



# ***Aiming High at Richmond School***



**Parents - Richmond School**



# **Aiming High at Richmond School**

**A guide on monitoring and  
rewarding student  
academic progress  
2010 - 2011**

# Aiming High at Richmond School

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# Aiming High at Richmond School

## 1. Introduction

Dear Parent/Student

At Richmond School we believe that a student's personal success is significantly enhanced by hard work and applying maximum effort. We also believe that all students can work hard regardless of their academic ability, and should be rewarded for such efforts. Students who demonstrate a particular talent or apply effort beyond our expectations in one or more curriculum areas should be praised and have their achievements celebrated.

Equally, parents should be involved in this act of rewarding hard working students.

From September 2010 we will be introducing a new policy that focuses on rewarding all students for the effort they apply to their studies and in the way we report to parents. This policy is called 'Aiming High' and it will link to our recently introduced Behaviour Management Policy.

Please read on to find out more and to discover how you can help play a key role.....

## 2. Target Grades

Early in the Autumn term the school will set targets, levels or grades in each subject for every student in Years 7 - 13. During the first half term, just before the mid term break, we will inform every parent of the targets that have been agreed and discussed with individual students. The student's Group Tutor along with the subject teacher will share this information and monitor the progress towards reaching targets.

### How do we establish our academic expectations?

For students in **Years 7, 8 and 9** targets are currently set based on performance at primary school (KS2 SATS in Year 6), the students reading age and through a nationally recognized database established by the 'Fischer Family Trust'. ([www.fischertrust.org](http://www.fischertrust.org)) The Fischer Family Trust has developed systems to provide a range of analyses using pupil-level data. The analysis provides an indication of likely performance based upon progress equal to that across all schools and equal to that in similar schools. The targets set do include a significant challenge factor.

All students in Years 7 and 9 have their reading ability tested. The scores are monitored and for those students who are reading at a level below their chronological age extra support is **1**

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provided. All parents can support students with reading by encouraging them to use the library and purchasing books from our Bookstore. Mrs. Westgarth in the English Department and Mrs. Clarke in the Learning Support Department can give further advice on reading.

Given all these sources of data that are available to help us establish our academic expectations we believe we can be reasonably accurate in predicting individual student outcomes. We acknowledge that target setting is not an exact science but we do place a lot of value on the estimated levels or grades that the data gives us for each individual child. When a student is in **Years 10 and 11** we may review the data to predict an even more accurate picture of expected outcomes at the end of the course a student is taking e.g. GCSE or BTEC or Diploma courses.

For students embarking on **post 16 courses** targets are set using a nationally recognized analytical and practical system known as 'Alps' (Advanced Level Performance Systems) plus the data we have from their previous GCSE/BTEC results.

As a parent it is useful to know the expectations that have been set for your child and to be able to monitor their progress on a regular basis by getting feedback from the school. You will be able to contact school at any time to find out how well your child is progressing towards the targets set and we shall report to you at the end of each term. Equally, you can see how your child is progressing by accessing the parental portal on our school website. Guidance on this will be sent out to parents in the Autumn Term.

## 3. Aiming High Grades

At the end of every term the school reports to parents on the effort their child has put into achieving the expected grades. 'Aiming High' grades are awarded for effort ranging from E1 to E6 in every subject. We call these E grades:

- E1** - Star Students
- E2** – Promising Students
- E3** – Working Students
- E4** – Wake – Up Call Students
- E5** – Target Students
- E6** – Negative Students

A copy of a typical report is on the next page and an explanation follows. Parents receive three termly reports relating to effort in all subjects during the academic year. The Summer Term Report contains a reference from the Group Tutor to sum up the year.

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Each effort grade comes with a clear descriptor, which students will know and see displayed around the school:

Remember **you** start a new monitoring period on an E1! Every term we will tell you and your family how we think you are doing. We will give you attainment and effort grades. This is what the effort grades mean.

