19th January 2017

STEPS and the Step Grid Handbook

Dear Parent / Carer

As someone with a son or daughter in Year 7 you may be aware that there have many changes to assessment in schools over the last few years. At the same time as the government's announcement of a major shift in the way attainment and progress were to be reported at KS2 from September 2016, they also indicated the abolishment of 'levels' at KS3, but with a much earlier deadline of September 2014. However, unlike KS2, there was no prescribed alternative system put into place across the country and all secondary schools were invited to create their own model of assessment.

Darrick Wood School was one of the very few schools that quickly set about working on an alternative to the outgoing process. Indeed, the School were at the forefront of developing a new system of assessment and progress monitoring to take its place by the start of September 2014.

Our work, now entitled *"STEPS – Strategic Targets for Educational Progress and Success at KS3"* has been nationally recognised and is somewhat ground-breaking. Over the last twelve months we have been able to work very closely with Scholastic Publishing Ltd. to produce our package commercially; it is now available nationally, with all schools in the country able to purchase what we at Darrick Wood have created.

We continue to develop STEPS and make minor alterations, but we feel very reassured that what your sons and daughters experience is indeed a very comprehensive and professional package that allows you as parents and carers the opportunity to be closely involved in their attainment, progress and target setting over the entire key stage.

Accompanying this letter you will find your own copy of the STEPS Handbook. Please keep this safe and use it to cross reference attainment on each report with content of the KS3 courses for each subject studied. You will also find your child's first STEPS Summary Report from the end of December; in future you will be receiving one of these in the last week of every term.

Finally, although there is additional guidance on the Summary Report and in the Handbook which will answer many of your questions, please feel free to contact me directly at the School if you have something specific to the system which needs further explanation.

Yours sincerely

M J Smith
Assistant Head Teacher