



# Supporting the Most Able

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Review By: Leadership Group & C&C

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## **1 Introduction and General Rationale**

At Studley High School our Aim is for every student to maximise their potential and enjoy the experience.

All children require encouragement and support. All pupils should receive the education they need and the quality of teaching within our classrooms, combined with the enrichment activities should provide both engagement and challenge for the most able.

All students are individuals with their own special needs and requirements. More able students need to be identified, targeted, supported and challenged. Strategies need to be devised and implemented, and student progress needs to be monitored. Within a framework of equal opportunity, all pupils are entitled to have their needs recognised and addressed. Therefore, the school recognises that more able pupils have specific needs to be catered for.

### **Aims**

The policy aims to provide a coherent approach to meeting the needs of pupils who have been identified as more able and to support the highest possible learning for these and all pupils at the school.

In line with the school's aims, it is committed to providing:

- An agreed shared definition of the term "more able"
- Identification of the more able pupils as early as possible
- Raising staff awareness of the range of strategies available to them
- Working in partnership with parents/carers to help them promote children's learning and development
- A child centred culture, valuing each child's own interests and learning styles
- Education which encourages independence and autonomy, supporting children in using their initiative
- Encouragement of children to be open to ideas and to initiatives presented by others
- Education that looks beyond subject disciplines and conventions, including using the wider community

## **2 Definitions**

More able learners are defined as those who have one or more abilities developed to a level significantly ahead of their year group, or with the potential to develop those abilities.

More able pupils may have the ability to excel academically in one or more subjects such as English, drama, technology or the ability to excel in practical skills such as sport, leadership, artistic performance, or in an applied skill.

We focus on pupils who are within the top 5% - 10% of all learners in this school. This means that regardless of the age, background and circumstances of our pupils, there will be a proportion of learners who are identified as more able. The definition can be extended beyond the conventional taught curriculum to cover such attributes as social awareness, leadership, empathy and self-awareness. It can also be refined to distinguish between the 'more able' cohort in any particular year group and the 'exceptionally able', taken from the top 2 – 5% nationally. However, we recognise that the number of more able pupils within the school should represent a 'growing pool' and we do not put a limit on the number of learners identified as more able.



### **3 How can schools identify more able pupils?**

The process of identifying more able pupils should start as early as possible in the learner's school career. An initial register is created when learners arrive at Studley High School, using data obtained from their previous school. However, there is no single method for identifying high ability with total accuracy.

A variety of different strategies should be used including information from sources other than tests and examinations. Teacher observations in class, pupils and parent nomination and the input of support staff and form tutors all form an important part of the identification process.

The identification process needs to be ongoing and not a 'once and for all' exercise. It is important that factors such as gender, race, and social class do not affect judgements of ability made by staff and because of this, the cohort should be broadly representative of the whole school.

In line with upcoming statutory requirements a register of identified pupils will be kept and updated regularly. There should be provision for movement on and off the register as ability is not seen as a fixed commodity, although this movement would be expected to reduce with age.

### **4 Provision**

In order for more able learners to achieve within the education system, a number of factors need to be in place. There must be an innate ability on the part of the learner but this is unlikely to flourish without exposure to new and exciting challenges on the one hand and strong motivation on the other.

More able learners consequently need

- their abilities to be recognised
- an environment which offers opportunities for new learning and fresh experiences
- a setting in which they are able to develop confidence in themselves as learners

There are five foundations to success in learning that have been identified.

- Getting along with others (including 'thinking first' and 'understanding others')
- Organisation ('setting goals' and 'planning time')
- Persistence
- Confidence
- Resilience

More able learners need the opportunity to develop the social skills of understanding and acceptance. They need access to a broad curriculum, encouragement in setting and working towards challenging goals and the opportunity to become independent learners. While still at school, they need to have the opportunity to tackle challenging tasks, to learn perseverance. They need to develop confidence, academically and socially, and they need to acquire resilience in the face of adversity and failure in a supportive environment.

Given the need to ensure that the pastoral, social and emotional needs of more able learners are met, the school takes the view that all learners should be educated wherever possible within their own year group, although there will be occasions when a pupil joins with older pupils for specific aspects of the curriculum, or as part of an enrichment opportunity.



### **The specific needs of more able learners**

There is a possibility that the needs of more able learners can be overlooked within a classroom environment. To address this, the school will consider the following specific needs of more able learners.

### **Pastoral, Social and Emotional Needs**

All staff should ensure that:

- More able learners are socially integrated to overcome the possibility of them being set apart due to their talents of overall high ability
- More able learners develop understanding of those less able than themselves
- They have contact with pupils of comparable ability
- They have time to socialise, relax and play with their peers

### **Academic and Curricular Needs**

All staff should ensure that:

- More able learners have access to a balanced curriculum
- They are challenged and motivated
- They are given the opportunity to achieve their maximum potential
- They are able to cope and learn from failure in a safe learning environment
- They are given opportunities to become independent learners in their thinking and methods of study

## **5 Organisational Issues**

The school will put in place a programme to meet the needs of more able learners to include in-class strategies, enrichment time and provision beyond the normal timetabled classroom.