## **E1 – STAR STUDENTS**

You always invest in your own learning. You:

- Hand homework in on time.
- Do reading/research homeworks.
- Listen carefully to teachers and students.
- Make a good contribution to group work and to whole class discussions.
- Are ready to learn.
- Meet your targets whenever possible.

You do everything the school expects of you and you set an excellent example for other students.

## **E2 – PROMISING STUDENTS**

You almost always invest in your own learning. You:

- Hand homework in on time.
- Do reading/research homeworks.
- Listen carefully to teachers and students.
- Make a good contribution to group work and to whole class discussions.
- Are ready to learn.
- Meet your targets whenever possible.

You make sure that teachers, parents and other students know that you want to learn.

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## E3 – WORKING STUDENTS

You are positive about learning and you usually:

- Hand homework in on time.
- Do reading/research homework.
- Listen carefully to teachers and students.
- Make a good contribution to group work and to whole class discussions.
- Are ready to learn.
- Meet your targets whenever possible.

You are doing fine and completing most of what the school expects. We think you could aim higher and fulfill your promise.

## E4 – WAKE-UP CALL STUDENTS

You are beginning to neglect your school work. You sometimes don't:

- Hand in homework on time.
- Do reading/research homework.
- Listen carefully to teachers and students.
- Make a good contribution to group work and to whole class discussions.
- Meet your targets.

You are often not ready to learn and as a result you are in danger of not doing as well as you can. The attainment grade you have been given will **not** be reached if you do **not** wake up to this problem.

## E5 – TARGET STUDENT

You need help in valuing your own learning and often block the learning of others. You frequently:

- Fail to hand in homework.
- Interrupt lessons.
- Slow down the learning.
- Don't do enough work in lessons.
- Arrive late.
- Distract other students.
- Get easily distracted.
- Refuse reasonable requests.
- Don't meet your targets.

You will already have been spoken to about your work and your parents will have been asked to help you get a grip. You will have already had help and advice. At this stage your parents will be asked permission for you to attend after school sessions to catch up on work and you will be monitored very closely.

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## E6 – NEGATIVE STUDENTS

You are having major difficulties in managing your own learning and are stopping other students learning. You:

- Do no homework.
- Disrupt learning.
- Challenge other students.
- Challenge teachers.
- Truant from lessons.
- Do not respond to being on report.
- Do not improve despite the help we have offered.
- Do not meet your targets.

Serious consequences will follow.

## 4. Parental Consultations

There are a number of consultation sessions throughout the school year for the different year groups.

For parents of **Year 7** students, in the Autumn Term there is an opportunity to come together as a Tutor Group and meet with the Head Teacher to discuss general school issues, share concerns and focus on school improvement. We usually ask parents to come along in three Tutor Groups. The purpose of this meeting is not to discuss an individual student's progress but to share experiences of the first year in secondary school.

Students in **Year 8 in 2010 – 11** will be asked to think about their subjects for the next three years from February onwards. Parents and students are invited into school to meet with a member of the Leadership Team or the Head of Year for a personal interview to discuss the possible routes of study available between the ages of 14 and 19.

Parental Consultation Evenings for **all Year Groups** are arranged after school so that parents can discuss with class teachers the progress that is being made in individual subjects.

## 5. Internal School Examinations

All students in every group will take internal school examinations.

In **Years 7, 8 and 9** we believe that by taking formal examinations students gain good experience for the rigour of external examinations later in their school life.

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Students in **Years 10, 11, 12 and 13** will take examinations and modular tests throughout the year in preparation for their final assessments, usually in the summer term of their final year. It is worth noting that a number of external examinations are sat by students in January. Please do check when examinations and modular tests are taking place if you think you need to take your child out of school during term time.

Examination results are reported to parents via the 'Aiming High' Report or in a separate letter following the examinations.

A diary of internal examinations for this year is posted on the School Website.

