TEACHING & LEARNING, ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING POLICY

SENIOR SCHOOL

TEACHING & LEARNING, ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING POLICY

Authorised by	Deputy Head (Academic)
Date	October 2024
	Revised: January 2025
Date of next review	October 2025 or earlier as required

1   **Introduction**

This policy relates to all children at Churcher's College Senior School. Throughout this document, the terms "the School" and "Churcher's College" refer to Churcher's College Senior School.

2   **Churcher's College Teaching & Learning Philosophy**

We are committed to providing the best possible experience for pupils in the classroom. A purposeful learning environment that prepares them both for their public exams as well as life beyond Churcher's. We are proud to have the staffing resources that allow us to offer a significant amount of individual help to our pupils, both in the classroom and in extra support sessions, and no limitations on the choice of subject combinations at GCSE and A Level.

We aim for the best possible outcomes for each pupil, both in absolute and value-added terms, combined with a diverse programme of extracurricular opportunities, all of which build confident, well-rounded, resilient and independent learners. They are encouraged and expected to take as many of these opportunities as possible.

Responsive teaching is at the heart of our educational philosophy, where the needs of each individual child are central to our educational provision, both inside and outside of the classroom.

3   **Teaching & Learning – See Appendix A: Responsive Teaching Infographic**

3.1   What makes an excellent lesson?

See Appendix B: Lesson Planning and Observation Checklist

3.1.1   Planning will be effective and show clear learning objectives, differentiation and high expectation. Planning will be informed by assessments (AfL) and may also be informed by feedback from parents and/or colleagues.

3.1.2   The teaching will reflect these clear learning objectives, differentiation and high expectations and will be well paced.

3.1.3   Teachers will demonstrate a sound knowledge of the subject.

3.1.4   A variety of teaching strategies will be used which are appropriate to the learning objectives including the use of ICT.

3.1.5   Lessons will contain a mix of teacher instruction, teacher-led discussion, practical work, group work and independent work depending on the subject, topic and year group.

3.1.6   Teaching will not undermine fundamental British values.

3.2   Homework

The type of task and the style of assessment will be, to a large degree, subject specific and therefore Heads of Department, in consultation with others in their Department,

will need to have formal structures and a commonality of approach for their Department. Guidelines common to all departments are:

3.2.1   Homework should seek to reinforce work completed in lessons or extend beyond it. Homework tasks should follow naturally from the lesson in which they are set and pupils should understand the rationale for the homework. Where larger tasks are set, or tasks involving group work, the deadline will be extended to make it realistic. Pupils should **not** be asked to hand in homework the day after it is set.

3.2.2   Pupils should regularly receive meaningful feedback on their work. Feedback should be diagnostic in line with the principles of Assessment for Learning and it should convey a sense of the learning process to students. (*See 4. Feedback below.)*

3.2.3   Parents should be aware both of the task and the regularity with which homework is set because all homework tasks should be posted on Firefly.

3.2.4   Some subjects set homework fortnightly in the 1st and 2nd Year to make it easier for these pupils to manage their task list. Fortnightly homeworks should take approximately twice as long as weekly homeworks (*see 3.2.5 below)*

3.2.5   Homework tasks should be of an appropriate length to the year group as follows:

1st year	Weekly homeworks: 20 mins per subject
	(15 mins up to October half term)
	Fortnightly homeworks: 40 mins per subject
2nd year	Weekly homeworks: 20 mins per subject
	Fortnightly homeworks: 40 mins per subject
3rd year	30 mins per subject
4th year	60 mins per subject
5th year	60 mins per subject
6th form	It will vary from week to week but as a guide, 2 hours per subject per week for set tasks, with the expectation that students are doing a significant amount of self-directed consolidation work on top of the set tasks.

3.2.6   Pupils complete work at differing rates and teachers will as far as is possible ensure that the task is appropriate in length for all in the group. Particularly at KS3, tasks should be closed rather than open-ended wherever possible to

allow all pupils to complete the homework in a similar time frame. More open tasks such as posters or research tasks should be avoided unless clear assessment criteria have been shared in advance of the task being set and pupils have been guided with respect to some suggested research sources.

