



# GIFTED & TALENTED/MOST ABLE STUDENT POLICY

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<b>Last reviewed:</b>	Sept 2020
<b>Ratified by Governors:</b>	n/a

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## Introduction – The Need for a Whole School Policy

- This **HCC Gifted & Talented/Most Able Student Policy** has been updated to take account of Ofsted's most recent report published in March 2015 on *The most able students - An update on progress since June 2013*. Unless otherwise stated, all references or related references to Ofsted are a direct response to this report.
- Ofsted cites a report on '*Educating the highly able*' published by the Sutton Trust in 2012 which refers to how: 'Ensuring that the brightest pupils fulfil their potential goes straight to the heart of social mobility, of basic fairness and economic efficiency.'
- All staff are aware of this policy and act upon it in order for G&T/Most Able students to receive a uniform approach.
- We recognise that G&T/Most Able students have as much need of differentiated learning as any other student.
- Each department considers their provision for this cohort which informs individual departmental Raising Attainment Plans.

## Aims

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector begins his report: 'Too many of our most able children and young people are underperforming in our non-selective state secondary schools.' It is a primary concern of the HCC policy to:

- Maintain a culture and ethos that champions the needs of G&T/Most Able students.
- Help G&T/Most Able students to flourish and leave school with the best qualifications.
- Provide first-rate opportunities for G&T/Most Able students to develop the skills, confidence and attitudes needed to succeed at the best universities.
- Find ways of discovering and promoting hidden talent.
- Raise awareness among staff, governors and students about the needs of G&T/Most Able students.

- Encourage, support and evaluate the progress of G&T/Most Able students.
- Support and guide G&T/Most Able students into higher education, including leading universities.

The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) has developed ten principles of good practice for schools and we endeavour to match these at all times:

1. Flexibility in meeting needs.
2. Valuing diversity and dealing with underachievement.
3. A partnership with pupils and parents.
4. The leadership of the Head-teacher and Senior Team priorities the needs of these students.
5. Regular assessment and review with early, prompt intervention.
6. High teacher expectations.
7. Positive attitudes by teachers who are prepared to “Go the extra mile”.
8. Close primary/secondary liaison.
9. Good use of external resources.
10. The absence of labels; working to the child’s strengths.

### **General Approach**

It is the intention of the college to provide an appropriate curriculum and support to enable each student who has been identified as G&T/Most Able to reach their full potential. It is accepted that this may involve radical solutions to support exceptional children.

## Who are the Gifted & Talented/Most Able Students? (See Appendix D)

- The use of Scaled Scores to replace National Curriculum Levels for Y6 SAT tests in 2016-17 means that the 2013 Ofsted definition of Most Able - students achieving Level 5 in English and/or Mathematics at the end of Y6 - is no longer applicable.
- 'Most Able' at HCC is defined as students with 'High'/'Upper' Prior Attainment (Fischer Family Trust/RAISEonline). From 2017 onwards, reading and mathematics test results only are used in calculating KS2 prior attainment fine levels for use in progress 8. If no prior attainment is available, pupils are excluded from national prior attainment groups.
- There are currently no national criteria (FFT/RAISEonline) for the application of KS2 prior attainment to identify High/Upper/Most Able students in the current Year 7 cohort (2019-20). Until the provision of national criteria, all Y7 students at HCC with a **scaled SAT score of 107 or above** (108 in 2018-19/107 in 2017-18/106 in 2017-17) have been identified as High/Upper/Most Able, providing a cohort which is consistent with existing cohorts in higher years.
- The DfE defines Gifted & Talented student as a cohort of between 5% and 10% of the college's population. ('Excellence in Cities - The National Evaluation of a Policy to Raise Standards in Urban Schools').
- This group is divided into the Gifted - academically most able - and the Talented whose expertise lies in areas such as drama, performing arts, sport and music etc.
- The DfE guidelines are for a ratio of  $\frac{2}{3}$  Gifted to  $\frac{1}{3}$  Talented.
- The National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth defines their cohort as the top 5% nationally, requiring two CAT scores of 129+ or very significant achievement in one or more fields.
- It is HCC policy to identify and allocate Most Able students according to Prior Attainment at the end of Year 6 before the transition to Year 7. Using CAT tests and teacher recommendations within the first term of Year 7, a sub-group of Gifted and Talented students is then identified (approximately 9% of the school roll). See Appendix B.

- While significant duplication will be seen between the respective cohorts, HCC is conscious that Most Able does not inevitably mean Gifted and Talented. Students designated as Talented, for example, may be identified according to attributes beyond the criteria for Most Able.
- While the terms 'Most Able' and 'Gifted and Talented' may be used synonymously, they may also refer to distinct and separate curriculum provision.

