

# Centre Policy for Determining Grades

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FOR A/AS LEVELS AND GCSES FOR SUMMER 2021  
AT PRINCE HENRY'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL



## Centre Policy for determining teacher assessed grades – summer 2021:

### Prince Henry's Grammar School, Otley

#### Statement of Intent

***This section provides details of the purpose of this document, as appropriate to our centre.***

Staff at Prince Henry's are committed to ensuring that every young person receives the grades that they deserve this summer and that these grades are determined fairly, consistently, free from bias and effectively within and across subjects. Senior leaders have used the government guidance to develop a robust system for allocating students' grades. Staff have then been given clear guidelines to ensure that all involved in the processes clearly understand their roles and responsibilities. To support teachers to take evidence-based decisions in line with the JCQ guidance Prince Henry's will take the following approach:

- Grades will reflect the standard that students are performing now, not their potential.
- Students will only be assessed on what they have been taught.
- Teachers will use a range of assessment evidence to make a judgement of the grade the student is performing at (approximately 3 pieces at GCSE and 5 pieces at A level) but the exact number may vary between subjects.
- Staff will not be allowed to tell students the grades submitted to Exam Boards.
- Staff will be supported and given training to assist with marking and awarding appropriate grades.
- Staff will follow both internal and external quality assurance requirements (outlined later in this policy).
- Staff will consider historical centre data in the process, and appropriate decision making in respect of, teacher assessed grades.
- Copies of all assessment evidence will be stored in school.

The process used at Prince Henry's has been clearly communicated to candidates and their parents/ carers.

Furthermore, it is expected that school will meet its obligations in relation to equality legislation.

As the school conducts vocational qualifications we will also be following the separate guidance and policies produced in relation to Q-Tags and submission of evidence.

## Roles and Responsibilities

***This section gives details of the roles and responsibilities within our centre.***

### Head of Centre

Our Head of Centre, Janet Sheriff:

- Will be responsible for approving our policy for determining teacher assessed grades.
- Has overall responsibility for Prince Henry's Grammar School as an examinations centre and will ensure that clear roles and responsibilities of all staff are defined.
- Will confirm that teacher assessed grade decisions represent the academic judgement made by teachers and that the checks in place ensure these align with the guidance on standards provided by awarding organisations.
- Will ensure a robust internal quality assurance process has been produced and signed-off in advance of results being submitted.

### Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Faculty

Our Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Faculty will:

- Provide training and support to our staff.
- Support the Head of Centre in the quality assurance of the final teacher assessed grades.
- Ensure an effective approach within and across subjects and with authenticating the preliminary outcome from single teacher subjects.
- Be responsible for ensuring staff have a clear understanding of the internal and external quality assurance processes and their role within it.
- Ensure that all teachers within their subject make consistent judgements about student evidence in deriving a grade.
- Ensure all staff conduct assessments under the appropriate levels of control with reference to guidance provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications.
- Ensure teachers have the information required to make accurate and fair judgments.
- Sign off the grades awarded confirming they are accurate.
- Ensure that all aspects of the Prince Henry's Grammar School Centre Policy are completed for each qualification that they are submitting.

### Teachers/ Specialist Teachers / SENCo

Our teachers, specialist teachers and SENCo will:

- Ensure they conduct assessments under our centre's appropriate levels of control and have sufficient evidence, in line with this Centre Policy and guidance from the Joint Council for Qualifications, to provide teacher assessed grades for each student they have entered for a qualification.
- Ensure access arrangements are in place as appropriate for individuals.
- Ensure that the teacher assessed grade they assign to each student is a fair, valid and reliable reflection of the assessed evidence available for each student.
- Sign a declaration to confirm this.

- Make judgements based on what each student has been taught and what they have been assessed on, as outlined in the section on grading in the main JCQ guidance.
- Complete the centralised Assessment Record for each subject cohort, identifying the nature of the assessment evidence being used, the level of control for assessments considered, and any other evidence that explains the determination of the final teacher assessed grades. Any necessary variations for individual students will also be recorded.
- Collate the appropriate evidence to justify their decisions and pass this to the Exams Office for safe secure storage.

### **Examinations Officer**

Our Examinations Officer will:

- Be responsible for the administration of our final teacher assessed grades and for managing the post-results services.

