



Tuesday 9th February 2021

Dear parent/ carer,

RE: Options, parents' evening and your child's data

Further to my letter of 29th January, I wanted to write to you again with some brief reminders and updates regarding the Year 9 options process.

The options process is now well underway. We have already sent you the options booklet and accompanying letter, and I know that Personalised Learning Tutors have been answering lots of questions as part of their safe and well calls. In addition to this, in the coming days you will see a range of short videos appearing on our dedicated options website here: <https://icenimethwold.atrust.org.uk/curriculum/options-process-2021/>. These will introduce you and your child to some of the different subjects they may like to consider taking as part of their GCSEs.

Secondly, parents' evening is this Thursday 11th February from 4.00pm – 6.30pm. This is an opportunity for you to discuss your child's progress in video conference with their teachers, and also ask any questions of your child's subject teachers with regards to options. The ability to book appointments will close at 5pm on Wednesday 10th January to allow staff adequate time to prepare for their appointments. Please see my letter of 29th January for more information on how to use this system.

In addition, I would like to remind you about how you can access your child's assessment results. Go4Schools is open for all parents and carers and will show you your child's assessment data, attendance data and live behaviour records. If you are unsure as to how to sign up for Go4Schools, please email office@iceni.atrust.org.uk.

The way we are presenting data in Years 7, 8 and 9 has changed since last year. From this academic year, we have started to report Year 7, 8 and 9 students' assessment results as percentage scores, in their progress reports.

Why percentage scores?

Within education, a national debate is currently taking place over the use of GCSE grades, and particularly grade flightpaths, in Years 7, 8 and 9. The Department for Education and Ofsted advise that schools should not report GCSE grades for these students, but they do not recommend an alternative. This debate has also taken place at Iceni Academy and it was clear from the feedback we received that there was appetite for change. With this in mind, we have developed a new assessment and reporting system for use with Years 7, 8 and 9, which does not use GCSE grades or flightpaths.

Percentage scores explained

Because we want to report something easy to understand, as well as something which is more meaningful, we now report the average percentage scores that Year 7, 8 and 9 students achieve in their class assessments.

Students are assessed at least once per term in each subject, enabling a percentage score to be reported for each subject, in every progress report. The progress report includes an 'Expected score' column, a 'Current score' column and a 'Key Stage Three Progress' column. This final column will confirm whether the student's score is:

- Above target (above the expected score)
- On target (meeting the expected score)
- Working towards target (below the expected score)
- Cause for concern (well below the expected score)

The progress of students is not measured against a 'target' percentage score, set in September. Instead, student progress is measured by comparing each student's individual percentage score to the average score of a group of students. These groups (of approximately twenty students) will be different to the classes that students are taught in. Instead, they are based on the students Year 6 SATS results (so students with similar results/ starting points are grouped together).

If the student's current percentage score is neither significantly above nor below their group's average score, their score is reported as being 'On target', as they are working approximately at the average level of their peers.

If the student's current percentage score is significantly above their group's average score, the student's progress is reported as being 'Above target'. This means that the student is working significantly above the average level of their peers.

Conversely, if the student's current percentage score is below their group's average score, the student's progress is reported as being 'Working towards target', (or 'Cause for concern' if the difference is great enough). This means that the student is working significantly below the average level of their peers.

The significance of the difference between a student's percentage score and the expected / average score for their group, is determined using standard deviation.

The example of a student's progress report (below) shows both the expected percentage scores, the student's own current percentage scores, as well as the 'Key Stage Three' progress column.

Detailed progress

Subject	Expected Score	Current Score	KS3 Progress	Breakdown
Art Mrs J Crook	-	-	-	-
Drama Mrs J Crook	84	-	-	-
English Ms L Hodges, Mrs S Clark	42	55	Above Target	-
French Miss M Trichet	86	96	Above Target	-
Geography Mr J Boyd	66	82	Above Target	-
German Miss F Agoudjil	87	94	On Target	-
History Mr N Bedford	56	85	Above Target	-
ICT Miss A Bhadrinath	54	-	-	-
Maths Mr D Ijaiya, Mr J Moore	56	79	Above Target	-
Music Miss H Armsby	53	82	Above Target	-
PE Miss S Turner	33	34	On Target	-
PHE Mr L Taylor, Miss R Pyke	70	73	On Target	-
PL Group Miss A Bhadrinath	-	-	-	-
Religious Studies Miss R Pyke	80	70	Working Towards Target	-
Science Miss G Barker, Mr J Marenghi	69	57	Working Towards Target	-
Technology Mr P Bate	67	81	Above Target	-

■ Cause for concern
 ■ Working Towards Target
 ■ On Target
 ■ Above Target

Please note, percentage scores achieved in different subjects are not comparable and a seemingly low percentage score does not mean that your child is not performing well, it instead reflects the difficulty and rigour of the subject's assessments.

An important reason why Iceni Academy decided not to use percentage score 'targets' with Years 7 to 9, is that we do not want to create artificial barriers or ceilings for the progress of our students. Many teachers have observed that younger students who meet their expected grades

early in the school year, begin to 'switch off' and become more difficult to motivate as the year progresses. This means that they will have made less progress by the end of the school year, than if they had not had an expected grade. Similarly, some younger students have become very demotivated when they have failed to meet a very challenging expected grade in the autumn term and do not make the progress they are capable of by the end of the year either.

Without percentage score 'targets', we believe that students will be motivated to do their best in every assessment and make the progress they are truly capable of.

From Year 10, when students begin their GCSE subjects, they will be given end of Key Stage targets in the form of a GCSE 9-1 grade. This reflects the fact that they will be working on GCSE-level courses for the remainder of their time at Iceni Academy.

We look forward to seeing you on Thursday at Parents' Evening if possible.

Yours faithfully,

A. Staniforth.

Miss A Staniforth
Assistant Principal – Quality of Education