



Bishop Wordsworth's School

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Understanding your son's Yr7 and 8 Report

At BWS we use 'ability bands' to track the progress of students in lower school. Each of your son's teachers has determined his 'Initial Ability Band' and this was done in the first term.

- For Yr7 students this will generally have been through a baseline assessment in each subject. We have a diverse range of feeder primary schools and consequently these assessments are designed to take account of potential as well as current knowledge.
- Initial Ability Bands for Yr8 students will have been based on their level of attainment at the end of Yr7, as well as initial work done at the start of this year.

The bands are (in order of ability): Foundation, Developing, Secure, Confident, Exceptional.

Departments use the banding system to fit their individual needs and assessment objectives so whilst the exact distribution is unique, a fair guide would be to say that the initial ability band distribution is weighted to the centre with the *average* student in the secure band. The exceptional and foundation bands have generally fewer than 5% of students in either category and all bands are aimed for students to ultimately secure higher-level GCSE passes, although it is important to note that students are not being assessed against GCSE criteria in lower school.

If your son is making 'expected progress' he should expect to remain 'within band' for future reports (see graphic below), provided he does so this will represent positive and sustained progress towards what will become challenging GCSE target grades and strong performance in external examinations.

Initial Ability Band (yr. 7)	Grade report (yr. 7)	Full report (yr. 7)	Ability band adjusted (yr. 8)	Grade report (yr. 8)	Full report (yr. 8)
			Exceptional		
			Confident		
			Secure		
			Developing		
			Foundation		

Ability in subject

Progress which is faster than expected may result in him moving up a band, whilst progress slower than expected may result in him dropping a band. In many circumstances the current ability band will be weighted by recent assessment(s) and / or coursework and hence thorough preparation for end of topic tests and regular submission of homework are critical to maintaining performance.

Comparison of ability bands	Progress
Current assessment two bands higher than initial assessment	Much more than expected
Current assessment one band higher than initial assessment	More than expected
Current assessment same as initial assessment	As expected
Current assessment one band lower than initial assessment	Less than expected
Current assessment two bands lower than initial assessment	Much less than expected

In school the information on this report will be used by the lower school office to assess global performance and progress over the year – helping to identify where your son is doing well, and where action is needed to address underperformance.

At home we would hope that this report can act as a springboard for conversations. Subjects in which your son has made less than expected progress can be discussed and the causal factors contributing to his performance can be identified, with steps promoted to mitigate the impact. Should you have any questions about how your son can effectively do this we would first direct you to the ‘Attitude to Learning’ criteria which should be useful in informing conversations about motivation, organisation and involvement. Where performance is ‘much less than expected’ your son’s report also includes the staff initials for further contact should you have any questions.

Reviewed: February 2023.

M. Thorne

Assistant Head