



**Rayner Stephens**  
HIGH SCHOOL

# GUIDE TO THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM



Dear Families,

On behalf of Rayner Stephens High School we would like to welcome you and your family to the extended community of our educational trust. In joining our school you have chosen to be part of our vision to secure a world class education for students. We are totally committed to our ambitious project of supporting all students so that they are equipped to succeed in all aspects of their lives and able to fulfil their future aspirations. Working with you in partnership we will be better able to meet our ambition: **'We support, challenge and collaborate in our endeavour to provide world-class education that allows our whole community to flourish.'**

We are ambitious for all our students and we have high expectations of achievement and success. We believe that education that meets the needs of each individual can transform lives and that this is central to future personal happiness. Our curriculum is designed to provide all students with the knowledge, skills and global competencies they need to flourish in life.

In this guide you will find detailed information which explains all the key approaches that have been developed to improve the experience of students and parents/carers. You will find information on the following important areas:

- A broad and balanced curriculum
- Target Setting and Assessment
- Key Stage 3 Progress Ranges
- Reporting using Working at Grades (WAGs)
- Key Stage 3 Exercise Book Stickers
- Feedback approaches
- Subject Curriculum Overviews
- Rubrics to support learning
- Student use of rubrics

Although there is a lot of information here we hope that you will find the information on all our approaches really helpful for you in supporting your child's education throughout their school career. We suggest you keep this guide handy for reference in the coming school year.

**Rayner Stephens High School**



## A Broad and Balanced Curriculum

Our curriculum fulfils all statutory requirements and whilst the compulsory core for all students has an emphasis on the academic, it is broad and balanced in nature. Our model emphasises the importance of learning in literacy, numeracy, languages, humanities, and science. We actively encourage high levels of participation in subjects that ultimately lead to the English Baccalaureate. In addition, students study a full range of subjects including Music, Computing, Technology, Art, PE and Drama.

At Key Stage 4 (KS4, which commences in Year 10), in addition to the academic core, we offer a wide range of optional subjects, including creative, technical, vocational and alternative routes. KS4 courses prepare students for their examination courses, but also seeks to engage, inspire and challenge all students as they develop their skills and competencies. We work with students and their families to determine the most appropriate route to follow.

During Year 9 students are guided to choose from a wide range of options subjects, which best support their future aspirations and offer them the greatest opportunities for success. These routes are not fixed on entry but will emerge over the course of a students' time at school.

## Target Setting and Assessment

Our assessment and reporting approaches help students and families to have a clear understanding of current levels of achievement and what is needed to improve.

## Year 7, 8 and 9 - Progress Ranges

At the beginning of each year students will receive their own personal expected progress ranges for each of the subjects they study. These personal ranges alongside the use of rubrics (see later section) will help ensure that students and families all have a clear understanding of what appropriate levels of achievement should look like for a student over time and allow progress to be monitored more effectively.

All KS3 students will be provided with a starting point in each subject based on their prior attainment from Key Stage 2 (KS2), their primary teacher's assessment information and in-school testing completed in September. The progress ranges will be defined as follows: **Developing**, **Advancing** and **Mastering**. These progress ranges will be established on entry to Year 7. The progress ranges for students in Year 8 and 9 will not be based only on information from KS2 results but will also consider the achievement and progress that they have made in each subject during their time in secondary school.

Through each term teachers will review progress of students regularly and will be able to increase targets when students have been regularly exceeding their current range. Progress range expectations will never be lowered as they are based on a point already reached in a student's education. All progress ranges will be reviewed annually.

## Year 7, 8 and 9 - reporting using Working at Grades (WAGs)

On-going assessment will allow teachers to monitor students' progress against their personal progress range and on a termly basis will report a current 'working at grade' or 'WAG'.

Students who are mainly achieving in-line with the relevant success criteria of their current range will be determined to be working **EQUAL** to their expected standard (**EQL**). If students are not fulfilling all of the expectations of their current range, or are operating mainly at a level below this, they will be determined to be working **BELOW** their expected standard (**BLW**). Where students are mainly fulfilling the expectations of a higher range or where their work regularly demonstrates knowledge, skill and understanding at a greater depth, these students will be determined to be **EXCEEDING** their expected standard (**EXD**).

Grade	Description
<b>EXD</b>	Exceeding your expected standard
<b>EQL</b>	Working at your expected standard
<b>BLW</b>	Working below your expected standard



On a termly basis students will be directed to record their current teacher assessed progress on the stickers on the front of their exercise books:

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Name:

Subject:

Teacher:

Current Range:

Term 1:

Term 2:

Term 3:

Achievement Success Professionalism Integrity Respect Endeavour

On the stickers, teachers will direct students to insert their specified KS3 Progress Range descriptor, Developing, Advancing or Mastering. On a termly basis when 'WAG' grades are provided students will record either BLW, EQL or EXD, in-line with the information that has been formally reported to families.

### Feedback Approaches

We believe that having consistently well planned and differentiated lessons is the most effective way to ensure students make good progress. We also know that the provision of high-quality feedback is one of the most important elements in ensuring students make good progress.

Our approach to feedback aims to ensure that teachers regularly reflect on the learning in their classes, which in turn provides opportunities to improve planning, and address gaps, errors and misconceptions in students' knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers are expected to provide effective and personalised feedback by regularly analysing learning to effectively assess progress, identify individual and full class teaching and learning points which can be swiftly addressed by informing planning and delivery.

