

# Be Your Best Self

Thursday 20th October 2022



Dear parents, carers and students,

I hope this finds you well?

A brief update about the *Department for Education Performance Tables* which were released earlier this morning. This is the first time that data have been published since the start of the pandemic.

We are delighted.

I wrote to all parents back in late August about how pleased we were with the outcomes for the Year 11 & 13 classes of 2022, and these national figures put our performance in a wider context. What they do not show, amongst many other aspects, is the impact of our superb careers advice, information and guidance strategy which supported our 16 and 18 year olds into high quality, aspirational destinations once they left the school.

The performance tables are available: [HERE](#)

Two key points to note:

1. Our 2022 Year 11 'PROGRESS 8' score is +0.5. This means that, on average, students in Year 11 last academic year achieved half a grade *higher* in their subjects compared to students in similar schools to Tadcaster Grammar School *nationally*.

This is exceptional.

2. Our % EBacc (English Baccalaureate) measure appears low compared to the national figure, although you will be aware that this is a result of a conscious effort by the school to maximise access to the widest possible choice of subjects for Year 10 & 11 students, as opposed to pre determining this important choice for them. See here: [HERE](#) for more details. You will also note that, for those students who *chose* the full suite of EBacc subjects of their own volition, they significantly outperform the England average.



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I hope the following explanatory notes help make your own assessment of how well our wonderful students performed, and the positive impact made by the school staff and families who supported these young adults.

I am still waiting for the draft report from our recent Ofsted inspection to check for factual accuracy before publication. I will of course email again as soon as we are alerted that the report has been published on the Ofsted website.

Thank you for your fantastic support of the school during this first half term. Enjoy the half-term break.

Regards,

Andrew Parkinson  
Headteacher

### **Why can't data be compared this year?**

The government, and the schools' inspectorate Ofsted, acknowledge that the impact of the pandemic was not the same across all schools and colleges. Even within a local area or town, the impact of the pandemic was very different.

### **How were results arrived at last year?**

In 2020 and 2021, exams were cancelled due to the pandemic, and grades were based on teacher assessments (with exam boards ensuring consistency). This different form of assessment led to grades, overall, being higher in 2020 and 2021 than they were in pre-pandemic years, when students sat exams.

Last summer saw the first return of exams since 2019, albeit with significant adaptations to recognise that students' learning had been significantly affected by the pandemic. Nationally, it was determined that grades would, overall, fall roughly halfway between 2019 and 2021. This would enable grades to gradually move back to pre-pandemic levels, while still being as fair as possible to students taking exams in 2022.

### **Why are there no progress figures for post-16?**

Normally, the Department for Education publishes progress figures for A levels and for post-16 students retaking English and maths GCSE. However, because the 2022 cohort received centre-assessed grades in 2020, and the government committed to not using these for accountability purposes, no progress data has been produced for last summer.

### **How do our results compare to similar schools?**

As explained above, the ability to rank schools is no longer available, as the government is clear that schools cannot be compared this year. One of the measures included in the government website mentioned above is our Progress 8 figure, which is a relative measure based on students' progress from primary school in eight subjects. A score of 0 means the school adds an average amount of progress to students. A score between 0 and 1 means the school adds an above average amount of progress to students. A score between 0 and -1 means the school adds a below average amount of progress to students. You will also be able to look at the local authority average for all the key measures, but not be able to directly compare schools.

Source: Association of School & College Leaders