



The Lakes School

Key Stage 3 & 4 Assessment: A Guide for Parents



Our curriculum inspires, challenges and empowers students

INSPIRES

CHALLENGES

EMPOWERS

Introduction

Ensuring that your child makes strong academic progress is a key priority for the staff and governors at The Lakes School. Your child's teachers will use a variety of approaches to assessment and use this information to plan learning activities that help your child build on their prior knowledge, skills and understanding. We share this assessment information with you through our assessment point reports which are published three times a year. This handy guide explains our approach to assessment and answers some of the questions that you might have as a Lakes School parent. Do please get in touch if you have any specific questions and we will be only too pleased to help.

Why are my child's SATs scores so important?

Your child's Year 6 SATs results reflect their ability in English and maths with English being split in to reading, writing and spelling/grammar. In each of these areas, your child will have achieved a standardised score between 80 and 120 with a score around 100 being broadly average. A score higher than 100 means that your child is in the upper half of the ability range and a score lower than 100 means that your child is in the lower half of the ability range. These SATs scores do not necessarily relate to your child's future ability in English and maths. In addition, your child may demonstrate a particular ability in a range of subjects that is not captured by their SATs scores. The standardised scores achieved by your child provide a starting point, also called a baseline, from which it is possible to look in to the future and set targets for the years ahead. This is possible because of the way data is used nationally, across many thousands of children's attainment, to identify links between SATs scores and the most likely grades children will achieve at GCSE.

Why do you set targets for my child? Why are targets so important?

Your child will study a wide range of subjects as part of our inspiring, challenging and empowering curriculum. Across all of these subjects, the curriculum is sequenced carefully over a number of years so that your child develops a deep knowledge, range of skills and level of understanding. By setting targets, your child's teachers are able to pitch their lessons at an appropriately challenging level so that your child has the best chance of making strong progress in line with their ability.

Targets give an indication of your child's potential but it is not uncommon for students to make much faster progress than their targets - it is therefore useful to see your child's targets as a guide and a healthy challenge for your child to work towards. Targets also help children understand their potential in different subjects. Finding out if you are performing above or below target can help children gauge if they need to work harder to realise their potential.

How can you set targets for my child when they have just started Year 7?

Nationally, statistics are published which show the likelihood of a child with certain SATs scores achieving a particular grade at GCSE. These statistics are shared in the form of a 'transition matrix' and they bring together the GCSE grades of thousands of children. Each GCSE course has a transition matrix. These GCSE grades are then set against each child's SATs scores from when they were in Year 6 to provide a percentage likelihood of achieving each GCSE grade. This is a complicated statistical process so it is best illustrated with a table. Figure 1 below shows an extract from a transition matrix for GCSE English Literature.

Figure 1: Example Line from a Transition Matrix

		Percentage of Children Achieving GCSE Attainment Grade in English Literature									
		U	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Key Stage 2 Scaled Score for Reading	101-104	1	2	6	15	22	25	17	7	3	1

The table shows the percentage likelihood of a child with a Key Stage 2 Reading score of 101 to 104 achieving different GCSE grades in English Literature. On average, the most likely grade to be achieved is a 5 which would be in line with a child making average progress. At The Lakes School, we believe that students should achieve better than average so we set targets that are one grade higher; in this example above, a child's target would therefore be a Grade 6 at GCSE rather than a 5. By achieving a Grade 6, a

child would have made better than average progress. Read the next section about how we ensure targets are well matched to your child's ability.

How do you ensure that my child's targets are challenging but well matched to their ability?

We believe in setting targets that encourage students to develop high expectations of their future achievement. We know that students who attend well and bring a positive attitude to learning in to all of their lessons they will often go on to make strong progress and achieve their targets; often, students achieve higher grades than their targets which is a reflection of their continued commitment over a five year period.

