



KS3 Year 9 Assessment Parent Handbook 2025-26



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Ponteland High School

Callerton Lane, Ponteland, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE20 9EG



Dear Parent,

An Introduction to the Year 9 Key Stage 3 (KS3) Assessment Process

The Year 9 curriculum has been carefully designed to stretch and challenge students, ensuring that they are thoroughly prepared for the transition to GCSE studies. Our curriculum is comprehensive, revisiting and expanding upon topics covered in earlier years while also introducing new and engaging content.

To provide students, parents, and teachers with an accurate measure of understanding, we have implemented two assessment windows during Year 9. These assessments offer a crucial snapshot of student learning and are designed to reflect the summative style of assessments students will experience in Years 10 and 11.

The tests will be conducted during scheduled lesson times under teacher supervision. Teachers will mark the tests and record the results centrally. Parents will receive the following information in February and June on a grade card:

- The mark achieved by their child on each test.
- The average mark achieved by all students taking the test.
- A corresponding KS3 grade descriptor.

The results from these tests will provide valuable information on performance across all subjects studied at KS3. The data from the February tests will be useful for making informed decisions about KS4 options and will enable teachers and students to effectively identify and address any knowledge gaps as they progress towards Key Stage 4. The results from the June tests will form part of the data used to allocate students to classes in Year 10.

We trust this handbook will offer useful information regarding the structure and delivery of the tests, as well as an overview of the assessed content. If you have any general questions about the assessments please do not hesitate to contact me. For subject specific questions please contact the relevant Head of Department.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Warland', written in a cursive style.

Mark Warland
Deputy Headteacher



Structure of the tests

Each subject assessment will comprise of the following 3 sections:

Section 1- Multiple Choice Questions

Section 2: Short written responses

Section 3: Application of skill (Extended written answers or demonstration of the skill)

The test will be 40 marks in total with students being given 45 minutes to complete it. Tests will be conducted in silence under teacher supervision. Students will not be allowed to use any resources other than those provided by the teacher.

Reporting of Results

Parents will receive the results from the tests taken during January (Assessment Window 1) in February. For the tests taken in May/June (Assessment Window 2) parents will receive the results at the end of June. The mark achieved on each test along with the average mark for all students who took the test will be shown. In Maths, students will either sit a core or higher paper, depending on their current set. No tests will be undertaken in RE as students started their GCSE content in this subject at the start of September. For this subject a GCSE 'Working At grade' will be reported instead.

KS3 Grade Descriptors

In addition to the raw score and cohort average mark a KS3 Grade Descriptor will also be shown for each subject. We will use the same language that students are familiar with from Year 7 and 8.

If a student is not yet meeting the expected standards for their age at the time of reporting we would award a grade of "**Working towards the expected standard**". This will typically be around 10% of the cohort.

If a student is working at the expected standard we would report a grade of "**Working at the expected standard**". This will typically be around 50% of the cohort.

For those students who are working significantly above the age expected standard at the time of reporting we would award a grade of "**Working at Greater Depth**". This will typically be around 40% of the cohort.



Year 9 KS3 Assessments - Summary of topics covered in Spring Term assessments

Subject	Students will be asked questions to assess their knowledge and understanding in the following areas:
Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The 'Words of the Week' for unit 1 Name Strip project ● Drawing task - How to apply tone correctly
Computing	Knowledge and understanding of E-safety and Computation thinking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● E-Safety: Passwords, Hacking and Copyright ● Computational Thinking: Algorithms, Sequence, Selection
Design Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Word of the week definitions ● Isometric drawing task including drawing, rendering, use of tone and texture. Creativity will also be assessed. ● Demonstrating technical knowledge of materials and manufacturing
English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge of key analytical terminology ● Ability to read and understand an unseen extract ● Ability to be able to write a creative response using an image as stimulus
French	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Vocabulary on home and household tasks ● Vocabulary on daily routine ● Vocabulary on family and relationships ● Giving a variety of opinions and reasons ● Using the past, present and future tenses
Food Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nutrition and ingredients ● Healthy eating and a balance diet ● Understanding of cooking methods ● Different food groups ● Macro and micronutrients
Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Weather and Climate ● Global Development



