



POLICY FOR THE MOST ABLE

DEFINITION

- Most able describes gifted and/or talented learners with an ability to develop to a level significantly ahead of their year group (or with the potential to develop those abilities).
- The most able students at St Helen and St Katharine may be identified as being particularly most able within the context of the School and being either gifted and talented or both.
- 'Gifted' learners are those who have high abilities in the context of St Helen and St Katharine in one or more academic subjects, like mathematics and English.
- 'Talented' learners are those who have high abilities in the context of St Helen and St Katharine in practical skills in areas like sport, music, design or creative and performing arts.
- The identification of the most able is a dynamic recognition of ability in a particular subject at a particular point of a student's progress through the School.
- Skills like leadership, decision-making, resilience and organisation are also taken into account when identifying and providing for the most able students.

AIMS

- To enable each student to make the best use of her academic abilities and talents
- To meet the needs of the most able students
- To raise the aspirations and expectations of achievement for all students
- To encourage greater enterprise, self-reliance, resilience and independence in all students

OBJECTIVES

- The focus for all students is on achievement, not just attainment, and also encourages independence and self-assessment. Extension in depth and enrichment in breadth of learning is provided as appropriate to the needs of all students including the most able.
- The Deputy Head has oversight of whole school activities for the most able, one per year group is organised at whole school level from Years 5-11. The Deputy Head of Sixth Form has oversight of Sixth Form whole school activities.
- The Head of Department is responsible for the identification of and provision for the most able in their subject. Each department will identify their most able students in each year group using the procedures outlined in this policy and according to the subject criteria set out by that department. The number of students identified will vary between departments but provision for those students is the responsibility of that department and the individual subject teachers within it.
- Departments will review annually the progress of those students identified as most able and may alter their criteria and provision as a result of this. It is not intended that once on a subject list a student remains there. Stretch and challenge in a subject may have an impact on the progress and potential of the most able.
- Provision for the most able may go beyond the school and Heads of Department will liaise with outside agencies as appropriate.
- The progress of academic scholars will be tracked by members of the Senior Management Team. The Deputy Head has oversight of this process. The progress of scholarship holders in art, drama, music and sport will be tracked by the relevant

Head of Department. All scholars will be invited to discuss their progress and targets at least once per year.

- Staff INSET provision will support the knowledge and understanding of teaching strategies to stretch and challenge students including the most able. The Deputy Head will liaise with the Director of Staff when the School INSET programme is being drawn up.

IDENTIFICATION OF THE MOST ABLE STUDENTS

Departments will identify the most able students by making a judgement based on an analysis of all or any of the following sources of information:

- Subject criteria, classroom observation and work scrutiny
- Achievement in related extra-curricular activities
- Information from feeder schools and outside agencies e.g. sports club
- Tests and examination results, including entrance examinations, MIDYIS/ALIS data and the award of scholarships

The process for selection of academic scholars is detailed within the Admissions Policy.

TEACHING THE MOST ABLE

Distinguishing characteristics of effective teaching for most able students include:

- A high level of subject knowledge and enthusiasm to work with the most able on the part of the teacher
- Emphasis on creative problem solving and critical thinking
- Higher order concepts and terminology
- Risk taking by teacher and learner
- Freedom to challenge and to admit error
- Developing skills for independent research
- Building on prior learning and experience

The teaching of the most able could include some or all of the following strategies which will also enrich the experience of all students:

- Differentiation, by providing extension (through complexity) and enrichment (through a broader range of content tasks and resources).
- The development of independent learning skills allowing students to organise their own work, carry out tasks unaided, and/or evaluate their work and the work of others.
- Opportunities to work with students of similar ability across the age range.
- The offering in school of related clubs, societies, music, drama, art and sporting activities, including lectures from relevant speakers.
- The promotion of external opportunities of academic and/or extra-curricular enrichment provision for most able (e.g. competitions, masterclasses, enrichment days, residential experiences and visits).
- The promotion of the subject Going Beyond resources which will be reviewed annually by Heads of Department

Last review date	Michaelmas 2017
Next review date	Michaelmas 2019
Person responsible for review.....	Deputy Head
Audience	Teaching Staff/parents