### **Training**

***This section provides details of the approach our centre will take to training, support and guidance in determining teacher assessed grades this year.***

Teachers have been provided with clear guidance around the setting and management of appropriate assessment activities both from the SLT and from their Subject Leaders.

All information from awarding organisations/ JCQ has been passed to staff as necessary, or carefully reviewed and key information relevant to staff has been distributed.

All staff have had access to whole school training to discuss consistent, fair, grading involving presentations and discussion opportunities and these have included input from exam markers.

Many Senior Leaders and Subject Leaders have attended webinars/ courses with colleagues from other local schools to discuss best practice.

All subject leaders are arranging/ have arranged further training as necessary to ensure staff understand the requirements specific to their subjects.

### **Support for Newly Qualified Teachers and teachers less familiar with assessment**

***This section provides details of our approach to training, support and guidance for newly qualified teachers and teachers less familiar with assessment.***

We are in a position where we have no NQTs teaching examined classes.

A handful of staff are in the earlier years of their careers, but have been involved in assessing students previously. Subject Leaders are supporting those staff with training and where necessary additional moderation/ reviews of marking.

### Use of appropriate evidence

***This section gives details in relation to our use of evidence.***

***Teachers making judgements will have regard to the Ofqual Head of Centre guidance on recommended evidence, and further guidance provided by awarding organisations.***

#### **Selection of Assessment Evidence:**

- Consistent sources of evidence will be used for a class or cohort (except where there are mitigating circumstances that mean alternative evidence is required).
- The selected assessments will relate closely to the specification requirements predominantly being made up of assessment materials provided by exam boards and will be selected to give students the best opportunity to demonstrate their ability, taking into account what it has been possible to teach most effectively during the course.
- NEAs (or practical/ performance based tasks) will be used where they form part of the course, using a similar weighting to that applied in the normal exam series.
- Each subject will be using a range of evidence to make a judgement of the grade the student is performing at (approximately 3 pieces at GCSE, 5 pieces at A Level) but the exact number may vary between subjects.
- The bulk of evidence will come from assessments yet to take place, although some historical data may be used if appropriate and in discussion with the Senior Leadership Team.
- Assessment evidence will only be used if the class teacher is confident that it is the student's own work and that the student has not been given inappropriate levels of support to complete it, either in school, at home or with an external tutor.
- Where the highest grades are awarded (including higher tier grades), the assessment evidence will include appropriately demanding tasks.

#### **Completion of Assessments:**

- Students will be informed in advance what assessments will be used as evidence in each subject.
- Teachers will inform students what topic areas they should revise and what topic areas they do not need to revise. Students will not be told the specific task.
- Teachers will use class time to prepare students for the selected assessments (this may involve teaching new content or may not).
- Some assessments will take place in classrooms, some will take place in the Sports Hall, under more formal exam conditions. Students and parents will be given a timetable for those assessments taking place in the Sports Hall, other assessments will take place in regular lesson time.
- Teachers will record the provisional mark that each student has achieved in each assessment, but this provisional mark will not be shared with the students. These marks may change after moderation. Teachers will not award a provisional grade to individual assessments, so they will not be able to share a 'grade' for each assessment.
- Students will sign to confirm that the assessment evidence is their own work and that there are no mitigating circumstances that they wish to be taken into

account (which have not yet been formally brought to the attention of the school).

- After completion all evidence will be passed to the Exam's Office for safe storage.

***This section gives details in relation to use of Additional Assessment Materials***

Additional Assessment Materials will only be used where a student has mitigating circumstances that clearly impact on their performance in that subject. For example, if an individual student had a sustained period of ill health/ absence during the time a part of the course being assessed was taught. Where it is deemed that a student has significantly under or over achieved when compared to their historical outcomes for such reasons additional assessment materials may be used.

***This section gives details of how our centre will ensure the appropriateness of evidence and balance of evidence in arriving at grades in the following ways.***

Subject Leaders submitted initial plans identifying the (at least 3 pieces at GCSE, 5 pieces at A Level) evidence, level of control each piece will be taken under and the proposed weighting towards the final grade following the protocols set out above. These were reviewed by SLT and amended where it was felt assessment was not appropriate or balanced.

On completion of work each student will sign a declaration confirming the work was their own and that they had no additional assistance.

