

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 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.
- '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 good progress making 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 5-10. The Deputy Head of Sixth Form has oversight of Sixth Form whole school activities. (Appendix 1)
- 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.
- Heads of Department track the progress of students in their subject and this includes tracking the progress of the most able. Tracking will inform an annual review of subject criteria and provision. It is not intended that once identified as most able in a subject a student remains at this level.-
- 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. The expectations of being a scholar are written and monitored by the Heads of Department of art, drama, music and sport who may also arrange activities particular to the scholars.
- 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
- An expectation of students' self-motivation and the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort
- Emphasis on 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 are reviewed annually by Heads of Department

Last review date	Michaelmas 2019
Next review date	Michaelmas 2021
Person responsible for review.....	Deputy Head
Audience	Teaching Staff/parents

Appendix 1: Going Beyond

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

Year	Activity	Staff involved at whole school level
5	Trinity term: Individual Podcast drawing on skills taught in Computing with assessment by computing teacher and Y5 form tutor. Best will go forward to meet with HOS.	HOS
6	Lent term: Young Entrepreneur project and competition. Final 8 will go forward to do a presentation to Deputy Head and Bursar. Certificates and prizes awarded in school assembly.	DH & Bursar
7	Trinity second half in Learning Skills lessons. Students choose one of their subjects as a focus for research using Learning Skills lessons based in the library. Each HOD provides 3 research questions as appropriate for Y7. Students choose a question/research it - they should also refer to subject Going Beyond sheets. They may need to then choose another question. They prepare a brief presentation on their research in Learning Skills lessons. Best 2 or 3 in each form will be invited to a HODs meeting to talk about their research and outcomes with HODs in small groups. Thinking Suppers with Abingdon School for the academic scholars. Students discuss material and questions, some provided prior to the event and some unseen, provided at the supper. Feedback to staff after discussion.	HODs
8	Each term Y8 have no homework for a week and complete a different activity. Michaelmas: read a fiction book Lent: research and brief write up of current affairs 'eco' topic Trinity: read a non-fiction book or journal Students evaluate their learning and meet with SMT members in a small group for follow up discussion. Thinking Suppers with Abingdon School for the academic scholars. Students discuss material and questions, some provided prior to the event and some unseen, provided at the supper. Feedback to staff after discussion.	SMT
9 &10	Thinking Suppers – for most able (as identified by the relevant subject staff) and academic scholars. Suppers take place at Radley and SHSK. Students discuss material and questions, some provided by a HOD prior to the event and some unseen, provided at the supper. Feedback to subject staff present.	HODs Subject staff.
Sixth Form	The Deputy Head of Sixth Form, from information provided by subject staff, collates details of enrichment opportunities in a bulletin emailed to students and parents each half term.	DH Sixth Form