The approach is designed to:

- Significantly improve the quality and timely impact of feedback on students' work
- Ensure that feedback is timely and effective, used in sequence after lessons
- Be task focused - improving use of assessment to inform planning
- Ensure that staff have more time to focus on good quality planning

### Subject Curriculum Overviews

We provide students and families with subject curriculum overviews which will clearly show how that subject's curriculum will be delivered over time. These will all be set out in the format shown in the example below:

Year 7 - English						
Curriculum intent	In Year 7, students are introduced to the fundamental skills they will develop across their five years at Longdendale. In terms of reading, they will build on KS2 reading skills with comprehension and inference, but will also begin to analyse and evaluate writers' choices. In writing, they will be learning to refine their writing skills through writing for different purposes and audiences, as well as in different formats. The curriculum is designed to build on students' cultural capital by teaching about historical figures and events, global culture and through exploring moral issues. Students will build written skills and oracy as they explore complex topics and issues.					
Term	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Scheme	The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas	Short Stories and Imaginative Writing	Reading: Animals	Non-Fiction and Transactional Writing	Poetry	Consolidation
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading the novel <i>The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas</i>.</li> <li>• Understanding the context surround WW2 and the Holocaust.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language and structure devices.</li> <li>• What makes a good short story.</li> <li>• Spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the differences between fiction and non-fiction.</li> <li>• Language and structural devices.</li> <li>• Purpose, audience and format of writing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language and structure devices.</li> <li>• What makes effective writing to persuade, argue and inform.</li> <li>• Spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poetic devices</li> <li>• How poetry differs from other writing.</li> <li>• Rules and conventions found in poetry.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploration of historical and cultural information around different continents of the world.</li> <li>• Consolidation of reading and writing skills from across the year.</li> </ul>
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critically evaluating a writer's intentions and how successful they have been.</li> <li>• Analysing how a theme or idea is presented across a full text.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysing and evaluating why a short story has been effective.</li> <li>• Imaginative writing; emulating the skills another writer has used.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scanning texts to respond to comprehension questions.</li> <li>• Intensive reading to analyse the writer's choices.</li> <li>• Extensive reading to evaluate the success of a text.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysing and evaluating why a piece of 'real world' writing has been effective.</li> <li>• Transactional writing; emulating the skills another writer has used.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inference and understanding of a wide range of poetry.</li> <li>• Analysing the poets' choices.</li> <li>• Emulating certain poetry styles in your own writing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysing and evaluating writers' choices.</li> <li>• Spelling, punctuation and grammar.</li> <li>• Transactional and imaginative writing.</li> </ul>

## Use of rubrics to support learning

From these overviews subject leaders and teachers have developed rubrics which will be used to inform the planning of teaching, learning and assessment of each unit of work in a subject area. Rubrics give an outline of the opportunities that students will be given to develop the knowledge, understanding, skills and competencies necessary to make progress and be successful.

### Rubrics:

- provide a clear overview learning plan for the whole course of study
- ensure that the subject curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced
- outline success criteria, which help clarify and share the expected standards for performance
- and allow judgements to be made in relation to students' progress
- are designed to help students to remember in the long term the subject content they have been taught and to integrate this new knowledge into their conceptual understanding of the subject
- and relate this more widely to other areas of the curriculum
- strengthen the feedback approaches being used in Trust schools

### Student use of rubrics

Although rubrics will mainly be used by teachers when planning, a section of each rubric will be provided to and used by students within lessons. This will ensure that students begin each new topic in every subject area with a summary of content, the key concepts and subject terminology for that unit along-side clearly defined success criteria. This will help them know what they are aiming for.

Subject:		Year Group:	
Unit Title:			
Term of Delivery/Duration:			
Summary of content: <div style="text-align: center;">Font</div>			
Key Concepts and subject terminology to be embedded:			
Success Criteria (Working at Grade):			
Developing	Advancing	Mastering	

Basic **subject details** are recorded in this section

A **summary of content** is provided in this section. This is the section of the rubric setting out what learners will need to **know**

**Key concepts** and **subject terminology** are provided in this section. This is the section of the rubric setting out the key areas of learning that learners will need to **understand** and **apply** as they progress through the unit

Clearly defined **success criteria** are provided in this section. This is the section of the rubric setting out what learners will need to do in order to make progress and be successful. This criteria will outline the **knowledge, skills** and **understanding** learners need to demonstrate to make progress appropriate to their current progress range.

As illustrated above, this section of the rubric will be given to students to stick into their exercise book in all subjects to help them understand what they are studying. This will allow them to focus fully on developing their understanding, building knowledge and demonstrating the necessary skills during lessons.

Over the course of a unit of work students and teachers will both be able to refer to the success criteria and use them as a checklist of progress being made. Success criteria will be divided into the three tiers of the KS3 progress ranges. The criteria will clearly demonstrate the different levels of knowledge, skill and understanding that students are expected to develop within each unit of work. Use of carefully devised success criteria covering the full ability and target range allows ambitious levels of challenge for all students and ensures no ceiling on achievement. These rubric success criteria will in turn feed into the specific planning of individual lessons by teachers as they plan appropriate learning for the specific needs of the students in their class. Encouraging the use of success criteria by students will help them develop their understanding and make judgements about the quality of their own work and have better understanding of what they need to do to improve. Students will be encouraged to keep track of their personal performance in each unit by ticking off the appropriate success criteria on the student rubric stuck in their exercise books.