Teachers have access to prior attainment data in order to assess the ability of their class. All teachers will receive regular updates of changes to the more able register. Once identified it is then possible to differentiate work accordingly – for those with strengths in defined learning areas – verbal and quantitative – they may be facilitated through extension activities. For those with other strengths, other techniques are needed for example:

#### **◆ In-class strategies**

- i) extensions – using appropriate extension resources and materials for use with more able students in lessons
- ii) differentiation – work is differentiated
- iii) challenge – work is set to challenge the thinking ability of this cohort and can be of an open-ended nature
- iv) Highlighting higher ability that can then be transferred across subject areas, where warranted.



◆ **Enrichment**

Activities and exercises beyond the normal schemes of work are added to broaden the experience of this cohort. It is important that any enrichment opportunities are clearly linked to the curriculum available in lessons, so that impact on learners is greater.

◆ **Provision beyond the classroom**

- i) After school extra curricular activities.
- ii) Projects set up with outside professionals
- iii) An emphasis on collaborative learning within networks and hub groups.

**6 Transfer and transition**

- The school will set up links with feeder schools for curriculum groups.
- Work closely with all relevant adults with a view to providing a challenging education.
- Develop a strategy of networking with other schools, colleges and local community organisations and specialists who can provide expertise and enrichment activities.
- The school and parents / carers must work in partnership and the school should provide the opportunity for parental input to inform targets for pupils to ensure progress in learning.

**7 Training and Resources**

- Provide continuing professional development opportunities for all staff to enable them to meet the needs of more able learners. Carry out an ongoing audit of staff needs in order to ensure training is targeted.
- Provide an induction programme for new staff which addresses issues of more able learners, both at whole school and subject level.
- Set aside a budget specifically for the development of the provision for learners of a higher ability.
- Use available resources effectively to stimulate innovative practice and to enrich and extend pupils' learning opportunities.

**8 Monitoring and Evaluation**

All staff in school have a shared responsibility for meeting the educational, social and emotional needs of more able learners.

An assistant headteacher, with the help of staff will monitor and evaluate provision and suggest improvements.

The policy will be reviewed annually by SCL and Curriculum and Communication Committee of the Governing Body.

**9 The Role of the Co-ordinator**

All staff in a school have a shared responsibility for meeting the educational, social and emotional needs of more able learners. The assistant headteacher has a specific role:

- To draw up / revise the school policy for more able pupils, especially with regard to national and local agendas.



- To assist members of staff with drawing up or revising specific subject or departmental policies and procedures.
- To ascertain the professional development needs of staff and work with the Headteacher to provide appropriate support.
- To ensure that identification procedures are in place throughout the school.
- To establish a register of more able pupils and to ensure that the register is updated regularly.
- To advise on the setting up of appropriate targets for more able learners and to co-ordinate the drawing up of Exceptional Education Plans (EEPs) where appropriate.
- To keep check on and disseminate relevant educational literature and articles.
- To communicate with parents and carers of more able children.
- To be available at parents' evenings to answer questions relating to more able pupils,
- To promote extra-curricular activities and the involvement of the wider community in special events
- To liaise with relevant organisations and outside agencies.
- To promote the use of enrichment activities and the use of competitions, clubs and special events throughout the school.
- To manage a budget.
- To monitor and evaluate provision and suggest improvements.
- To advise the governing body on the work of the school in relation to more able learners.

## **10 Governing Body**

- Governors have an important role in ensuring that the needs of more able learners are met. Working with the Headteacher and staff, they can ensure that:
- The school has a culture of achievement
- Parents are well informed about the strategy for meeting the needs of more able learners.
- Links are established throughout the community.
- Provision is regularly monitored and evaluated.
- Sufficient allocation is made from the school budget for funding, resources and staff training.
- The governing body receives regular reports on provision for, and attainment of, more able learners.

Governors have a special responsibility in partnership with the Headteacher for ensuring that all learners' needs are met.

## **11 School Parent Partnership**

Parents / Guardians will be informed in writing as to whether their son / daughter is grouped within this cohort and will be informed of the extra challenge and support their child will receive along with a clear understanding of what they should do to help them. Progress of all pupils will be communicated by the normal school reporting channels. These will include parents evenings, interim and full reports and when necessary letter or telephone contact.

## **12 The role of the DFE**

The DFE appreciates that every learner has a different starting point and different aspirations.



In order for its mission statement to become a reality, the DFE expects that the school has:

- ◆ high expectations of their pupils
- ◆ provision to raise the personal aspirations of all their learners
- ◆ provision to develop greater independence, self reliance, motivation and enterprise in all their learners.

Approved / reviewed by Curriculum & Communication Committee

..... Chair ..... Date