Statistically, the national *transition matrices* show us the most likely grade that your child will achieve at GCSE for each subject but this would only reflect average achievement for your child in line with the majority of students nationally. You will be pleased to hear that we want Lakes School students to be better than average! This is why we set targets which represent the progress made by the top 20% of students nationally, after all, if 20% of the students in the country can do it, then why can't students at The Lakes School? This is why we set targets for your child that are broadly 1 grade higher than the average. This provides an appropriate level of challenge. Your child may demonstrate a particular aptitude for a subject and in such circumstances it may be helpful to raise the target grade for your child. It is very rare indeed for the school to lower the target grade for a child.

Now that you have set targets, how does my child get from their SATs to their GCSEs?

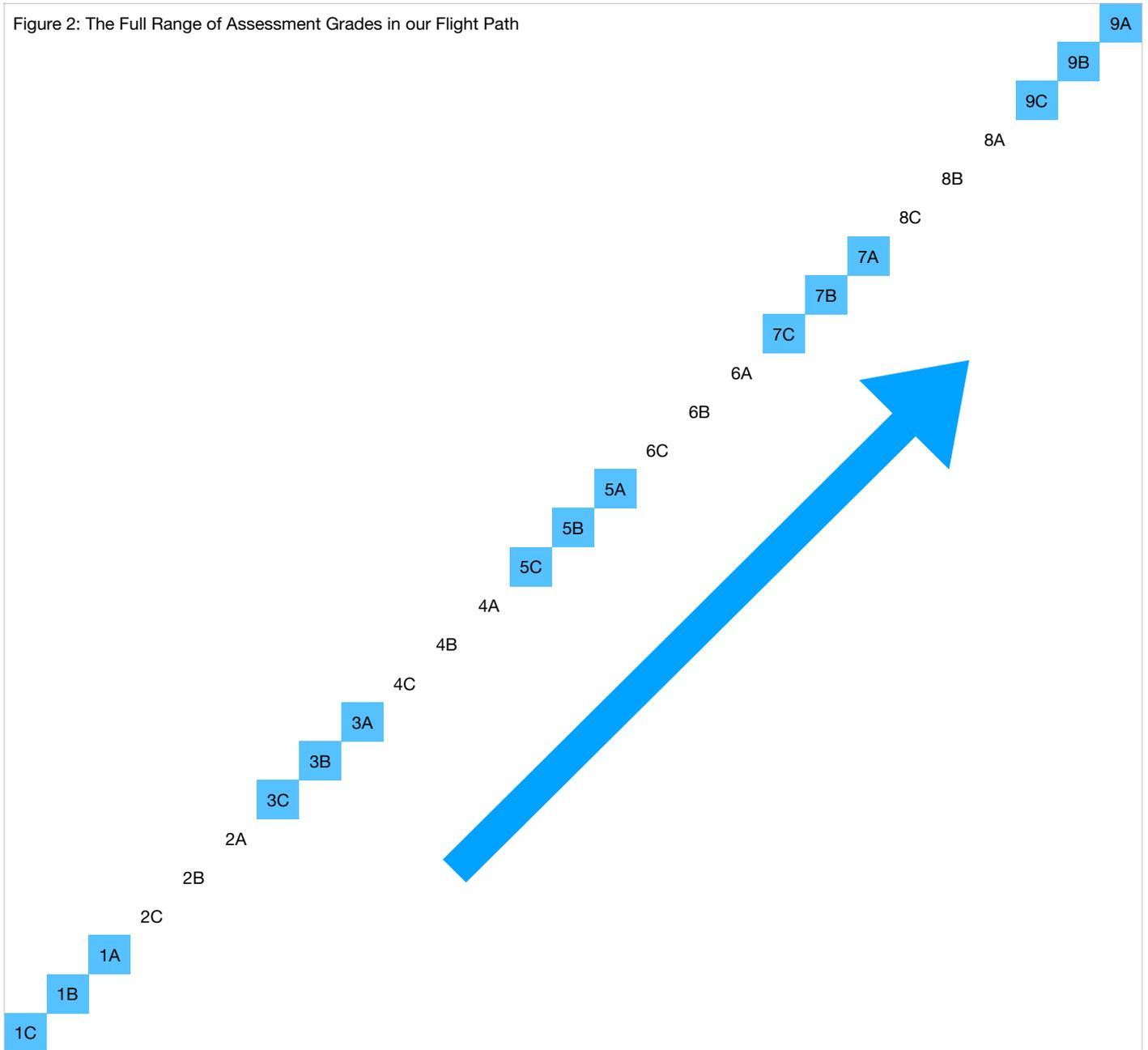
From Year 7 to Year 11, your child will embark on a 5 year journey, during which they will make progress from their SATs starting point to their GCSE targets. To help us assess your child's progress during this journey we plot something called a *flight path*. If your child follows this flight path closely from term to term and year to year, then they are likely to arrive at their destination or their GCSE target for each of the subjects they study.