3.2.7   Homework Timetables can be found in the Academic Info folder on the S Drive here.

3.3   Vulnerable groups

3.3.1   Vulnerable groups are defined as those groups of pupils who may need extra support to make appropriate progress. These include SEND pupils or high attainers (more able pupils). Teachers are encouraged to make a discrete note in their mark books at the start of the academic year when they receive their class lists so they can plan appropriately when teaching these pupils.

3.3.2   The list of SEND pupils is published by the Head of Curriculum Support and can be found in the Pupil Information folder on the S Drive here. The Head of Curriculum Support produces Teaching Tips for specific pupils where appropriate, which can be found here. Curriculum support information for each child is also in isams. Teachers should familiarise themselves with curriculum support information, including Teaching Tips (where applicable), at the start of the academic year when they receive their class lists.

3.3.3   For those pupils in 3rd to 5th Year who are disaffected, demotivated or those who just find it hard to work we run an academic support programme called Springboard. There is a programme of study which is often bespoke and tailored to the needs of the individuals in each group who meet weekly. Pupil lists can be found in the Pupil Information folder on the S Drive here.

3.3.4   In line with our responsive teaching philosophy the high attainers should also expect to be challenged in class by differentiated tasks where appropriate.

3.3.5   High attainers are identified by the Head of Teaching and Learning using a variety of academic data. Each pupil is interviewed and teaching tips are agreed. These are published in the Pupil Information folder on the S Drive here as well as in isams and the High Attainers Policy can be accessed here.

3.3.6   The Academy is an extracurricular club for the high attainers in 2nd to 5th Year which meets weekly at lunchtimes. There is a defined programme of study for each year group. Sessions are largely discussion-based but they are also taken on trips and visits.

3.4   Independent learning

At Churcher's, pupils develop greater independent learning skills as they go through the school. In the 1st Year they are highly directed with scaffolded tasks and best practice modelled by teachers but as they move towards KS4, classwork and

homework tasks may require more independence but this will vary from subject to subject. Also, with so many topic tests and end of year exams, pupils gradually learn how to learn independently. They are given study skills lessons in form time and subject teachers give subject-specific advice on preparation for tests and exams so pupils have many opportunities to try different techniques to see which works best for them. In the Sixth Form, students are expected to spend a considerable amount of time each week, over and above their set homework tasks, working independently to consolidate what they have learned in class.

3.5   Digital learning

By the end of KS3 each pupil has been given a firm grounding in the core ICT skills, as well as having had a go at some coding, and they are proficient in their use of the Microsoft Office 365 suite of apps.

All homework is set via Firefly, our Virtual Learning Environment and pupils are adept at using the Firefly app as a personal organiser to track their outstanding tasks.

Using the students' own devices or our bookable laptops or iPads, ICT is regularly used in most subjects across all year groups. For example:

- Classroom quiz apps such as Kahoot, Gimkit or Quizlet to consolidate knowledge and understanding
- Web quests where students use the internet to search for information which they then synthesise into a document or a presentation.
- Stop motion animations to explain difficult processes or ideas
- Filming and editing short documentary films to explain a concept or discuss a topic
- Virtual science experiments and simulations (particularly useful during remote learning!)
- Using spreadsheets to record, display and analyse the results of investigations and experiments
- Using Firefly for online submission of work and pupil self-assessment of their work in light of teacher feedback.

Pupils are therefore given ample opportunity to apply their ICT skills to a range of situations across the school curriculum and beyond.

L6 students are piloting a BYOD scheme so they each have a laptop in lessons.

3.6   Disruption to teaching

Teaching of the normal school timetable will continue in the event of pupil absence, teacher absence or school closure due to COVID-19. The school has contingency plans in place to allow all pupils to access the full curriculum using Microsoft Teams and

Firefly. We use the term 'Remote Learning' for teaching when the school is closed and 'Blended Learning' for teaching when some pupils or teachers are self-isolating but most are in school. The school's Remote Learning Policy can be accessed here.