German	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Vocabulary on daily routine, sport and hobbies ● Vocabulary on food and drink ● Giving a variety of opinions and reasons ● Using the past and present tenses
History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Causes of World War One ● Trench life and The Battle of the Somme ● The role of General Haig ● The Treaty of Versailles
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Data handling cycle including scatter graphs ● Line symmetry and reflection ● Straight line graphs ● Forming and solving equations ● Properties of polygons
Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge of the main musical elements studied so far in Year 9. ● Ability to listen to music and hear details using accurate musical vocabulary to describe the sounds. ● Ability to perform music confidently and accurately, demonstrating control, expression, and secure musicianship.
Physical Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge of the 5 components of a warm up and understanding of up to 5 components of fitness ● Leadership and Officiating Task ● Skill application in the game Endball.



Science	<p>Questions to assess recall of content taught since September of Year 9.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Biology: Genetics and plant reactions. ● Chemistry: Chemical reactions and making materials ● Physics: Motion and Magnetism
Spanish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Vocabulary on the topic of Home, local area and weather ● Vocabulary on the topic of Hobbies ● Giving a variety of opinions and reasons ● Using the past, present and future tenses

Year 9 KS3 Assessments - Summary of topics covered in the Summer Term assessments

Subject	Students will be asked questions to assess their knowledge and understanding in the following areas:
Art	<p>Focus: Portrait Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recalling and describing 'Words of the Week' based on Artist research. ● Tonal blending using paint ● Tonal blending on a section of a portrait.
Computing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bitmaps and Vectors ● Resolution and Compression ● Binary, Decimal and Hexadecimal ● Algorithms ● Flow charts
Design Technology	<p>Focus: Creativity and Isometric Drawing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a series of design ideas by selecting different criteria from a list to develop a unique product. ● Communication - Accurate isometric sketching, rendering and use of tone. ● Questions on modernist design and checking the understanding of key terms from 'Words of the Week'.
English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge of key prose/poetry terminology ● Ability to understand and analyse a poem ● Ability to write a creative response using an image as stimulus



French	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Healthy Living ● Personal Details ● Relationships ● Celebrations ● Future Plans
Food Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Different Nutritional Needs ● Dietary Needs - Ethical- Medical - Allergies and Intolerances ● Religious Diets ● Cooking Skills and Methods - Pastry Making and Aeration <p>Food Practical Assessment - Making a Meal - Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hygiene and health and Safety ● Food Preparations ● Cooking Skills ● Presentation of final dishes.
Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Plate Tectonics ● Diverse Asia
German	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Free time & hobbies ● Family ● School ● Where you live/Local area ● Future plans ● Grammar: present/past/future tenses, word order, adjective endings
History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nazi Persecution of the Jews (1933-1945) ● The Holocaust ● World War Two (Causes)



Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Data handling ● Transformations (Reflection, Rotation, Translation and Enlargement) ● Straight line graphs ● Forming and solving equations ● 3D Shapes ● Polygons ● Number, percentages and money ● Ratio ● Pythagoras
Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Extending understanding of the musical concepts covered in Year 9, showing deeper awareness of how these elements are used in different pieces of music. ● Refining listening and analytical skills, recognising more subtle musical features and describing them clearly using appropriate terminology. ● Advancing performance ability, working towards greater accuracy, confidence, and expression, with improved control and overall musicality.
Physical Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge of the components of a warm up and cool down and be able to deliver an appropriate warm up and cool down to a small group ● Knowledge of the importance of each component of fitness and why they are important in sport ● Ability to perform in a practical activity and use transferable skills from a range of sports
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Biology - Cells & Microscopes (B1a), Cells and Control (B2) ● Chemistry - Earth and Atmosphere (C21) ● Physics - Conservation of energy (P3)
Spanish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Freetime and hobbies ● Description of an ideal house ● Recent activities with friends ● Where you would like to live in the future