## 6. Rewarding students for their effort

The ethos of Richmond School is to celebrate achievement at all levels. Students in Year 7 are given an Achievement Folder in which to store certificates and letters of commendation they receive throughout their life at school.

### Aiming High

From September 2010 a student gaining an **E1** or an **E2** grade in any subject, which demonstrates an outstanding commitment to their work, will receive a letter of commendation. If a student achieves either **all E1 or E2 grades**, or a combination of both, a letter of commendation will follow, together with special privileges and rewards. Students are to be consulted over the appropriateness of rewards through their representative on the Student Council.

### Graduation

The focus of **Years 7 and 8** is to equip all students with the necessary learning skills to embark on courses that lead to external examination success later in their school lives.

At the end of **Year 8** students will consider the most appropriate pathway that will result in maximum examination success within a 14 – 19 curriculum. Some students will be able to select courses that will lead to external examination success. The GCSE/BTEC programme is therefore a three year curriculum commencing in Year 9 for some students in some curriculum areas. By offering 3 years to this programme of study we believe that the most able students will be challenged with a wider range of courses and for students who have a learning difficulty they are given longer time to study for external examination success.

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At the end of Year 8 successful students will be involved in a Graduation Ceremony. This is a rite of passage indicating that the student is capable of commencing courses of study in Year 9. To become a 'Year 8 Richmond Graduate' and access courses that lead to external examination success students must have a minimum of all E3 Grades on their 'Aiming High' Report at the Summer Reporting stage. They should also have evidence of having contributed to the wider life of the school e.g. schools sports team, performance or act of community service, and have a minimum of 92% attendance (exceptions may be made due to certain medical conditions). Richmond Graduates will be given a Certificate of Achievement at a Rewards Ceremony and the opportunity of a celebratory disco.

If a student fails to Graduate (s)he will be placed on a 'Back on Track' programme that focuses the student on learning.

At the end of **Year 11** students will be able to attend the traditional 'Year 11 Prom' on condition that they 'Graduate' and gain a 'Passport' to the Prom. To become a Year 11 'Graduate' students must have:

- 'Aiming High' grades – all E3's or above in the final Report of Year 11.
- An attendance record of at least 92% for the year (unless medical condition prevents this).
- Nil C4 grades on the Behaviour Consequences system between January 2011 and the Prom.
- Maximum attendance at any revision session or coursework catch up programme, as requested by the subject teacher.
- Compliance with the full school uniform policy throughout the academic year, including during examinations.
- Full attendance at all external GCSE examinations.
- All books handed back in to school on or before 'Book Return Day'.

The Prom will take place after the final examination for a Year 11 student. **The date in 2011 is Friday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2011.**

The **Year 13 Prom** is scheduled for **Friday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2011** and the same criteria will apply for those students wishing to attend this traditional event.

## **Student Of The Month**

Every subject area recognizes an individual student's work by selecting a **Student of the Month**. A certificate is presented to a student in every year for their effort in a particular subject.

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## **Extra Curricular Activities**

The majority of students contribute to the wider life of the school by becoming involved in extra curricular activities. Recognition for this may be given by way of a 'Thank You' letter or 'Certificate of Achievement'. Many students due to their talents gain recognition from the County or Area, particularly with success on the sports field.

## **'Richmond Star' Cards**

Students may receive through the post a '**Richmond Star**' card. This is simply a post card sent home through the post congratulating a student on his/her success, effort or positive contribution to the life of the school. Please watch out for a card arriving through your letter box!

## **'Richmond Stars' Gallery**

The School Reception is where we like to display photographs of our talented students. Students are encouraged to have their photograph taken so that others can appreciate their talents and achievements. Photographs are not taken without consent from parents or students.

## **For further Information or Questions**

### **Please contact:**

- **Mrs J Potter (Deputy Head Teacher)**
- **Mrs L Richardson (Assistant Headteacher)**
- **Mr K Allan (Head of Post 16 Learning)**
- **Mr I Robertson (Headteacher)**

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