



# De La Salle School

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11<sup>th</sup> March, '19

Dear Parent/Carer,

We were fortunate enough to return after the half term break to continued good weather and increasing daytime, which seems to make life easier for everyone! As I write, our Year 11 students have just completed their second set of mocks and are in full GCSE preparation mode.

In my previous letters, I have mentioned how we are looking at changing our reporting to parents. This is partly in response to your feedback in the Big Ask and also as part of the work we are doing to align curriculum, assessment and reporting.

The changes we are looking to make cover 3 key areas:

1. How we set targets.
2. How we report your child's progress.
3. How we shape the curriculum to support progress throughout the year.

These changes are linked into our schemes of work and whole school assessments. The work on these changes is well underway but they won't come into effect until September and will apply to students in Years 7-10 next year (current Years 6-9). **Flightpaths will cease to exist for these students.**

I wanted to use this first letter of the half term to give you an update on the first stage of these planned changes – **how we will set targets.**

## How we set targets

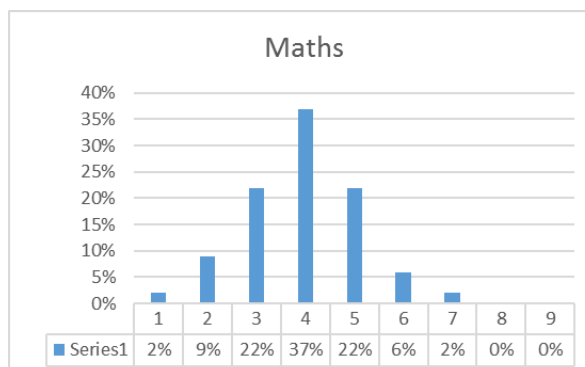
As you may know, we have already made changes to the way we set targets for students in Years 7-9 by having multiple targets, which are more bespoke than a single target across every subject. From September, we will be enhancing our target setting even further to make it a more realistic reflection of what is achievable, clearer for parents and to encourage students to be more aspirational.

The changes to the targets will be twofold:

- a) Firstly, rather than a single grade for a target we will share with you the percentage likelihood of your child achieving each of the grades (this is based upon students nationally with the same profile and SATs results as your child).

Here is an example of how the maths probabilities might look for 'Child A'. It shows clearly that the most likely outcome for students with the same ability as 'Child A' across the country, is a grade 4 in maths (37%).

However, 22% achieved a grade 5 and 6% achieved a grade 6. The aim of this is to encourage students to view the GCSEs as a range of possibilities rather than a fixed grade to achieve.



- b) The second piece of information will be to inform you of where your child is placed within the year group upon their transition to secondary school. This will be reported in quintiles (5 groups) based upon average SAT scores, in other words the 48 students (1/5 of our 240 intake) with the highest average SATs scores would be quintile 1, the next 48 highest would be quintile 2 and so on. The purpose of this is to give you an indication as to where your child's starting point was in relation to the rest of the year group. This information will not be shared publicly.

### **Why are we making changes?**

Some of the information we provide, especially for younger students, is either not very useful or not very accurate. This is not the fault of any individual but the reality of how misleading it is trying to say whether a Year 8 student is on track to achieve their Year 11 target. This information is inaccurate for many reasons such as: the students will have only studied a very small part of the subject, the most challenging topics (which will often help decide a student's final grade) are usually not covered until the end of Year 10 or into Year 11.

We believe saying a child is 'on target' based upon a small assessment, 3 or 4 years before their GCSE might appear reassuring but, in reality, is futile and misleading for parents.

### **What changes are we making?**

- We are changing our target setting by removing the old flightpaths and introducing the concept that students can achieve a variety of outcomes based upon many factors, rather than having just a single target.
- We are redesigning our schemes of work (series of lessons) to clearly identify essential knowledge and skills that students at each age and stage of their studies should know or be able to use. These will then be assessed formally at 3 points throughout the school year in assessment weeks.
- These assessments will not just be on the topics that have just been taught (which can lead to inflated scores as students have only just finished this work), but upon all the areas they have covered in that subject previously (as GCSE would do). This encourages the interleaving of knowledge and will help to ensure knowledge is learnt in the long term and not just the short term.
- In addition to this information, we will comment on how well they are progressing with their current topic or theme. This will be reported in one of four categories:
  - o Mastering – performing very strongly within the topic showing a complete or near complete understanding.
  - o Securing – performing to a good standard within the topic showing good understanding.
  - o Developing – performing reasonably well though, understanding is not secure.
  - o Emerging – an understanding of the basics and understanding is limited.

I will write again later this term to explain the rest of the above changes around how we will report progress and how this links to curriculum and assessment.

If you have any questions or concerns then please feel free to contact either me or Mrs Mulhall to discuss the matter further.

Yours sincerely,



Mr A Rannard  
**Headteacher**