3.7 Intervention

3.7.1 The Deputy Head Academic uses grading card and report data to generate tracking spreadsheets for Heads of House each half term (*see 8. Tracking below*). After discussion with Heads of House and/or Personal Tutors, strategies are put in place for improvement where necessary. In the Sixth Form, Personal Tutors have these discussions and in discussion with the Head of Sixth Form students underperforming may be put on an IEP (Individual Educational Plan) to raise their attainment.

3.7.2 Pupils who are not coping with a full timetable may be offered a modified curriculum. This may involve dropping a subject and receiving curriculum support instead, or working independently in the Library in the regained time. A list of pupils currently on a modified curriculum can be found in the Pupil Information folder on the S Drive here.

4 Feedback

4.1 Pupils should receive regular, meaningful and timely feedback on their homework, usually within a week of it being handed in. It should aim to improve the student, not the work. It is neither reasonable nor helpful for staff to correct every single mistake.

4.2 Feedback will be given in ways that best promotes pupils' learning. Sometimes whole class feedback can be more effective than individual comments written on the pupils' work.

4.3 Pupil responses to homework tasks should help teachers plan future lessons in line with the principles of AfL.

4.4 Teachers should adopt a 'Four Quarter Marking' approach to providing feedback on pupils' work whereby the following assessment methods should be used in roughly equal measure:

4.5 Peer and Self Assessment: In line with AfL best practice, tasks may be marked by pupils (in class, following common marking criteria) and in this case teachers may want to initial the work or stamp it to show it has been seen.

4.6 Individual departments have flexibility to create their own marking policies. Some subjects will assign a mark or grade which

will reflect effort and/or attainment, for others no grade will be given, just comments. In every case pupils should understand the department marking policy and ideally have a copy of it stuck into the front of their books.

5.   Assessment

5.1   Pupils should have both formative assessments throughout the year to inform teaching and summative assessments at the end of the year to judge pupil attainment. Teachers should also continually assess students by questioning in class and observing classwork.

5.2   For GCSE and A Level students, assessments should, where appropriate, result in a grade for attainment as well as a percentage. Wherever possible, the whole cohort should sit the same assessment to allow comparisons to be made across the year group.

5.3   Pupils and parents are informed well in advance about any key periods of assessment such as mock exams or end of year exams. Learning lists are generated for every exam and these are posted on Firefly for pupils and parents to access at home.

5.4   The Deputy Head Academic sends home results letters to parents after every key period of assessment detailing the mark their child obtained in each exam along with the year average.

5.5   The Pastoral Team meets to discuss the exam results and any individuals in need of intervention are identified. The relevant Head of House follows up each action point and contacts parents where necessary.

6.   Reporting

6.1   Reports provide information about the progress of pupils for the pastoral team, parents, pupils and the senior management team.

6.2   There are two types of report at Churcher's – a full report with grades and comments for each subject, and grading cards which just have grades for each subject.

6.3   Reporting is half termly so each pupil receives one full written report per academic year plus five grading cards (except the 5th Year and U6 whose final reporting cycle falls during public exams.) Dates for the current academic year can be found in the Assessment & Reporting Map document which can be found in this folder.

6.4   In each reporting cycle, pupils receive four 'Attitude to Learning' Grades and an Attainment grade.

6.5   Grades are awarded for a limited period of work, the five or so weeks since the previous assessment or report grade.

6.6   The four Attitude to Learning categories are:

- Listens attentively

8

- Retains focus on tasks in lessons
- Fully completes homework
- Well organised

Pupils are awarded a frequency grade in each category as follows:

- Al = Always
- Mo = Mostly
- Of = Often
- So = Sometimes
- In = Infrequently
- Ra = Rarely

See Appendix C – Reporting Grade Descriptors

6.6   Attainment grades are awarded according to nationally referenced standards at GCSE for KS4 pupils and A Level for Sixth Formers. At KS3 attainment is judged relative to other Churcher's pupils and is on a four point scale, 4 being highest and 1 being lowest.

6.7   Sixth Form students fill in a self assessment report on the iSAMS Pupil Portal which then appears on the front page of the student's full report. For each subject they award themselves three Attitude to Learning grades and then write a comment on their progress.

6.8   Reports are published electronically on My School Portal.

7.   Parents' Evenings

7.1   Parents' Evenings are administered by the Director of Studies and are spread throughout the year. All year groups have at least one Parents' Evening in order to discuss academic progress and pastoral care.