We will consider the depth and breadth of knowledge, understanding and skills assessed, especially higher order skills within individual assessments.

If additional or alternative assessments are used (in the case of mitigating circumstances) we will consider the level of control under which an assessment was completed, for example whether the evidence was produced under high control and under supervision or at home.

**Awarding teacher assessed grades based on evidence**

***We give details here of our centre's approach to awarding teacher assessed grades.***

- Teachers will use a range of assessment evidence to make a judgement of the grade the student is performing at (approximately 3 pieces at GCSE and 5 pieces at A level, but the exact number may vary between subjects).
- This information for each subject is available to parents/ students on the school website.

**Making a Judgement About the Final Grade:**

- Senior leaders will ensure that teachers and leaders have access to and understand how to use the Exam Board support, guidance and training so that they know how to make fair and consistent judgements.
- In making their judgements, teachers will consider any exam access arrangements and / or mitigating circumstances that may impact on the assessment evidence selected.
- Awarding organisations' resources will be used to inform robust moderation of marking and the standardisation of grades, using the 'national standards' established by Exam Boards for each subject.
- More recent evidence of a student's performance will be given more weighting when making a judgement about the final grade.
- Teachers will complete the centralised Assessment Record for each subject cohort, identifying the nature of the assessment evidence being used, the level of control for assessments considered, and any other evidence that explains the determination of the final teacher assessed grades. Any necessary variations for individual students will also be recorded.

### Internal quality assurance

***This section gives details of our approach to internal standardisation, within and across subject departments.***

#### **Pre-Assessments:**

SLT reviewed the range of evidence and weighting proposed by each subject to check that it meets the key principles of the Centre Policy.

SLT will check that there are plans in place for robust moderation of marking including the use of awarding organisations 'national standards'.

SLT will ensure that all teachers involved in making judgements about grades have been given training on how to make fair and consistent judgements.

#### **During Assessments:**

SLT and Faculty Leaders will conduct "Learning Walks" in a random sample of lesson-based assessments and subject tests held in the Sports Hall to check integrity of assessments.

Where possible and appropriate internal assessments will be 'blind marked'.

#### **Post Assessments:**

Subject Leaders and/or Faculty Leaders will oversee moderation to check that it takes place as planned, and that standards are amended if needed to ensure consistency across the team and ensure that standards are in line with awarding organisations' national standards.

Staff will conduct internal standardisation across all grades.

Staff will ensure that the centralised Candidate Assessment Record will form the basis of internal standardisation and discussions across teachers to agree the awarding of teacher assessed grades.

Where necessary, we will review and reflect on individual grading decisions to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by our awarding organisation(s).

Grades proposed by subject teachers will be reviewed by Subject Leaders and/or Faculty Leaders to ensure they are in line with:

- The marks awarded for each piece of evidence
- What could reasonably be expected, given each student's previous predicted grades over the two-year course

Where appropriate, we will amend individual grade decisions to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by the awarding organisation(s).

Where there is only one teacher involved in marking assessments and determining grades, then the output of this activity will be reviewed by an appropriate member of staff within the centre. This will be that subject's Faculty Leader with support from the SLT Link (or an external subject specialist) where necessary.

In respect of equality legislation, we will consider the range of evidence for students of different protected characteristics that are included in our internal standardisation.



**Comparison of Teacher Assessed Grades to results for previous cohorts**

***This section gives details of our internal process to ensure a comparison of teacher assessed grades at qualification level to results for previous cohorts in our centre taking the same qualification.***

We will:

- Compile information on the grades awarded to our students in past June series in which exams took place (e.g. 2017 - 2019).
- Consider the size of our cohort from year to year.
- Consider the stability of our centre's overall grade outcomes from year to year.
- Consider both subject and centre level variation in our outcomes during the internal quality assurance process.
- Seek to review grades awarded and ensure that they are in line with historical outcomes or at least ensure that a clear explanation can be provided where this is not the case.

***This section gives details of the approach our centre will follow if our initial teacher assessed grades for a qualification are viewed as overly lenient or harsh compared to results in previous years.***

We will:

- Compile historical data giving appropriate regard to potential mixtures of A\*-G and 9-1 grades in GCSEs. Where required, we will use the Ofqual guidance to convert legacy grades into the new 9 to 1 scale.
- Bring together other data sources that will help to quality assure the grades we intend to award in 2021.
- Require subjects to revisit moderation and re-consider grade boundaries assigned where grades appear to be overly lenient or harsh compared to historical results.

