A grade with a '+' after it means that the student is moving towards the next grade up, and a grade with a '-' after it means that the student has only just achieved that grade. The assessments enable students to demonstrate the relevant skills and knowledge of the latest topic and be awarded a grade in that area of work. It is important to understand that this is a reflection on smaller topics and parts of the course and does not equate to a full A-Level or BTEC grade but acts as an indicator to show where a student is 'working at' in a particular area of the subject. Even in mock examinations, students do not necessarily sit all papers for each subject.

Example of Fine Grading
A-
B+
B
B-
C+
C
C-

Current Grades can be viewed on Go4Schools in real-time as they are entered by the subject teachers and can be compared to the student's target to provide a clearer picture of progress for that student at that particular time of year.

5. How does the assessment system work?

At KS5 a student's expected progress varies greatly across each of the different subjects. Each student's Y12 progress towards their KS5 Target grade is therefore measured differently for each individual subject and coloured accordingly. An example of the variations that may occur is shown below:

Subject	Y12 Expected Progress	KS5 Target Grade
Maths	B	B
Biology	C	B

If students are believed to be underperforming across a range of subjects, then they will be placed on a learning support plan so that they are checking in with a member of the Sixth Form Team. Parents and students will be informed if this is the case.

6. What do the colours mean?

The current grade or teachers' end of year prediction column may be coloured according to the progress that the student is making or is predicted to make towards their target. Students may succeed better in one term compared to another and there may be circumstances beyond their control throughout the year. Keeping the end goal in sight allows students to personalize their progress journey. This colour system is designed to highlight instances where a student may not achieve their target. The colours are allocated as follows:

'Purple' or 'Above Target' is populated automatically if the latest assessment or predicted grade is graded at 2 fine grades or more above the student's target grade for the year.

'Green' or 'On Target' is populated automatically if the latest assessment or predicted grade is graded the same as the student's target grade for the year, or one fine grade either side.

'Yellow' or 'Below Target' is populated automatically if the latest assessment or predicted grade is graded between 2 and 4 fine grades below the student's target grade for the year.

'Red' or 'Well Below Target' is populated automatically if the latest assessment or predicted grade is graded 5 or more fine grades below the student's target grade for the year.

7. What is ATL and why is it important?

At certain points throughout the year subject teachers will be asked to provide an 'Attitude to Learning' grade for each student from a list of 4:

1. Student is always prepared for the lesson. Notes and folders are well organised and demonstrate high levels of organisation and planning. Classwork tasks are completed fully and to the required level of sophistication required at A Level. Student shows very high levels of engagement, courtesy, collaboration and cooperation.
2. Student is mainly prepared for the lesson. Notes and folders are mainly well organised, demonstrating good levels of organisation and planning. Classwork tasks are mostly completed well and include a good level of detail. Student is typically considerate, respectful and courteous to staff and other students.
3. Student is sometimes prepared for the lesson. Notes and folders are disorganised and incomplete. Classwork tasks are sometimes completed to include an adequate level of detail. Student sometimes responds promptly to a teacher's direction and usually works cooperatively with others.
4. Student is frequently unprepared for the lesson and may lack necessary resources. Notes and folders are disorganised. Classwork tasks are rarely

completed to include enough detail to aid learning. A lack of engagement and focus impacts occasionally to reduce learning.

These scores should help you to closely pinpoint where any issues may be occurring with your child whilst they are in Sixth Form. These will usually be the first columns that we look at when mentoring students before any reference is made to targets, as experience tells us that attitude to learning is key in progress and achievement in the Sixth Form.

8. My child has received a '3' or a '4' for ATL in all of their subjects, should I be concerned?

You are right to be concerned. The report enables you to establish whether there are common areas of concern from each of your child's teachers and help you support your child to move forward positively. The aim of this measure is to ensure that students are aware of the high expectations that we have set in school and encourage them to be demonstrating the high levels of engagement and application expected of them – which many of our students already do consistently. The first port of call if you have any concerns, is to the subject teacher, however if you have a more general concern then please contact the Head of Sixth Form. This will allow the school to work with you to determine any support that could be put in place to help your child improve. This could range from organisational support, to behavioural conversations and encouragement to act upon feedback.

If you have any questions regarding KS5 reports, please feel free to speak to subject teachers or the Head of Sixth Form.

9. Will reports be posted home?

No, reports have now gone online using Go4Schools and this gives you real-time access to your child's progress. You will receive an email when a specific, new report is available for you to view.