7.2   Parents make their own appointments using the parents' online booking system.

7.3   4th, 5th and 6th Form students are invited to attend with their parents.

7.4   Parents' Evenings can take place in two ways: face to face or via video call. In an ideal world, the first parents' evening of the year will be face to face with the second evening via video call. Parents' Evening dates for the current academic year can be found in the Assessment & Reporting Map document which can be found in this folder.

8.   Tracking

8.1   Pupils sit baseline ability tests as follows:

- 1st Year – MidYIS
- 4th Year – Yellis

- Lower Sixth – Alis

The results of these tests are included on all tracking spreadsheets to give an idea of the innate ability of each pupil so that individuals who are underperforming in relation to their ability can be spotted. These are picked up by the Heads of House and intervention strategies are implemented to raise focus, work rate and attainment as necessary.

8.2 Each reporting cycle, the Deputy Head Academic produces a tracking spreadsheet for each year group for the Heads of House. Pupils are ranked both by their average attainment grade and their average Attitude to Learning grade. Changes in Attitude to Learning are also included so Heads of House can see which pupils have increased their general effort and which are not working so hard. Heads of House have discussions with those who are doing particularly well and those who are doing less well. These spreadsheets are all available in the relevant folders in Pupil Information on the S Drive.

8.3 Departmental tracking – average attainment or attitude to learning grades can of course hide trends in particular subjects so each Head of Department keeps a central record of assessment results and tracks each pupil's progress against their baseline test score. Again, pupils of concern are discussed in department meetings and the relevant Head of House or Personal Tutor is alerted.

9. Academic Rewards

9.1 Pupils who submit work worthy of extra praise, either for its content or the effort that has gone into producing it, are given Merits. Details of the Merit system can be found at paragraph 5.2 of the Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy.

9.2 At the end of every term, each teacher nominates one member of each of their teaching groups for a Commendation. This can be awarded for attainment, attitude to learning or progress made that term. Pupils are given Amazon vouchers for each commendation they receive. A central spreadsheet is populated with the nominations and the Head of Teaching and Learning organises the distribution of vouchers and congratulatory letters.

9.3 The most prestigious academic rewards are made at Speech Day (for pupils in 4th Year to U6) and Lower School Prize Giving (for 1st to 3rd Years). Each subject nominates a prize winner and there are also a number of Cum Laude awards for those deserving pupils who have not won a subject prize. Further details on the award of school prizes can be found in the Award of Prizes Policy.

10. Academic Integrity

10.1 Academic integrity is characterised by students:

- Producing work that is the result of their individual effort (unless the assessment explicitly requires a group submission)

- Acknowledging sources that have been used.
- Not reusing for a new assessment any work (either in full or in part) that has already been submitted
- Detailing accurate data and information obtained appropriately and ethically, and which represents their own endeavours, knowledge and understanding
- Adhering to and complying with all Churcher's College policies to avoid academic misconduct.

10.2   Academic misconduct includes:

Plagiarism

This refers to presenting work or ideas from another source as your own, with or without consent of the original author, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition, as is the use of material generated wholly or in part through use of artificial intelligence (see the school's AI policy).

Collusion

Collusion is where a students work together on the same assignment, but where they should be submitting individual pieces of work. Collusion can also take place when a student provides a copy of a completed assignment to another student for them to complete their assignment which they then submit as their own.

Cheating

Cheating normally refers to exam-related incidents such as taking unauthorised materials into the exam hall. Cheating can also apply to a broader range of assessed activities, e.g. the falsification of data, evidence, or results used when completing research.

10.3   Any student suspected of academic misconduct through the use of AI detection tools (eg GPT Zero) or a teacher's professional judgement will be reported to the Deputy Head Academic for consideration under the school's AI Policy or, if it is exam related, to the Academic Registrar for consideration under the appropriate JCQ policies. See also the Churcher's College Malpractice Policy here.