What is a *flight path*?

Your child will be set a *flight path* for each of the subjects that they study and this *flight path* will set out the progress your child should make as an alpha-numerical journey; this means a combination of numbers and letters. Our *flight paths* travel from a 1c to a 9a. Each number is called a grade with grade 9 being the highest. Within each grade is a level which is indicated by the letters a, b and c where a is the higher level, c is the lower level and b is in the middle. Typically, your child will make steady progress through each of the levels before progressing to the next grade.

Figure 2 below indicates the full *flight path* for our assessments. Your child may start at any point on the flight path dependent on their SATs scores. Equally, your child may have a target, or a destination, at any point on the *flight path*, dependent on their starting point.

Figure 2: The Full Range of Assessment Grades in our Flight Path



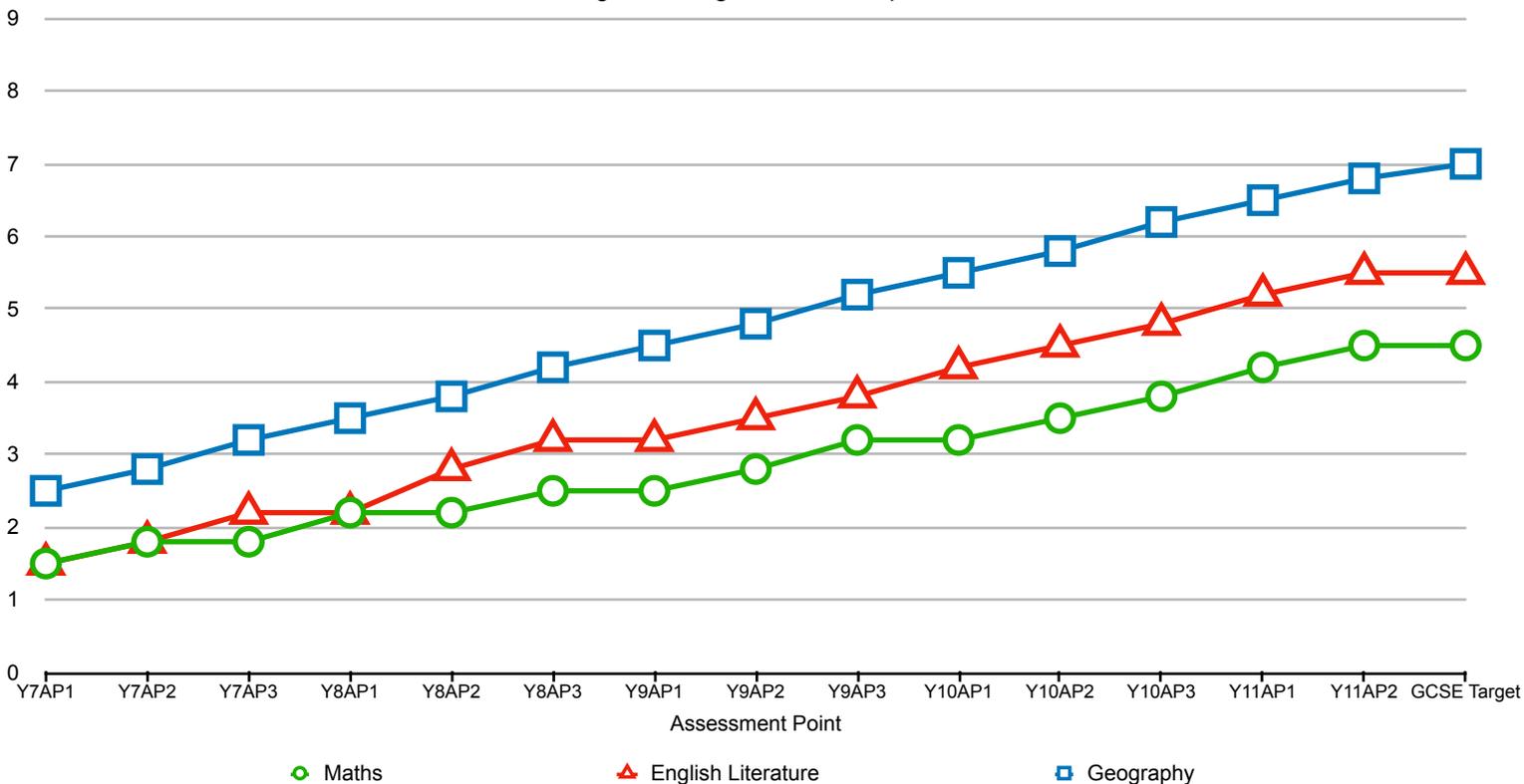
Where can I find some examples of how the school sets *targets* and *flight paths*?

