

## Setting

Setting is where students are grouped by ability or aptitude for a particular subject and streaming is where pupils follow different pathways through the curriculum based on ability or aptitude. Setting means that a school can mix the populations of teaching groups. Streaming means the populations will stay fixed. Varndean uses setting to aid achievement. We don't use streaming.

Historically the amount of setting that there is and the rigidity of that setting has increased as children have progressed through the school. By year 9 students are set in all the core subjects and remain so until the end of year 11 although of course they can move between sets as their need dictates.

Lower down the school we have cherished the mixed ability form group as the main way to group children as it has given children a really stable experience when transferring to secondary school and enabled them to establish strong peer group relations which in turn has enabled them to learn and develop. Our teachers have become expert at mixed ability teaching and ensuring that all children progress. However within this model we have remained flexible and have been able to introduce setting in certain subjects when it has made most sense to do so.

We remain committed to a blended structure but will introduce some more setting into year 7 and 8 (notably in maths) from Sept 2013 to further support learning.

## 4 levels of progress for everyone

First and foremost school is about learning and we want to make sure every child makes excellent progress from when they start in Year 7 to when they finish in year 11. Schools (and organisations like OFSTED) measure the progress a child makes from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 in levels and we do this by looking at a child's starting point and working out how much progress they should make in their five years with us. There are conversion tables which allow us to convert national curriculum levels into GCSE grades and this helps us know how well every child is doing compared to how well they might do.

OFSTED and the Government often talk about expected progress and will measure a school by the proportions of students making this amount of progress. Expected progress = 3 levels of progress over 5 years. That is to say a child who achieves level 4 (on average) at the end of Key Stage 2 should expect to progress to a grade C at GCSE by the end of Year 11. A child who achieves level 5 would progress to a B grade and so on.

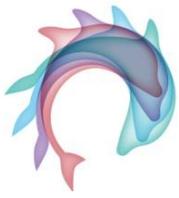
Varndean School  
Balfour Road,  
Brighton, BN1 6NP

Tel 01273 561 281  
Fax 01273 564 614  
Email [school@varndean.co.uk](mailto:school@varndean.co.uk)

Headteacher William Deighan

[www.varndean.co.uk](http://www.varndean.co.uk)





Many students make more than expected progress and actually achieve more highly for example arrive on Level 4 from primary school and achieve a B grade by the time they have finished or even an A grade. This is known as making 4 levels of progress or even 5 levels.

At Varndean we have decided that we should be aiming high for every student and not settling for average progress. Therefore all of our learning goals are based on all children making at least 4 levels of progress over 5 years.

Of course 4 levels of progress doesn't translate tidily into a level of progress per year and indeed learning is rarely as neat as this anyway. Therefore currently are goals are based upon two levels of progress in Key Stage 3 (years 7 and 8) and 2 levels or more in Key Stage 4 (years 9,10 and 11).

In September you will receive a log in to our parent portal which will allow you to track how your child is doing against these goals at key times during the year and to see for yourself whether they are meeting the demanding challenge of 4 levels of progress.

Varndean School  
Balfour Road,  
Brighton, BN1 6NP

Tel 01273 561 281  
Fax 01273 564 614  
Email [school@varndean.co.uk](mailto:school@varndean.co.uk)

Headteacher William Deighan

[www.varndean.co.uk](http://www.varndean.co.uk)