11.   Monitoring Teaching & Learning

11.1   Through indirect methods such as pupil and parent feedback we are confident that standards of teaching and learning are very high at Churcher's College but we must not rest on our laurels so we have a number of ways in which we monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

11.2   Department Reviews – each Head of Department meets with the Headmaster and Deputies once a year in the Autumn Term to review the previous year. The HoD fills in a Department Review form (a copy of which can be found here). The form includes

a SWOT analysis for the department and an analysis of the previous year's public examination results, including value added standardised residuals. HoDs are also invited to bring a scheme of work or example of student work to reflect on. Action points are noted where necessary.

11.3   Departmental Monitoring – it is the responsibility of each Head of Department to monitor the quality of teaching and learning within their subject area. This can be done in a number of ways, including book looks, paired peer observations as well as formal observations by HoDs as part of the Performance Development system.

11.4   SMT Learning Walks – ideally once a year, members of the Senior Management Team are allocated a department (or more than one if they are smaller subjects) and over the course of two or three days they plan to observe each member of that department for at least 20 minutes. Teachers are not told which lessons will be observed but they are told on which days the learning walks are happening. Feedback is given to each observed teacher via the Dropbox system (*see 12. Supporting and Developing Teaching & Learning below).* Where possible, the observer also does a book look to check on the quality and frequency of marking and feedback.

12.   Supporting and Developing Teaching & Learning

12.1   The school has a responsibility to professionally develop members of its teaching staff. There is a clearly defined Professional Development system in place so each teacher has the opportunity to meet with their line manager and discuss their strengths and weaknesses as well as where they would like to go next in their career. The Performance Development system is overseen by the Deputy Head Staff and details can be found here.

12.2   In-house CPD sessions are regularly held on various aspects of teaching and learning. Sessions are led by volunteers, often those with an interest in the subject or a colleague who has attended an external INSET course. These are often twilight or lunchtime sessions as well as whole school INSET or items at termly staff meetings. In addition, each summer we dedicate an afternoon to Head of Department training at Middle Managers Training Day as well as the leadership development programme being available to all teachers.

12.4   Weekly Teaching & Learning Bulletins are sent out via email by the Deputy Head Staff. These usually focus on a particular aspect of teaching and learning; sometimes practical advice for the classroom practitioner and sometimes educational theory or some recent research for colleagues to read and decide if and how it can be applied to their teaching.

Appendix A - Responsive Teaching Infographic
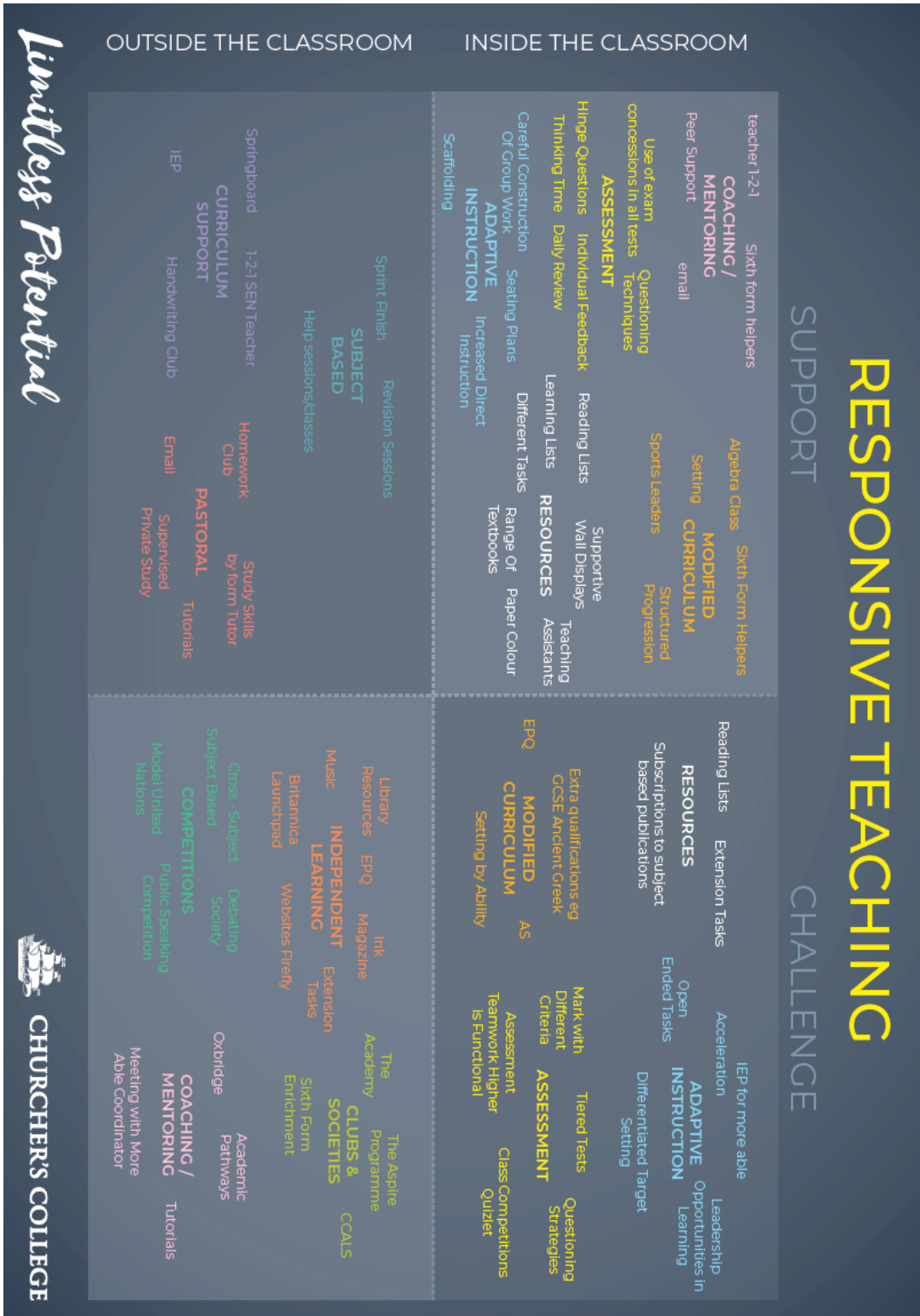
Appendix B - Lesson Planning Checklist