Right here! Below, you can find 3 fictional examples of how we set *targets* and plot a *flight path* for 3 different students, each with a different starting point based on their Year 6 SATs scores. The examples are summarised below and cover three different starting points and three different GCSE subjects. Figure 3 below provides a quick summary of the *flight paths* which feature in our examples.

In figure 4 below, you can view a graph which plots the *flight path* examples from the table in Figure 3. *Flight paths* are created for each subject your child studies and they provide a guide so that we can check that your child is on track to continue making good progress towards their final GCSE target.

Figure 3: Flight Path Examples	Key Stage 2 Data Used	Scaled Score	Flight Path Starting Point in Year 7	Likely GCSE Target
Setting a target for GCSE Maths	Child's Key Stage 2 Maths Score	90	1B	4
Setting a target for GCSE English Literature	Child's Key Stage 2 Reading Score	100	1B	5
Setting a target for GCSE Geography	Child's Key Stage 2 Combined English and Maths Score	110	2B	7

Figure 4: Flight Path Examples



Is student progress as linear as it looks in a *flight path*?

In short, no. During the course of their time at school, a child's progress will speed up and slow down due to a wide range of factors which may relate to school or life at home, or indeed a number of other factors which may influence a child's happiness and ability to learn.

However, flight paths do provide a constant measure against which your child's progress can be measured. If your child's progress stays close to the target grades shared in your child's report then you know that they are on track to achieve their target grade at the end of the year and at the end of Key Stage 4.

When and how do you assess my child? What is an assessment point?

Teachers will be assessing your child all of the time. Sometimes this is through an end of topic test or a trial exam. This helps teachers and students assess the extent to which the correct knowledge, skills and understanding has been developed. Such assessments will typically take the form of a written or practical task and may be referred to as a summative assessment which takes place at the end of a period of learning. Your child's teachers will also assess their ongoing work in the classroom and through their homework. Teachers are able to assess the progress your child is making through a range of classroom activities which might include question and answer sessions, group work, written work in books, presentations or project work to name but a few. This ongoing assessment may be referred to as formative assessment and it helps teachers adapt their curriculum and lesson plans to meet the needs of your child and groups of children within their classes.

Your child's teachers will then use all of this assessment information to make a decision about their *current working grade* and they will record this centrally at our whole school *assessment points* which take place three times a year. Typically, these assessment points take place in December, March and July and after each of these *assessment points* we will send home a report through our Arbor parent portal. This will report will provide you with information about your child's achievement including the progress they are making towards achieving their targets. The reports may also include comments from your child's class teachers.

