

# Gartree High School

Ridgeway, Oadby, Leicester, LE2 5TQ



23<sup>rd</sup> September 2016

Dear parent/carer,

Over the first weeks of term a range of assessments take place to ensure that we can plan, prepare and provide for your son or daughter to the highest standard.

The word assessment comes originally from the Latin *assidere*, which means, literally 'to sit beside' someone, presumably to make some sort of judgement of their capabilities. The meaning of the word has evolved over the years and is now used in many different ways, in many different contexts.

In education we assess for an extraordinarily wide range of reasons, but the principal one is to find out what students have learned.

All teachers are responding to and planning for the students they will see each day, whilst also considering the longer term planning so that learning potential is reached and the best possible GCSE outcomes are achieved.

Effective assessment has some key principles: It should be part of effective planning of teaching and learning; It should focus on how the students learn; It should be sensitive and constructive (because any assessment has an emotional impact); learners should receive constructive guidance on how to improve.

The way that national testing and exam results are being reported has changed significantly in recent years. Many parents are familiar with the language of national curriculum levels, which have been used throughout Key Stages 1, 2 and 3. However, with the changes taking place some parents may be struggling to make sense of the current system. We will provide more details as our assessment practices develop.

In summer 2016, Key Stage 2 results were reported as a scaled score for the first time. The expected standard in the tests is a scaled score of 100 or above. Children sitting Key Stage 2 tests this year were the first to be taught and assessed under the new national curriculum, and the expected standard has been raised this year.

At Key Stage 3 (years 7, 8 & 9) national curriculum levels are no longer used to report on attainment. Students will need to demonstrate they are secure in their knowledge and understanding of a subject, and this will be tracked by the teacher to gauge what progress is being made. GCSEs will also have a new grading structure from 2017, A\* - G is being replaced with 9-1.

I have been at countless results days for GCSE and A-levels, and I have seen tears of happiness and tears of disappointment. It is hard to be assessed and graded, particularly when so much is at stake. This weekend many young people, former Gartree students among them, will head to university having completed their school education. For parents this is a very proud and an emotional day for a whole number of reasons. Whilst this is a significant moment, I am fortunate to see your sons and daughters achieve in so many ways throughout the school day, from pieces of writing to random acts of kindness. I hope you can feel a sense of pride in what your son or daughter is achieving in their day-to-day education. Teenagers will challenge you and test you to your limits at times, but I have yet to meet a young person who does not appreciate recognition of what they have achieved, and does not want to make their parents immensely proud of them. I hope your child continues to make you proud!

Have a great weekend.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Singleton'.

Sonia Singleton  
Headteacher

Headteacher: Ms Sonia Singleton  
Deputy Headteachers: Mr Paul Bannister, Mr Ben Rackley  
Telephone: (0116) 2717421 Fax (0116) 2720148  
Email: admin @ gartree.leics.sch.uk Website: www.gartree.leics.sch.uk