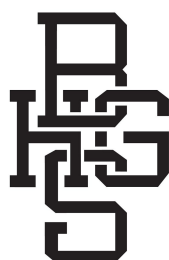


BISHOP'S HATFIELD GIRLS' SCHOOL

MORE ABLE LEARNERS POLICY



Date of last review: Summer Term 2019

Date of next review: Summer Term 2022

School - based policy

More Able Learners Policy

Rationale

At Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School we believe in providing for the individual needs of all pupils. Therefore it is important that the needs of 'more able learners' should be recognised and strategies developed for their identification and support. We believe more able learners should be stretched and challenged in a stimulating learning environment which offers opportunities for pupils to excel and develop an enthusiasm for learning.

Through this policy we aim to achieve a whole school ethos where more able pupils achieve their full potential, by implementing effective identification, monitoring and teaching. This includes:

- Clear procedures for the identification of pupils with particular abilities
- Identifying the different levels of responsibility for supporting more able learners
- Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the progress of more able pupils
- Information and guidance for all staff to support the more able

Identifying the more able

The identification of more able pupils is not an easy task: consequently, a variety of data is used in order to collate accurate information. All types of data used in identification has limitations, so we should not be too dogmatic in our approach, instead keeping an open mind.

More able learners are identified at the beginning of each key stage, as outlined below:

- In Year 7 pupils will be identified using prior attainment information from Key Stage 2 SATs, they will also be identified using data from the Cognitive Assessment Tests (CATs) that will be taken in the first term of Year 7.
- In Year 10 more able pupils will be identified by using FFT target grade data and end of Year 9 attainment data.
- In Year 12 more able pupils will be identified using GCSE results data.

The table below outlines the key criteria that will be used to identify the more able:

| | |
|--|--|
| KS2 SATs | Top 10% of pupils (Threshold) |
| CATS | Top 10% of pupils (Average CAT Score) |
| Method of identifying other More Able, eg talent | Identification by staff. Untapped potential. |

Responsibility for the more able

The **Assistant Headteacher** responsible for more able pupils has overall responsibility for an oversight of the education of the more able.

Key areas of responsibility include:

- Leading of sharing of good practice in teaching and learning for stretch and challenge
- Liaising with other schools and agencies regarding curriculum provision and good practice

- Identifying pupils and their needs in consultation with teachers
- Informing pupils, parents and teachers about provision for stretch and challenge
- Monitoring provision and progress
- Targeting intervention where necessary

Heads of Faculty and Subject Leaders have responsibility for supporting and monitoring the provision for more able learners in their subject areas by

- Contributing to the identification process
- Developing and reviewing curriculum implementation to facilitate for more able learners
- Leading staff in their areas on good practice
- Liaising with the Assistant Headteacher to ensure the school policy is implemented

All teaching staff have a responsibility to provide a learning environment and opportunities that allow appropriate stretch and challenge for all pupils.

Monitoring the more able

More able learners will be identified on marksheets, all teaching staff will need to be aware of who the more able learners in their classes are. Monitoring will primarily take place through the use of tracking reports. Where there is a clear need, intervention to support the progress of students will be implemented. Pupil panels may also be used to consult pupils on the level of stretch and challenge they experience in lessons.

Monitoring will also take place through evaluation of teaching and learning in the form of learning walks and lesson observations. Faculty areas will be responsible for monitoring the progress of more able pupils within their subject areas. They will be required to identify trends with regard to attainment and develop teaching and learning strategies to support pupils achieve at their full potential.

Curriculum Provision

The central aim of Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School is to provide all of our pupils with educational experiences and opportunities that will enable them to discover and fulfil their own potential. Our key principles are to ensure:

- Differentiation is built into our curriculum planning; this includes differentiation by outcome, differentiation by task and differentiation by pace
- There is a commitment to developing extension and enrichment materials which allow individuality of response, satisfy developmental stage rather than chronological age, encourage high quality thinking / using higher order skills, provide many open-ended situations and open up further opportunities for research
- As wide an expertise as possible should be used in providing for more able pupils. Suggested schemes may include:
 - Involvement with national associations to identify and make use of expertise from the community
 - Shared ventures with other schools
 - National activities and special events
 - Opportunities made available by university links
 - Workshop activities

- Opportunities to exercise leadership and develop communication skills in a peer tutoring situation
- Where appropriate, pupils may be accelerated through a learning programme, e.g. taking a GCSE or AS Level early
- A resource base of extension and enrichment materials will be developed

