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December 2016

Dear Parents and Guardians

GCSE Grading

Please find enclosed your son/daughter's end of term report.

This year the Third Form exam and attainment grades will appear as a number format instead of the traditional letter format. This is because the government changes to education have included a gradual move to the new, reformed GCSE grading, which will be using levels 1 to 9, rather than letter grades U to A*. All GCSE subjects for the current Third Form will be assessed using the new number levels, hence we are now marking all their work, assessments and attainment using levels 1 to 9. The one exception is Latin, which as a certificate will still be marked with grades A* - U when the exam is taken in 2018.

To help you understand what the new levels mean, the comparison between the old and new grading systems is roughly as follows:

8 = A*
7 = A
6 = B
5 = C+
4 = C-
3 = D
2 = E
1 = F
0 = U

You may notice that the table above does not include the new grade 9. This is because this grade essentially represents an A** and will only be awarded by the exam boards based on the performance across the national cohort. We have been told that the formula for working this out will be to take the percentage of pupils achieving a grade 7 and above nationally, divide that by two and then add 7%. This would then be the percentage of pupils within the grade 7 and above cohort that will be achieving a grade 9, with the grade 8 boundary set to have equal space between grades 7 and 9. As you can imagine, this will be impossible for use to calculate in advance, so we are taking the approach of not awarding grade 9 for our internal assessments, but rather we will leave the awarding of 9 to the exam boards once they have the results of the whole cohort.

I hope this helps you to better understand these national changes to GCSE grading and how we are managing them at Stowe, but do please feel free to get in touch if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely

Dr Julie Potter

