



VALLEY PARK
SCHOOL

UNDERSTANDING



MINIMUM EXPECTED GRADES

A Guide for Parents

As your child progresses through secondary school, you will hear teachers refer to their MEG (Minimum Expected Grade). MEGs help students, parents, and teachers understand academic progress and identify whether a student is working at, below, or above the level expected for them. This guide explains what MEGs are, how they are used, and how you can support your child in achieving their full potential.

What is a MEG?

MEG stands for Minimum Expected Grade.

It is the minimum grade a student is expected to achieve by the end of key stage 4 if they continue to make expected progress from their starting point.

New MEGs are calculated for students following sixth form courses.

MEGs are designed to provide a realistic but challenging benchmark for achievement.

Why does the school use MEGs?

MEGs help schools to:

- Set high expectations for all students.
- Monitor progress over time.
- Identify students who may need additional support or intervention.
- Recognise students who are making exceptional progress.
- Support discussions about achievement during parents' evenings and progress reviews.
- Ensure all students are making appropriate progress from their individual starting points.

How are MEGs calculated?

- For students in key stages 3 & 4, MEGs are calculated based upon prior attainment data from primary school.
- For students in key stage 5, MEGs are calculated based upon their attainment of their top 8 GCSE and / or vocational qualifications

Schools regularly review their systems to ensure targets remain fair, ambitious, and appropriate.

Can a MEG change?

In some cases, yes.

A student's MEG may be reviewed if:

- Additional assessment information becomes available.
- There is evidence that the original target was not set at the appropriate level.

Any changes will be communicated to students and parents.

What is the difference between Attainment and Progress?

This is one of the most important concepts for parents to understand.

Attainment

Attainment refers to the grade a student is currently achieving.

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For example:

- A student currently working at Grade 5 has an attainment grade of 5.

Progress

Progress refers to how well a student is developing compared with their starting point and MEG.

For example:

- A student achieving Grade 5 who is expected to achieve Grade 5 is making expected progress.
- A student achieving Grade 5 whose MEG is Grade 4 may be exceeding expectations.
- A student achieving Grade 5 whose MEG is Grade 7 may require additional support.

Progress and attainment should always be considered together.

How do subjects use MEGs?

Teachers use MEGs to:

- Monitor individual progress.
- Plan interventions where needed.
- Provide appropriate challenge.
- Inform discussions with students about next steps.

Teachers also consider:

- Classwork
- Homework
- Assessments
- Tests and examinations
- Coursework (where applicable)
- Attitude to learning

A student's progress is never judged on a single piece of work.

How does the school use MEGs?

The school uses MEGs to:

- Track progress across year groups.
- Identify patterns and trends.
- Provide additional support for students who need it.
- Stretch and challenge high-achieving students.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

MEGs are only one part of the information schools use when monitoring achievement.

How do parents know what their child's MEG is?

Parents will receive this information through:

- Progress reports
- Parents' evenings
- Academic review meetings

If you are unsure about your child's MEG, please contact the relevant Futures Lead, Student support Manager or Head of Year.

What do *Below MEG*, *On MEG*, and *Above MEG* mean?

Below MEG

Your child is currently working below the level expected for this stage of their learning.

This may indicate:

- Gaps in understanding.
- Inconsistent completion of homework.
- Poor attendance or punctuality.
- A need for additional support.

Being below MEG at one reporting point does not mean a student cannot catch up.

On MEG

Your child is making the progress expected of them and is on track to achieve their expected grade.

This indicates:

- Secure understanding of current learning.
- Consistent progress.
- Appropriate engagement with lessons and assessments.

Above MEG

Your child is exceeding expected progress and achieving beyond the level currently predicted.

This may indicate:

- Strong subject knowledge.
- Excellent work habits.
- High levels of motivation and engagement.

Students performing above their MEG should continue to challenge themselves to maintain progress.

How often will I receive feedback?

Parents will receive formal progress information three times per year.

Reports will include:

- Progress in relation to MEG.
- Attitude to learning.
- Attendance information.

Parents can also discuss progress during parents' evenings and contact the school at any point if concerns arise.

What else affects academic progress?

Academic success is influenced by many factors, including:

Attendance

Research consistently shows that high attendance is strongly linked to academic achievement.

Even small amounts of missed learning can affect progress.

Attitude to Learning

Students who:

- Participate actively in lessons,
- Complete homework regularly,
- Meet deadlines, and
- Respond positively to feedback

are more likely to achieve or exceed their MEG.

Organisation

Good organisation helps students manage workloads, revision, and assessment deadlines effectively.

Wellbeing

Physical and emotional wellbeing can significantly affect learning. If your child is experiencing difficulties, please contact the school so appropriate support can be provided.

How can I help my child improve?

If your child is below MEG

You can support them by:

- Establishing a regular homework routine.
- Providing a quiet place to study.
- Encouraging good attendance.
- Monitoring deadlines and revision.
- Discussing feedback from teachers.
- Encouraging them to seek help when needed.

Focus on improvement and effort rather than comparing them with others.

If your child is on MEG

Help them maintain momentum by:

- Encouraging consistent study habits.
- Celebrating achievements.
- Supporting revision throughout the year.
- Encouraging independent learning.

If your child is above MEG

Help them continue to develop by:

- Encouraging wider reading.
- Promoting independent research.
- Supporting participation in enrichment opportunities.
- Helping them set ambitious goals.

Frequently Asked Questions

Does a MEG limit what my child can achieve?

No.

A MEG is a benchmark, not a ceiling. Many students exceed their MEG through hard work, determination, and effective support.

Should I be worried if my child is below MEG?

Not necessarily.

One report showing a student below MEG may simply indicate a temporary dip in performance. The important thing is identifying any issues early and working with teachers to support improvement.

Is being above MEG a guarantee of future success?

No.

Students need to maintain effort and engagement throughout their studies. Progress can change over time.

Key Message for Parents

MEGs are designed to support learning, not label students. They provide a useful guide to progress and help schools, students, and families work together towards success. The most important factors in achievement remain effort, attendance, resilience, organisation, and a positive attitude to learning. By working in partnership with the school, parents can play a vital role in helping their child reach—and often exceed—their potential.