Why do you have 3 assessment points in a year?

When assessing your child it is important to provide them with the time and the space to make progress. Our assessment, recording and reporting pattern provides teachers with lots of lesson time to support your child with their learning before the next assessment point. During this time, your child's teachers will be monitoring your child's achievement in lessons, and also their attitude to learning, to ensure that they are on track for the next assessment point. We find that three assessment points provides teachers and children with the breathing space they need to make strong progress between assessment points.

Should I worry if my child is below target at an assessment point?

Ideally, your child should make steady progress towards their GCSE targets in line with the *flight path* for each subject they are studying. Sometimes, you will find that your child is judged to be ahead of their assessment point target which is great news as it means they are working really hard and are making excellent progress.

We would always advise parents to spend time talking to your child about their report and you can always contact your child's Form Tutor and class teachers should you require any further information about your child's achievement.

The table in Figure 5 below, illustrates several scenarios that you may experience regarding your child's progress and we have provided a helpful guide so that you can consider how best to support your child.

Figure 5: Things to consider if your child is below target

Things to Consider	
My child is just below target in 1 or 2 subjects	<p>If your child is normally on track, this might not be a cause for concern. Sometimes, children cover a topic or a set of skills that they find challenging and it means they might be slightly below target now and then.</p> <p>You might like to find out from your child why they are below target and then keep an eye on your child's next report to see if they are back on track. If not, this might be a good time to have a chat with your child's Form Tutor or their class teachers.</p>
My child is just below target in many subjects	<p>You may be aware of a reason why your child is below target in a number of subjects; sometimes children go through a difficult period in their lives and this can sometimes affect their progress.</p> <p>You might like to contact your child's teachers to find out further details about why your child is just below target in a number of subjects and then keep an eye on your child's next report to see if they are working hard to get back on track.</p>
My child is well below target in 1 or 2 subjects	<p>If your child is well below target in 1 or 2 subjects then you might like to contact your child's Form Tutor or class teachers to explore the reasons why. There may be good reasons for this and it may be that your child needs to focus on particular aspects of the subject that they are finding difficult to grasp.</p>
My child is well below target in many subjects	<p>You may already be aware of the reasons for this and be in conversation with your child's Form Tutor, the pastoral team or your child's class teachers.</p> <p>Normally, a child who is in this situation would benefit from a meeting in school with their parent/s to make a plan for moving forward.</p>

How important is Attitude to Learning?

Attitude to Learning is a very important part of your child's life at school. With the right attitude towards their learning, your child will achieve well and make strong progress. There are four aspects to our Attitude to Learning expectations: Relationships, Knowledge & Understanding, Commitment and Efficiency. Students are given a score out of 5 for each of the subjects they study and you should expect your child to be achieving a score of 3 or above in all of their subjects. A score of 2 or below indicates that your child is not yet meeting the school's expectations with regard to their Attitude to Learning and there is scope for improvement.

Your child's Attitude to Learning score may help explain why your child is below target, or indeed above target, for some of the subjects they study.

You can access further information about our Attitude to Learning expectations by [clicking here](#).

What does the information mean on the Assessment Point Reports?

Below you can find an example of a Key Stage 3 and a Key Stage 4 Assessment Point report. We have drawn your attention to a few key pieces of information to help you interpret the report and talk about it with your child.



- Year 8 Assessment Point 1

The Lakes School



Year group Form

Year 8

Form tutor

Attendance*	Lates	Unauthorised Absences	Authorised Absences
99.1%	0	2	0
Incidents	Detentions	Merits	Report date <input type="text"/>
1	0	31	

The grade your teacher says you are working at right now.

