



Student Tracking Review

Raising aspirations and supporting progress for all

STR Newsletter – First Edition

November 2014

"New for 2014/15, the Student Tracking Review (STR) system is a high impact teaching and learning strategy that has been designed to raise the aspirations of our students, to take a snapshot of their approach to learning and to support their progress throughout the year. The system responds to the changing needs of students as they move through their learning journey at Castell Alun."

Graham Hughes, Headteacher



"Pupils show high levels of commitment and resilience to develop their knowledge and skills further."

ESTYN 2013

Lots of research has been done to try to find out what makes young people learn successfully. **'Student Tracking Review'** at Castell Alun uses the findings of that research. It means that students are about to become much more involved in improving their own learning as we try to further 'personalise' the learning process.

The new STR system provides an opportunity for students to engage more fully in the learning process and take responsibility for improving their own learning. The combination of setting aspirational targets, face-to-face feedback and online assessment from teachers enables students to engage more regularly in crucial dialogue about their progress and shape their own actions to improve areas of their work.

During this term you will receive the first STR progress check sheet for your son/daughter this year. We are aiming to issue one of these in the Autumn and Spring terms in addition to the usual annual report and we hope that it will help to:

- ✓ Monitor progress
- ✓ Inform parents/carers about how students are getting on
- ✓ Motivate students to 'aim high'
- ✓ Target support through our mentoring programme which involves advice and guidance from subject teachers, Group Tutors, Student Development and Learning Managers and Senior Leaders across the school



The aspirational targets have been set very high indeed. They are **NOT** what we expect your son/daughter to achieve, but they **ARE** what they could achieve with the right approach to learning, or as we are now calling it, the right **'Learning Ethic'**.

At each **STR** session students will be given three grades. Firstly there will be the **aspirational target**, followed by the **current expectation**. The final grade will be the current **Learning Ethic**. Each **STR** is an opportunity to consider **progress** made by comparing the current expectation of each student's performance with their aspirational target.

The next stage of the learning journey begins here...

Progress will be shown on the STR progress check sheet as being '**above**', '**on**' or '**working towards**' that expected to reach the target. The key is that each student knows and understands the assessment criteria and what to do to improve.

You will find teachers' comments about how to improve on your son/daughter's work in their books and folders and this is discussed regularly with students in lessons.

What is the secret of success?

The Castell Alun '**Learning Ethic**' aims to encourage, celebrate and develop more independent learners. We need to ensure our students can be successful in a rapidly changing global society.

Learning Ethic grade 'best-fit' criteria can be found on the reverse of the STR progress check sheet that you will receive.

LE1 describes a truly exceptional student

LE2 describes an outstanding student

LE3 describes a typical Castell Alun student

LE4 & LE5 describe students who are not yet displaying the key attributes of a successful learner.



Congratulations to Bea Beungchan for creating the winning STR design in our recent logo competition, and many thanks to Derron Bailey for transforming Bea's hand-drawn design into the STR logo now being used around school and on the front of this newsletter.

When introducing any new system you will appreciate that there may be teething problems and new terminology to get used to, but we very much hope that as the system evolves you will see the benefits, as the whole aim is to raise student achievement at all Key Stages in school.



The system needs to be flexible enough to allow targets to reflect individual student performance in all subjects. We will be conducting evaluations of the process at various points in the year and we look forward to hearing your views.

"The greater danger for most of us lies not in setting our aim too high and falling short; but in setting our aim too low, and achieving our mark."

Michaelangelo

Dates for your diary:

	STR1	STR2	Annual Reports Out
Years 12/13	October 2014	February 2015	April 2015/February 2015
Years 10/11	November 2014	April 2015	May 2015/January 2015
Years 7/8/9	December 2014	March 2015	June 2015/July 2015/June 2015