



Dear Parents,

Many of you have questions about assessments, tests and exams in the National Curriculum we have adapted. The explanation below may help.

Traditional Exams and Tests

These are designed to test work covered and mostly memorised before the test itself. There are NO questions of general intellect or intelligence and there are few questions where knowledge is adapted, except at IGCSE level age 16 years. The test is designed to have average, easy and difficult parts though.

Grading should cover a natural curve of distribution with mostly C's some B 's, few A's some D's, few E's. In the past we believe some tests were designed and marked by the teachers themselves without following this natural curve.

Assessments and Intelligence tests – (sometimes called Ability tests)

Assessment tests judge a child's ability in a subject, irrespective of whether the questions have been studied in class or not. These assessments give the children who deserve an **A** the opportunity to show they have a higher intellect and UNDERSTAND content they have not been taught – often by adapting basic concepts to new situations. Examples of such tests are IQ tests, Reading tests (words at the end of the test are new and difficult and may never have been seen by a student), Cognitive Ability tests.

The spread of grades or results is the same, mostly C.

Standardised Tests

These tests have been given to thousands of other students of the same age and results are compared (standardised) against this large number of students .

At Oxford, we use a combination of these tests.

At Oxford in the past some tests were designed, marked and graded by your child's own teacher. This brings obvious challenges to the reliability of the results.

At IGCSE in Y11 no IGCSE exams are marked by our teachers, none are set or designed by the teachers and all are graded by Cambridge exams.