Course	Teacher	Year target	Current Working Grade	ATTITUDE TO LEARNING	Term 1 Target	Comment
Art:		4C	3B	4	3B	
Computer Science:		4C	3B	5	3B	
Drama:		4C	3A	3	3B	
English:		4C	2A	4	3B	
PE:		4C	3C	4	3B	Your teachers may add a comment here about your progress or attitude to learning.
Geography:		4C	3B	4	3B	
History:		4C	3A	5	3B	
Mathematics:		4C	3A	4	3B	
Music:		4C	3C	3	3C	
Philosophy and Ethics:		N/A	N/A	4	N/A	
Science:		4C	3B	4	3B	
Spanish:		3A	3C	5	3C	
Design and Technology:		4C	3C	4	3C	

↓ Your targets to work towards for the end of the school year.

↑ The grade your teacher says you are working at right now.

↓ Your target for this term. Check how close your current working grade is to this term's target.



- Year 11 Assessment Point 1

The Lakes School



Year group Form

Year 11

Form tutor

Attendance*	Lates	Unauthorised Absences	Authorised Absences
99.1%	0	0	2
Incidents	Detentions	Merits	Report date <input type="text"/>
0	0	3	

The grade your teacher says you are working at right now.

Course	Teacher	Year target	Current working grade	Term 1 Target	ATTITUDE TO LEARNING	Comment
Art:		7B	6A	6A	5	Your teachers may add a comment here about your progress or attitude to learning.
Chemistry:		7B	7C	6A	4	
English: Language		8B	7B	8C	5	
Games :		N/A	N/A		4	
Geography:		7B	6A	6A	5	
History:		7B	6A	6A	5	
Mathematics:		6B	5C	6C	4	
Physics:		7B	6A	6A	5	
Spanish:		7B	6A	6A	4	

↓ Your targets to work towards for the end of the school year.

↑ The grade your teacher says you are working at right now.

↓ Your target for this term. Check how close your current working grade is to this term's target.

Glossary of Terms Related to Assessment

Term	Definition
Achievement	In school terms, achievement is reflected by the GCSE and A-Level grades a child achieves and how they these grades compare to their potential or target grades.
Assessment	The process of finding out what a child knows, can do and understands.
Assessment Point	A moment in the year when teachers capture a child's current working grade.
Attainment	The grade or grades achieved by a child in national exams such as GCSEs and A-Levels.
Current Working Grade	<p>A grade awarded to a child to indicate their current level of ability. Typically, this is represented by a number followed by the letter A, B or C to indicate a strong (A), secure (B) or insecure (C) level of ability with that grade.</p> <p>For examples child awarded a grade of 5A is strongly placed within a grade 5 and moving toward a grade 6 where they might soon be graded as a 6C.</p>
Flight Path	The incremental journey that a child follows as they make progress from one term to the next and from one year to the next in each of the subjects they study. A child's flight path in one subject may differ from their flightpath in another subject.
Formative Assessment	Ongoing assessment which is used by teachers to assess what a child can do well and what they need to do to improve. Formative assessment comes from the work children do in the classroom in their books and folders, during class discussions and through a wide range of other learning activities.
Standardised Score	<p>A number given to a child following a summative assessment which helps to compare their attainment with the attainment of all other children who took the same test.</p> <p>Typically, 100 will be average. A child with a score above 100 is above average and a child with a score below 100 is below average. A higher or lower number correlates to how much above or below the average of 100.</p>
Summative Assessment	Assessment which is used at the end of a unit of work or sequence of learning to indicate the level of a child's achievement across the topics tested. Summative assessment is typically assessed through a test or the production of a final assessed piece of work.
Target	The grade a child works towards which is set by the school and based on the child's prior attainment. A child will work toward targets in all of the subjects they study. The targets provide a focus for each child at the end of the term, for the end of the year and also for the end of their GCSE or A-Level studies. A child may be set different targets across all of the subjects they study.
Transition Matrix	<p>A table which shows the relationship between the grades children achieved at the end of Year 6 and the grades that the same children went on to achieve in their GCSEs. Transition Matrices are updated each year and are specific to a court of children. Sometimes, a Transition Matrix may include the data from several cohorts of children across several years which provides a stronger correlation between the Year 6 grades and the GCSE grades they take 5 years later.</p>