

Understanding Your Child's KS3 Progress Descriptors

A Parent & Carer Guide to Key Stage 3 Progress Descriptors Across the Curriculum

Welcome to our guide on Key Stage 3 progress descriptors! To help you track and support your child's learning journey, our subjects use clear **step-by-step progress descriptors scaled from Level 1 to Level 7**. These descriptors outline the specific knowledge, practical skills, and understanding students are developing across every subject in the curriculum.

Foundational Steps (Levels 1–2) Students learn key vocabulary, grasp foundational concepts, and complete simple tasks with structured teacher guidance and support.	Developing & Growing (Levels 3–5) Students build confidence and independence, applying key concepts to multi-step problems, improving techniques, and explaining reasoning.	Advanced Mastery (Levels 6–7) Students demonstrate exceptional skill, accuracy, and autonomy—tackling complex challenges, evaluating work critically, and adapting learning.
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Supporting Learning at Home

Celebrate your child's milestones with them and encourage them as they take their next steps! Use the reference table below to see what learning looks like across core academics, technology & practical arts, and performance & culture.

KS3 Subject Progress Expectations (Levels 1–7)

Subject	Core Focus Areas	Foundational (Levels 1–2)	Developing (Levels 3–5)	Advanced Mastery (Levels 6–7)
Art & Design	Research, Refine, Record, Respond	Record simple observations with support; minimal understanding of artists; basic exploration of materials.	Record observations effectively; apply artist influence to personal ideas; refine work using a range of media.	Insightfully interpret artists; record with exceptional accuracy; use purposeful media with high skill, creativity, and control.
Computing	Data, Systems, Algorithms, ICT, Digital Literacy	Differentiate binary/denary; identify basic systems; follow simple search algorithms; identify basic online safety threats.	Convert binary/hex; understand CPU fetch-decode-execute cycle; create algorithms with selection/iteration; explain online safety strategies.	Evaluate CPU performance factors (cache, cores, clock speed); write complex modular algorithms (sorts/data structures); use advanced digital tools.
Engineering	Design & Evaluate, Making	Hand-draw basic ideas and simple CAD; understand brief; model concept parts and use basic tools with full support.	Analyse brief details; draw multiple designs in 2D/3D using CAD and sketching; evaluate outcomes; use tools safely with increasing independence.	Produce detailed specifications and innovative designs; model physical/CAD concepts resolving production issues; use tools with extreme precision.

Subject	Core Focus Areas	Foundational (Levels 1–2)	Developing (Levels 3–5)	Advanced Mastery (Levels 6–7)
English	Reading, Writing, Spelling & Punctuation	Make simple text suggestions; write with limited vocabulary; use basic spelling and inconsistent punctuation.	Analyse text structure and quotations; select deliberate vocabulary and techniques; write with consistent spelling and varied punctuation.	Formulate original arguments with precise text analysis; use ambitious, impactful vocabulary; demonstrate flawless spelling and precise punctuation.
Food & Nutrition	Planning & Evaluating, Cooking	Create simple plans with support; identify basic strengths; execute basic cookery techniques and safe equipment use with guidance.	Write detailed recipe plans; evaluate bad/good points of dishes; cook with increasing independence and safety.	Produce thorough plans that others can follow; continuously evaluate during making; independently prepare professional, well-presented dishes.
Geography	Knowledge, Application, Evaluation, Skills	Recall basic geographical facts; identify simple physical/human features; locate 4-figure grid references.	Recall clear geographical knowledge; explain landform processes; make evidenced decisions considering stakeholders; use 6-figure grid references and graphs.	Demonstrate advanced knowledge across global scales; justify complex decisions and analyse stakeholder impacts; adapt fieldwork skills to unfamiliar situations.
Languages (MFL)	Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing	Understand familiar words and phrases; communicate simple ideas using basic connectives (and, but); read aloud short phrases.	Differentiate timeframes (past, present, future); engage in conversations expressing opinions with reasons; write detailed paragraphs using tenses in 'I' form.	Deduce meaning in authentic/longer passages across 3+ tenses; converse spontaneously; manipulate complex grammar, idioms, and relative clauses.
Maths	Algebra, Number, Statistics, Ratio, Geometry	Perform basic arithmetic and whole-number calculations; recognise simple shapes, basic algebraic terms, and bar charts with support.	Solve multi-step equations, fraction/decimal problems, direct scaling ratios, averages, and angle/trigonometry calculations.	Apply algebra and geometry to unfamiliar contexts and mathematical proofs; solve complex surds, fractional powers, direct/inverse proportion, and vector problems.
Music	Composing, Performing, Listening	Create single-line melodies with few notes; perform with pitch/rhythm inconsistencies; comment on basic dynamics and tempo.	Compose simple melodies with bass lines and chords; perform fluently with accurate timing; analyse dynamics, texture, and genre features.	Compose engaging multi-part pieces using dynamic and rhythmic variation; perform with exceptional skill and expression; perceptively analyse composer intent.
PE	Knowledge (Rules/Health), Performance (Skills/Leadership)	Recall fundamental rules and movement patterns (running, balancing); perform basic skills in isolated settings.	Explain movement principles and short-term exercise effects; execute complex skills fluently in competitive games; demonstrate teamwork and resilience.	Synthesise biomechanical and scientific knowledge to adjust strategies; deliver highly precise, expressive performances; lead and mentor peers.
Religious Studies (RS)	Learning About Religion, Learning From Religion	Recall basic teachings and key terms of 1–2 religions; express personal values on moral issues.	Recall accurate teachings across multiple religions; describe and explain personal responses to ethical issues and societal views.	Demonstrate advanced knowledge of teachings across multiple religions; evaluate and justify personal responses to complex ethical questions.

Subject	Core Focus Areas	Foundational (Levels 1–2)	Developing (Levels 3–5)	Advanced Mastery (Levels 6–7)
Science	Knowledge, Maths in Science, Working Scientifically	Recall basic facts and label simple diagrams; perform whole-number calculations; carry out basic practicals with help.	Explain scientific processes (e.g., photosynthesis, neutralisation); perform multi-step equation calculations; independently follow practical methods.	Apply comprehensive scientific knowledge to unfamiliar contexts; perform complex multi-step unit conversions/rearrangements; design valid controlled experiments.
Textiles	Design, Making, Evaluate	Draw basic design ideas with support; demonstrate basic embellishment/stitching with guidance; identify areas for improvement.	Draw multiple detailed designs; safely use tools, embellishments, and construction methods with little guidance; evaluate against brief specifications.	Produce detailed specifications and innovative designs; model complex concepts addressing production constraints; critically analyse professional work.