### **Key Areas of Underperformance for Most Able Students**

Ofsted has identified three key areas of underperformance for Most Able students where there are differences in outcomes between:

- schools where Most Able students make up a very small proportion of the school's population and those schools where proportions are higher
- the disadvantaged Most Able students and their better off peers
- the Most Able girls and the Most Able boys.

HCC's Most Able policy and provision is reviewed constantly to address the needs of priority groups. Academic mentoring, for example, seeks to identify and support priority students.

### **Transition from Primary**

We look to identify G&T/Most Able students during Year 6 with a view to implementation in Year 7. Identification can be undertaken using a combination of the methods below:

- CAT/SAT scores and other tracking/prior attainment data, including teacher assessment.
- Staff nomination through use of identification checklists.
- Student referral sheets.
- A register of Gifted & Talented/Most Able students.
- Liaison with feeder schools to seek nominations for new Year 7 students.
- Predicted GCSE grades.
- In-service training to enable staff to identify G&T/Most Able students.
- Assessment manager and, initially, the KS2 scores that it contains.
- Reference to the framework for progress.

All relevant information identifying G&T/Most Able students at HCC is immediately registered on SIMS so that teachers can respond appropriately. A comprehensive register of these students is circulated regularly to all teachers.

### **Inclusivity to Address Differential Attainment**

HCC is fully committed to ensuring equitable outcomes for G&T/Most Able students regardless of gender, ethnicity or socio-economic background.

- Inclusion in the G&T cohort is not permanent, although the emotional needs of the child would be a high priority.
- If it is perceived by parties that inclusion is no longer beneficial, G&T students may be moved either temporarily or permanently.
- Disaffected bright students need to be targeted.
- Behavioural problems will never be a reason for non-inclusion, nor will being on the Code of Practice.
- Students eligible for free school meals are a key sub-group within the Gifted and Talented/Most Able cohort. Effective deployment of the Pupil Premium is vital to prevent the under-achievement of this group in relation to their peers.

### **Grouping Policy According to Ability**

- HCC deploys a streaming system for core subjects so that Gifted/Most Able students will generally work in higher ability groups within their cohort. Learners with additional needs or those with SEN requirements in addition to being Gifted and Talented/Most Able may receive additional learning support beyond the cohort.
- It is acknowledged that there may be an occasional need for G&T/Most Able students to follow a radically different programme. Decisions concerning this would involve detailed discussions with all relevant parties and would place the best interests of the student as a whole person first.

## **Classwork, the Curriculum and Extension Activities**

- HCC is committed to addressing the attainment gap between Most Able students and their peers.
- It is our policy to provide a broad creative curriculum, giving all children a chance to thrive and to demonstrate skills and abilities that might not otherwise come to the fore. Enrichment/extension work is provided by all teachers in all classes as part of normal differentiated lesson provision, including homework. Differentiation by task is only one of many forms that are in regular use at HCC as shown on planning documents.
- HCC subscribes to a diverse selection of extracurricular publications accessed in classrooms and the LRC.
- Working with others of like ability is important. This is made possible by group work or by the use of setting. Differentiation provides activities requiring higher order thinking skills. The role of the teacher is vital in challenging the thinking of the Gifted/Talented/Most Able child, as is the learning environment.
- HCC has an on-going commitment to ensure a rigorous programme of academic study in-line with recent DfE and Ofsted guidance. Key Stage 4 provision is under constant review in accordance with the increased emphasis on academic subjects. Key Stage 5 provision is also closely monitored to ensure the best outcomes for students applying to university.
- In addition to the established channels available to all HCC students, Gifted & Talented and Most Able students have access to forums such as the College Council where they can express their views about how well the school is meeting their needs. This helps us to constantly review and adapt our policy.
- Funding for Most Able/Gifted & Talented provision can be accessed through appropriate channels.
- Directors of Learning are the designated liaisons between respective Departments and the HCC Gifted & Talented/Most Able programme Lead.

## **Assessment, Tracking and Targets**

HCC policy is guided by its College Improvement Plan (CIP) which provides detailed year-by-year evaluation of trends and results for Vulnerable Groups. Key performance indicators at HCC are as follows:



- Attainment Eight score/related FFT 20 Target
- Progress Eight

Whole school policy (CIP) is informed by key performance indicators in conjunction with Departmental RAPs, including vulnerable groups as a priority focus. Individual teachers identify relevant classroom strategies based on school and departmental policy coordinated by the Assistant Principal (Learners with Additional Needs) and the Lead Practitioner (Gifted & Talented).

Assessment is an on-going process from KS2 (see 'Transition from Primary'). HCC provides regular tracking data to all teachers, students and parents.