Lesson Planning and Observation

Things to think about

These ideas only serve to act as a guide to planning/observation. Some components may not be relevant depending on the nature of the lesson.

Teacher	Observer	Subject/Topic/Date

Lesson begins *positively and productively*
Learning goals made clear (may not be revealed immediately)
Teacher is *confident* in the material
Evidence of *explaining, modelling, scaffolding, practising*
Teacher checks students' *understanding* regularly
Clear assessment criteria
An *enjoyable, positive and engaging* learning environment
Lesson has *pace* with a *variety* of activities and methods of instruction
Vulnerable groups, e.g. SEN, EAL or More-able students catered for
Opportunities for students to *consolidate and challenge* their understanding "Cognitive Time"
Students recognise the lesson's *place in the sequence of learning*
Homework is *well-planned* and *communicated* clearly

Observer – don't forget to watch the students!

14

Appendix C - Reporting Grade Descriptors

DESCRIPTORS FOR GRADING CARDS AND FULL REPORTS

Each reporting session, the pupils are given one Attainment grade and four 'Attitude to Learning' grades.

Attainment Grades

Key Stage 3 (1st – 3rd Year)

With no standardised national scale against which to judge attainment, we use an attainment scale relative to other Churcher's pupils of the same age:

Grade	Descriptor
4	Maintains a very high level of attainment
3	Maintains a good level of attainment
2	Some weaknesses occasionally evident
1	Sometimes has difficulty attaining expected levels

Key Stage 4 (4th & 5th Year) and Sixth Form

Letter grades (A*-E) for A Level and number grades (9-1) for GCSE which are an estimate of the grade to which the student's current progress, effort and attitude so far are likely to lead. In other words, if the pupil continues to work at this level, they are likely to achieve a …

Attitude to Learning Grades

Grades are awarded for a limited period of work, the five or so weeks since the previous assessment or report grade.

There are four Attitude to Learning categories:

Listens attentively

Retains focus on tasks in lessons

Fully completes homework

Well organised

Pupils are awarded a frequency grade in each category as follows:

Al = Always
Mo = Mostly
Of = Often
So = Sometimes
In = Infrequently
Ra = Rarely

IGK September 2024