

9 September 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to you as we enter the new academic year to explain the setting system to be used for current Year 8 students in Maths. The setting is arranged slightly differently from Year 7 as they move from 4 bands (W, X, Y and Z) to 2 bands (X and Y).

Students in Year 8 will continue to be taught in mixed ability classes this year. Research has shown that students of all abilities benefit from the opportunity to collaborate with one another and engage their higher-order thinking when working in mixed ability groupings. This could have led to some changes this academic year due to the changes in bands.

There were three ability groupings in Year 7 for Maths last year meaning that certain classes were mixed ability. This is how the setting was arranged:

Group 1	Set 1	Only set 1 students in all 4 bands.
Group 2	Set 2 & 3	Students in set 2 & 3 in all 4 bands were mixed mathematical ability.
Group 3	Set 3	Only students in X and Z band.

Once the students enter Year 8, they will be split into three ability groupings. This is how the setting will be arranged for both X and Y bands:

Group 1	Set 1	Only set 1 students.
Group 2	Set 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6	Students in Set 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 in both bands are mixed mathematical ability.
Group 3	Set 7	Only set 7 students.

This means as students make the transition between Year 7 and Year 8, it may seem like they have moved up/down by a number of sets. In reality, students may have only moved up/down by one set or possibly none at all due to the new groupings. Below are some specific examples:

Situation 1 – A student may have been in 7W1 and is now in 8X5. This student is in the lower half of group 1 and has been placed in this set to offer them more support. They have either moved down one set or not moved at all.

Situation 2 – A student may have been in 7Y3 and is now in 8Y1. This student has moved up one set due to the ability groupings.

This should help to explain the changes in sets for this year, if you have any further questions please do get in contact with us.

Yours faithfully

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