

Guidance for Parents and Students Regarding Setting at Hasmonean

At Hasmonean High School students are taught in mixed ability for Year 7 and 8 in most subjects. Mathematics and Jewish Studies set in Year 7 using assessments that are conducted upon entry into the school. In Year 7, students with lower levels of literacy are placed in a nurture group for English, Humanities and Science. From Year 9, students are put into sets for English based on their performance lower down the school. In Science, students are placed into sets from Year 10.

The reason for this is that setting enables teachers to support, stretch and challenge students more effectively than teaching mixed ability groups.

Students have the opportunity to move up or down sets twice per year. This allows for a sustained period of teaching, informal assessments and a standardised test to take place before sets are changed.

Directors of Learning use a range of relevant data to place students in rank order (according to their attainment relative to that of other students in the year group) and then into a set.

Due to the fair and transparent nature of the setting process, movement is only based upon attainment, not on a child's potential, behaviour, attitude or aspiration (though all of these factors will have an impact on his attainment).

It is inevitable that some children may not perform as well as either they or their parents expect them to in a particular assessment or series of assessments. There will be many different reasons for this, depending on the children and their circumstances at a particular time. However, set changes are always and only determined by attainment, not by the reasons for the attainment. If their relative attainment falls below the cut off point for a particular set, they will move to the set below. If this is the case for your child, he will have every opportunity to move back up into his original set if his attainment places him or her above the cut off point to enter the higher set when set changes occur again.

Students and parents should always remember that in a school like Hasmonean, there can be particularly able cohorts where the competition to be in the higher sets is very strong indeed. It is the progress of the child, not the set which they are placed in, however, which is important.