***This section gives details of changes in our cohorts that need to be reflected in our comparisons.***

N/A

### Reasonable adjustments and mitigating circumstances (special consideration)

***This section gives details of our approach to access arrangements and mitigating circumstances (special consideration).***

Where students have agreed access arrangements or reasonable adjustments (for example a reader or scribe) we will make every effort to ensure that these arrangements are in place when assessments are being taken. For any 'exam room' style assessments all access arrangements will be in place.

For in-classroom assessments the following information has been provided to staff to help support these students:

- Students must be provided with the appropriate **coloured/modified paper**
- Students with **extra time** must have that accommodated within your lesson time
- **Laptops** must be prearranged with the exams office (remember to seat students near a plug socket) or students can use an appropriate iPad to type on.
- **Readers and scribes:**
  - option 1 - allow students to use the audio reader on their iPad and headphones to read text (check that this is possible with your test paper)
  - option 2 - arrange a reader/scribe from within your faculty
  - option 3 - contact SEND department if you have exhausted all possibilities and are still unable to accommodate needs
- For students requiring **separate rooms** the smaller classroom situation should suffice. Please try to consider seating for these students, for example discuss seating near the door for the assessment.
- In class assessments are likely to be shorter but **rest breaks** will be allowed if necessary. Try to reduce the time allowed and encourage students back to the assessment so that the assessment does not run over the lesson.

We believe the above adjustments are sufficient to ensure students can complete the necessary assessments.

We will record, as part of the centralised Candidate Assessment Record, how we have incorporated any necessary variations to take account of the impact of illness or personal circumstances on the performance of individual students in assessments.

There are a group of students for whom we need to be mindful of 'mitigating circumstances'. These are outlined to all staff coded as follows:

RED – Serious personal circumstances have affected performance. They **MUST** have the circumstance considered before awarding the final grade.

ORANGE – Staff should be aware of the mitigating circumstances. If the student appears to have underperformed in an assessment the mitigating circumstance should be considered.

BLUE - students with extended periods of Covid related isolation. It is likely these will be able to complete the assessments without issue, however, it is worth reviewing these and cross-referencing their isolation period with the work completed at that time to ensure they were not disadvantaged when completing an assessment.

Students will also be given the opportunity to raise any concerns following completion of each assessment on the candidate declaration form that they sign.

The guidance indicates that students affected by mitigating circumstances (whether pre-existing or that arise during the assessment period) should not be negatively affected when generating an outcome. Therefore, alternative arrangements of grade generation *may* be required (eg: using an alternative assessment, calculating the grade with less evidence or completing an assessment in an alternative arrangement/ time) for these students. This will need to be explained on the central candidate assessment record.

To ensure consistency in the application of Special Consideration, we will have a central group of senior staff through which such requests not previously identified should be discussed (this includes members of the school's SLT and the Exams Officer). These have read and understood the document: JCQ – A guide to the special consideration process, with effect from 1 September 2020

#### Addressing Disruption/Differentiated Lost Learning (DLL)

***This section gives details of our approach to address disruption or differentiated lost teaching.***

See the previous section on 'Reasonable adjustments and mitigating circumstances (special consideration)' for further details on this. Further considerations in this area have taken place with the selection of assessment evidence. This helps to minimise the disruption to learning further as follows:

- Consistent sources of evidence will be used for a class or cohort (except where there are mitigating circumstances that mean alternative evidence is required)
- The selected assessments will relate closely to the specification requirements and will be selected to give students the best opportunity to demonstrate their ability, taking into account what it has been possible to teach most effectively during the course
- NEAs (or practical/ performance based tasks) will be used where they form part of the course, using a similar weighting to that applied in the normal exam series
- Assessment evidence will only be used if the class teacher is confident that it is the student's own work and that the student has not been given inappropriate levels of support to complete it, either in school, at home or with an external tutor.

### Objectivity

***This section gives a summary of the arrangements in place within our centre in relation to objectivity.***

Staff will fulfil their duties and responsibilities in relation to relevant equality and disability legislation.

