

Kingsbury High School

A note on the no grade policy

At Kingsbury High we have opted for a “no grade” approach to self-evaluation .We don’t describe ourselves as good or outstanding or requiring improvement. We simply have certain expectations of ourselves and are keen to see whether we have met them and how we can get better.

So, why have we decided to forgo the opportunity to award ourselves grades for everything? Well, that began when we moved to what we call “comment only marking” for our students’ work. In line with the work of Dylan William on *Assessment for Learning*, the idea was that students would learn more about how to improve if they focused on the advice we gave them rather than on a number out of ten or a “level” assigned to each piece that they completed.

We thought that if that worked best for our students then it was surely the better approach for our teachers; the quality of teaching would surely improve in a more sustained way if we concentrated on feedback rather than a grade for each lesson. And if that served for teaching, it must serve for the school as a whole.

What this means as far as inspection is concerned is that our staff will not be in a position to say what grade a particular lesson or aspect of the school is. What observers of lessons will be able to say is whether a lesson meets our expectations of effective teaching.

We fully recognise that Ofsted itself will grade our school and we will, of course, be very pleased if our quest for improvement produces great inspection results; more important, though, is that we carry on developing as a school, continually striving to improve the provision we make for the communities we are proud to serve.