More Able Disadvantaged Pupils

The DFE's 2018 report 'Research to understand successful approaches to supporting the most academically able disadvantaged pupils' highlighted that highly able pupil premium pupils achieve half a grade less than other highly able pupils, on average. This is caused by a wide range of factors including, limited aspirations, poor attendance, material poverty and disengagement. To counter these barriers the DFE report recommended tailoring support for these pupils in the following four key areas:

- academic extension (and support if necessary)
- cultural enrichment
- personal development
- addressing material poverty

It is key that teachers are aware of the more able disadvantaged pupils they teach and ensure that they maximise opportunities to tailor support.

Appendix 1: Pedagogical approaches

The National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE) believe in the following core principles, which are supported by the school:

- The education of more able learners is a whole-school endeavour to be embraced by all school leaders.
- Addressing the needs of more able learners will raise achievement for a much wider group of learners in a school.
- Providing for more able learners is not about labelling, but about creating a curriculum and learning opportunities which allow all children to flourish.
- Ability can be revealed across a range of specific domains or more generally, and not only in traditional academic subjects.
- An ethos of high expectations and aspirations is a central plank for any school providing for more able learners.
- Teachers are central to providing challenging and enriching education, and their professional development is paramount.
- Ability is a fluid concept: it can be developed through challenge, opportunity and self-belief.

NACE encourages schools to develop their own practice based on the following strategies:

- Rich questioning
- Higher order and abstract thinking (eg. handling ambiguity and paradox)
- Problem solving and enquiry
- Development of advanced language skills, to include accuracy, precision and fluency
- Independent work and self-study
- Development of metacognition
- Transfer of knowledge across disciplines
- Provision of leadership opportunities
- Curriculum enrichment
- Different subject areas will deploy different and additional approaches according to age and stage

Independence and resilience

Professor John Hattie, alongside Gregory Yates, in *Visible Learning and the Science of How We Learn*, explored the difference between teachers as activators as opposed to teachers as facilitators. Teachers as activators results in a much higher effect size; some of the key actions they take are setting up tasks with the goal of mastery learning and teaching students metacognitive strategies. If students are going to work independently, then they need to have a clear goal in mind where the steps to success help students to judge how well they are working towards their goal.

Questioning and discussion

Robin Alexander, in his book *Towards Dialogic Teaching*, highlights the over-reliance on IRF (initiation-response-feedback) in the British classroom. Much classroom discussion centres upon the teacher initiating discussion by asking a question, choosing a student to answer and then acknowledging whether the answer is correct.

One way of embedding a stretch and challenge model is to experiment with different ways of encouraging greater participation in discussion. The expectation should be that every student is required to think deeply and make a contribution to the discussion.

Tasks, resources and groupings

Graham Nuthall's research in *The Hidden Lives of Learners* found that most of the feedback students get is from their peers and that, alarmingly, 80% of it is wrong. Moreover, for deep learning experiences to occur and be stored in their long-term memory, they need to be exposed to the information at least three times in different formats. Therefore, it is vital that when offering students choices they are held accountable for the work they produce.

Homework

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) Teaching and Learning Toolkit informs us that homework in secondary school can have a significant impact on student outcomes.

Getting homework right makes a big difference to the challenge culture. Classwork doesn't always give enough time to engage with a challenging task. Homework gives students greater freedom to demonstrate what they really know and produce quality work.

Academic vocabulary

Robert Marzano and Debra Pickering's book, *Building Academic Vocabulary*, shares a structured approach to teaching academic vocabulary. Begin by providing a description of the word before asking students to create their own description and example in their own words. Using visuals to accompany the word as a memory cue helps students to remember the work.

Growth Mindset

A wide range of research has been conducted into the concept of creating a 'growth mindset'. Mary Cay Ricci in her book *Mindsets in the Classroom* focuses on the idea of moving away from a fixed mindset towards one that encourages resilience and progress. By encouraging pupils to change their approach towards criticism, obstacles and challenges pupils can move towards embracing challenge and learning from mistakes.

Further Reading

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|-------------------|---|
| Shaun Allison | Making Every Lesson Count |
| Peter C Brown | Making it Stick |
| Sue Cowley | The Ultimate Guide to Differentiation: Achieving Excellence for All |
| Torsten Payne | Stretch and Challenge for All |
| Martin Stephenson | Educating the More Able Student |