



MOST ABLE POLICY	
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Policy for Most Able Pupils

1. Policy Aims:

This policy sets out our commitment to identifying, challenging, and supporting the Most Able pupils across all areas of learning. It aims to ensure that these learners are recognised early, provided with appropriate opportunities to thrive, and supported in both their academic and personal development. The policy outlines our principles, identification processes, provision strategies, and the roles of staff, pupils, and families in creating an environment where high potential can be realised.

2. Rationale

Without appropriate challenge, the most able pupils are at risk of underachievement (1,2). Research shows that when identification and provision are not aligned, learners with high potential may disengage or fail to thrive. Our approach is grounded in the belief that all pupils should be able to make progress in line with their ability, through fair access to meaningful challenge - not identical provision for all (3,4).

We also recognise that supporting the most able is not solely an academic responsibility. High-ability learners may face unique emotional and social challenges, including anxiety, perfectionism, and isolation (5,6). Promoting wellbeing is therefore central to our approach, ensuring that pupils can flourish both personally and academically.

3. Guiding Principles

Our approach to supporting the most able is shaped by the following core principles:

- Equity over sameness: Equal opportunity does not mean identical provision. Most able learners require differentiated support that enables them to thrive at their level (1,3).
- Holistic identification: We use a multi-faceted approach to identification that seeks to avoid bias and reflect a broad range of talents, including academic, creative, and leadership domains (4,5).
- Evidence-informed practice: Our curriculum and pedagogy are grounded in research that demonstrates effective strategies for high achievement and engagement (2,6).
- Early and sustained support: We believe that early recognition and ongoing challenge are essential to avoid missed potential and to maintain motivation over time (1,4).
- Wellbeing as integral: Academic success and emotional wellbeing are deeply interconnected. Our provision is designed to support both (5,6).

These principles guide all aspects of our policy, from identification to classroom practice and beyond.

4. Identification of Most Able Learners

We adopt a flexible and inclusive approach to identifying high potential across a broad range of abilities. Our aim is to recognise excellence in academic, creative and leadership domains, while ensuring that identification is fair, context-sensitive and ongoing.

We draw on a range of evidence, including:

- Standardised assessments and internal academic data
- Professional judgement from teachers and subject specialists
- Input from pupils and parents
- Demonstrated achievement or aptitude in specific areas such as STEM, languages, the arts, or sport

We avoid relying solely on test scores or fixed measures of intelligence. Instead, we consider individual context and relative norms to reduce bias and ensure that identification reflects the diversity of talent within our school community (1,4).

Identification is not a one-off event. We remain open to emerging potential and regularly review our register to ensure it reflects current understanding and pupil development.

5. Curriculum and Provision

Our provision for most able pupils includes:

- Curriculum compacting and acceleration, where appropriate. This may involve pupils completing GCSEs early. [12]
- Enrichment activities promoting independent thinking and problem-solving. This may be within lessons, organised external speakers or as part of our co-curricular programme. [7,13]
- Flexible grouping to provide intellectual challenge with peers. This may be through setting, seating arrangements or streaming. [12]
- Co-curricular and extra-curricular experiences, such as competitions, specialist mentoring, and stretch opportunities. [14,15]
- Differentiated classroom teaching to the top, with depth and challenge built into all subjects.

We also ensure that teachers are supported through ongoing professional development in stretching high-ability learners [1,5].

6. Wellbeing of Most Able Pupils

Supporting the most able is not only an academic responsibility - it also includes nurturing their emotional, social, and psychological wellbeing. High-ability learners may experience anxiety, perfectionism, fear of failure, isolation, or difficulties in peer relationships [4,7]. A holistic approach recognises that wellbeing and achievement are deeply interconnected.

Our approach includes:

- Monitoring emotional health through teaching, pastoral systems, tutor time and mentoring
- Providing opportunities for social connection, including peer groups, team projects, and enrichment activities that build confidence and collaboration [8]
- Recognising asynchronous development - where emotional maturity may not match intellectual ability - and responding with sensitivity in both curriculum and care

- Normalising challenge and failure as part of learning to build resilience and reduce perfectionist tendencies [7]
- Working with parents and carers to understand the wider emotional needs and stressors experienced by able learners
- Staff training on how to identify and support mental health concerns specific to high-ability pupils [14]

We are committed to creating an environment where the most able can thrive without pressure to perform, and where their identity is valued beyond achievement. We actively integrate wellbeing into our definition of success.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

We monitor most able learners by:

- Tracking academic performance termly
- Collecting pupil voice and engagement data
- Reviewing lesson planning and provision
- Evaluating enrichment participation
- Conducting departmental case studies

Annual reviews ensure our policy remains responsive to pupil needs, inspection frameworks, and emerging research [2,15].

8. Roles and Responsibilities

- Senior Leadership ensures strategic alignment, equitable access, and the necessary resources
- Most Able Coordinator oversees identification, the school register and professional development
- Subject Leaders ensure appropriate provision is embedded across the curriculum
- Teachers identify potential, plan for stretch, and nurture ambition
- Parents and carers are active partners in fostering aspiration
- Pupils are supported to reflect, set goals, and engage fully with their learning

9. Conclusion

This policy is a public commitment to ensuring our most able pupils are recognised, challenged, and supported. We believe that the pursuit of educational equity includes nurturing exceptional potential, and we strive to provide the environment where these learners can flourish.

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