Senior Leaders, Faculty Leaders and the Centre will consider:

- Sources of unfairness and bias (situations/contexts, difficulty, presentation and format, language, conditions for assessment, marker preconceptions);
- How to minimise bias in questions and marking and hidden forms of bias.
- Bias in teacher assessed grades.
- The use of blind-marking for tests where feasible.

To ensure objectivity, all staff involved in determining teacher assessed grades will be made aware that:

- Unconscious bias can skew judgements;
- The evidence presented should be valued for its own merit as an indication of performance and attainment;
- Teacher assessed grades should not be influenced by candidates' positive or challenging personal circumstances, character, behaviour, appearance, socio-economic background, or protected characteristics;
- Unconscious bias is more likely to occur when quick opinions are formed

Our internal standardisation process will help to ensure that there are different perspectives to the quality assurance process.

All staff will be required to sign a declaration to indicate they have been fair and not shown any bias when considering work and arriving at final grades.

### Recording Decisions and Retention of Evidence and Data

***This section outlines our approach to recording decisions and retaining evidence and data.***

Each subject has produced a rationale for the evidence they will be using.

Each subject will have a spreadsheet to add their scores for the (in most cases) 3 or 5 assessments into. This will also have a column for additional notes (for example if mitigating circumstances have been applied) for a specific student.

Each subject will collect the evidence used (usually 3 or 5 assessments) **and** the completed Candidate Record Sheets (declaration) for **each piece** of assessment. This will be passed to the Exam's Office for safe storage. This evidence will then be used in the case of appeals in the summer. We will ensure that evidence is retained electronically or on paper in a secure centre-based system that can be readily shared with our awarding organisation(s).

### Authenticating evidence

***This section of our Centre Policy details the mechanisms in place to ensure that teachers are confident in the authenticity of evidence, and the process for dealing with cases where evidence is not thought to be authentic.***

Robust mechanisms, will be in place to ensure that teachers are confident that work used as evidence is the students' own and that no inappropriate levels of support have been given to students to complete it, either within the centre or with external tutors.

These will include:

- All evidence being from work completed in controlled conditions, with the majority of that completed in the final part of the course.
- All students clearly informed of their expectations and what could be regarded as malpractice.
- All students being required to sign a candidate declaration at the end of each assessment.
- All staff to attend training, where this will be considered
- All staff being advised what to do if they have concerns over an individual's performance.
- All staff signing a declaration to say they have awarded grades fairly.

It is understood that awarding organisations will investigate instances where it appears evidence is not authentic. We will follow all guidance provided by awarding organisations to support these determinations of authenticity.

### Confidentiality

***This section details the measures in place in our centre to maintain the confidentiality of grades, while sharing information regarding the range of evidence on which the grades will be based.***

All students and parents have been made aware of the topics/ types of assessments set to be used by each subject.

All staff involved have been made aware of the need to maintain the confidentiality of teacher assessed grades.

All teaching staff have been briefed on the requirement to share details of the range of evidence on which students' grades will be based, while ensuring that details of the final grades remain confidential.

Grades will be stored on a secure spreadsheet overseen by the Exams' Office.

Before final grades are submitted to the awarding organisations staff will sign to confirm the grades being submitted are accurate.

Relevant details from this centre policy, including requirements around sharing details of evidence and the confidentiality requirements, have been shared with parents/ carers.

### Malpractice

***This section details the measures in place in our centre to prevent malpractice and, where that proves impossible, to handle cases in accordance with awarding organisation requirements.***

All staff involved have been made aware of the specific types of malpractice which may affect the Summer 2021 series including:

- breaches of internal security;
- deception;
- improper assistance to students;
- failure to appropriately authenticate a student's work;
- over direction of students in preparation for common assessments;
- allegations that centres submit grades not supported by evidence that they know to be inaccurate;
- centres enter students who were not originally intending to certificate a grade in the Summer 2021 series;
- failure to engage as requested with awarding organisations during the External Quality Assurance and appeal stages; and
- failure to keep appropriate records of decisions made and teacher assessed grades.

The consequences of malpractice or maladministration as published in the JCQ guidance have been outlined to all relevant staff.

Our general centre policies regarding malpractice, maladministration and conflicts of interest have been reviewed to ensure they address the specific challenges of delivery in Summer 2021.