HCC believes that Most Able students have the potential to achieve aspirational targets in line with Prior Attainment. Academic Target Groups are identified at the start of Year 7. Most Able students with a negative differential between FFT 20/50 targets and current attainment based on tracking data are specifically identified with a view to targeted intervention and support.

### **Support and Guidance for University Entry**

The university destinations of HCC students are celebrated throughout the school as an aspirational pathway for Most Able/Gifted and Talented students

The sixth form at HCC is a thriving and robust environment which builds on the support and guidance given to students in prior key stages:

- Raising students' awareness of university education.
- Engaging with students and their parents and carers about the next steps in their educational career.
- Highly informed staff provide support and guidance which helps students to make the right decisions about academic subject choices and informs them fully about the content and requirements of degree courses.
- Provides early support about applying to UCAS, completing personal statements and understanding the financial implications and benefits of attending university.
- Students have the chance to visit universities in order to broaden their horizons and aspirations.

- Ex-students who are attending university or who have already graduated act as role models to encourage current students.

### **Extracurricular Activities**

These are highly valued for all children and for the Gifted and Talented/Most Able child in particular. A full list of activities is available to all staff:

- Club activities based around curriculum subjects as well as many others.
- Activity days and master classes. Master classes are available for G&T students to attend.
- Day and residential visits, including overseas.
- The use of subject specialists, visiting artists, performers and authors.
- HCC endeavours to engage fully with the summer school programmes offered by CfBT and the Sutton Trust.
- Where appropriate, we will endeavour to connect children with other organisations and individuals who will be better able to develop their particular skills. For example, providing audition information to talented actors who might want to try out for the National Youth Music Theatre, or talented footballers who might be interested in a junior academy linked to a major club.
- Homework club/s include Most Able/Gifted and Talented students whose homework tracking grades fall below the expected level. Subject teachers, house leaders, the Most Able lead or others may identify students in need of support.

### **Partnership with Parents**

Parents and teachers at HCC work together for the needs of Gifted and Talented/Most Able students. It is acknowledged that parents can be a rich source of knowledge and expertise.

## **Pastoral Care**

- Students' mentors are the first point of contact regarding pastoral care.
- The college strives to offer opportunity but without pressure.
- The college needs to take account at all times that we deal with whole people with complex needs.
- The college must be able to accommodate the individual within the institution. This may mean that students work in different places and at different times to others in their peer group.
- Progress will be reviewed as part of the Review Programme for all students.

## **Managing, Co-ordinating and Monitoring**

The principal responsibility for the implementation of this policy must remain with the classroom teacher. In addition, the following people can support this through regular reviews:

1. Headteacher.
2. Assistant Principal (LAN).
3. Gifted and Talented/Most Able Lead/Lead Practitioner.
4. Directors of Learning
5. House Leaders.
6. School Governor/s with responsibility for the Gifted & Talented/Most Able.

## **Review and Development**

Each year the school will draw up a register of Gifted and Talented/Most Able students in each year group. The Most Able Lead and the Assistant Principal for Additional Needs will keep this list under review, supported by regular feedback from classroom teachers and other interested professionals.

It is acknowledged that occasional entrants to the school will need to be considered for inclusion on arrival. These children will be entered on the School Census.

## **Staff Training and Development**

The school is fully committed to providing opportunities for staff training and development in this area. It is our policy to support staff attending specific training events whenever possible and desirable while also to providing appropriate INSET, including termly briefing updates.

## **Conclusions**

- The key concept of the programme is to maximise students' opportunities.
- Curriculum delivery is flexible.
- Delivery is enhanced beyond the normal college day.
- Governors are involved.
- A variety of methods are employed.
- G&T students are monitored and membership of the cohort is flexible.
- Membership of the Most Able is fixed for the majority of students.
- The impact of the programme on the curriculum is monitored to be successful.
- At all times, the well-being of the individual student belonging to the cohort is paramount.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Curriculum**

- The college provides G&T/Most Able students with their full entitlement to the National Curriculum but accepts that, on occasion, it may be necessary to look for more radical innovations.
- The school examines individual curriculum provision where GCSE success has been reached

- The college's assessment and marking policies are utilised by the G&T/Most Able student cohort as they stand.
- The college utilises a range of strategies to improve the teaching and learning of G&T/Most Able students.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **G&T Cohort (2020-21)**

Refer to School Information System (SIMS)

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Most Able Cohort (2020-21)**

Refer to School Information System (SIMS)

## **APPENDIX D**

### **COVID-19 Response (2020-21)**

In the absence of scaled SAT scores for Y7 students due to COVID-19, the Most Able cohort (2020-21) is determined using Y6 Teacher Assessment (Reading/Writing/SPAG/Maths) and Cognitive Ability Test (CAT) scores. The Gifted & Talented cohort continues to be determined using CAT scores and teacher recommendation.