All staff involved have been made aware of these policies, and have received advice/training in them as necessary.

### Conflicts of Interest

***This section details our approach to addressing conflicts of interest, and how we will respond to such allegations.***

- All staff at Prince Henry's have been required to declare any conflict of interest such as relationships with students for further consideration.
- All staff with a possible conflict of interest are to sign a separate declaration that they will not seek to advantage their child before, during or after completing the 2021 assessments.
- All staff will sign a declaration at the end of the process to confirm that they have not sought to influence outcomes.
- Where applicable our Head of Centre will take appropriate action to manage any conflicts of interest arising with centre staff in accordance with the JCQ requirements
- We will also carefully consider the need, if required, to separate duties and personnel to ensure fairness in later process reviews and appeals.

### Private Candidates

***This section details our approach to providing and quality assuring grades to Private Candidates.***

- Our arrangements for assessing Private Candidates to arrive at appropriate grades are similar to the approaches utilised for internal candidates.
- Where it has been necessary to utilise different approaches, the **JCQ Guidance on Private Candidates** has been followed and any divergences from our approach for internal candidates have been recorded on the appropriate class/student documentation.
- Evidence will be collated in school for private candidates and will be reviewed by our subject specialists to confirm it is appropriate.
- Private candidates will be required to sign a declaration indicating the work is their own.
- In undertaking the review of cohort grades in conjunction with our centre results profiles from previous examined years, the grades determined by our centre for Private Candidates have been excluded from our analysis.

### External Quality Assurance

***This section outlines the arrangements we have in place to ensure the relevant documentation and assessment evidence can be provided in a timely manner for the purposes of External Quality Assurance sampling, and that staff can be made available to respond to enquiries.***

- All staff involved have been made aware of the awarding organisation requirements for External Quality Assurance as set out in the **JCQ Guidance**.
- All necessary records of decision-making in relation to determining grades will be stored and can be made available for review as required.
- All student evidence on which decisions regarding the determination of grades will be retained and can be made available for review as required.
- Instances where student evidence used to decide teacher assessed grades is not available, for example where the material has previously been returned to students and cannot now be retrieved, will be clearly recorded on the central record kept in school.
- All staff involved have been briefed on the possibility of interaction with awarding organisations during the different stages of the External Quality Assurance process and can respond promptly and fully to enquiries, including attendance at Virtual Visits should this prove necessary.
- Arrangements are in place to respond fully and promptly to any additional requirements/reviews that may be identified as a result of the External Quality Assurance process.
- Staff have been made aware that a failure to respond fully and effectively to such additional requirements may result in further action by the awarding organisations, including the withholding of results.



## Results

***This section details our approach to the issue of results to students and the provision of advice and guidance.***

- All staff involved have been made aware of the specific arrangements for the issue of results in Summer 2021, including the issuing of A/AS and GCSE results in the same week.
- Arrangements will be made to ensure the necessary staffing are in place, including exams office and support staff, to enable the efficient receipt and release of results to our students.
- Arrangements will be in place for the provision of all necessary advice, guidance and support, including pastoral support, to students on receipt of their results.
- Such guidance will include advice on the appeals process in place in 2021.
- Appropriate staff will be available to respond promptly to any requests for information from awarding organisations, for example regarding missing or incomplete results, to enable such issues to be swiftly resolved.
- Parents/guardians will be made aware of arrangements for results days.

## Appeals

***This section details our approach to managing appeals, including Centre Reviews, and subsequent appeals to awarding organisations.***

- All staff involved will be made aware of the arrangements for, and the requirements of, appeals in Summer 2021, as set out in the **JCQ Guidance**.
- Internal arrangements will be in place for the swift and effective handling of Centre Reviews in compliance with the requirements.
- All necessary staff will be briefed on the process for, and timing of, such reviews, and will be available to ensure their prompt and efficient handling.
- Learners will be appropriately guided as to the necessary stages of appeal.
- Arrangements will be in place for the timely submission of appeals to awarding organisations, including any priority appeals, for example those on which university places depend.
- Arrangements will be in place to obtain the written consent of students to the initiation of appeals, and to record their awareness that grades may go down as well as up on appeal.
- Appropriate information on the appeals process will be provided to parents/carers.