



HAILSHAM COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ACADEMY TRUST

'Be the very best you can be'

MOST ABLE & TALENTED STUDENT POLICY

SLT responsible:	Leading Practitioner / Assistant Principal (Vulnerable Learners)
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Introduction – The Need for a Whole School Policy

- This **HCC Most Able/Talented 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 Most Able/Talented students to receive a uniform approach.
- We recognise that Most Able/Talented 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 Most Able/Talented students.
- Help Most Able/Talented students to flourish and leave school with the best qualifications.
- Provide first-rate opportunities for Most Able/Talented 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, Trustees and students about the needs of Most Able/Talented students.
- Encourage, support and evaluate the progress of Most Able/Talented students.
- Support and guide Most Able/Talented students into higher education, including leading universities.

HCC has developed ten principles of good practice which we endeavour to follow 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 Most Able/Talented to reach their full potential. It is accepted that this may involve radical solutions to support exceptional children.

Who are the Most Able/Talented 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 108 or above** (2022-23) have been identified as High/Upper/Most Able, providing a cohort which is consistent with existing cohorts in higher years. **See Appendix D: COVID-19 Response (2020-21/2021-22)**
- 'Talented' at HCC is defined as students whose expertise lies in areas such as drama, performing arts, sport and music etc. Historically, this comprises about 2.5% of the school cohort based on DfE guidelines ('Excellence in Cities - The National Evaluation of a Policy to Raise Standards in Urban Schools'). Talented students are nominated by teachers and their inclusion on the register is reviewed annually.
- HCC treats 'most able' and 'talented' students equally and strives to create an inclusive cohort where artistic, sporting, musical and other forms of excellence are valued as highly as academic success in Ebacc subjects.
- 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 Most Able and Talented students is then identified (approximately 10% 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 Talented and that students designated as Talented may be identified according to attributes beyond the criteria for Most Able.

- While the terms 'Most Able' and 'Most Able 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 Most Able/Talented 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 Most Able/Talented students.
- Liaison with feeder schools to seek nominations for new Year 7 students.
- Predicted GCSE grades.
- In-service training to enable staff to identify Most Able/Talented students.
- Assessment manager and, initially, the KS2 scores that it contains.
- Reference to the framework for progress.

All relevant information identifying Most Able/Talented 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 Most Able/Talented students regardless of gender, ethnicity or socio-economic background.

- Inclusion in the Most Able/Talented 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, Most Able/Talented 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 Most Able/Talented 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 Most Able/Talented students will generally work in higher ability groups within their cohort. Learners with additional needs or those with SEN requirements in addition to being Most Able/Talented may receive additional learning support beyond the cohort.
- It is acknowledged that there may be an occasional need for Most Able/Talented 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 Most Able/Talented 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, Most Able/Talented 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/Talented provision can be accessed through appropriate channels.
- Directors of Learning are the designated liaisons between respective Departments and the HCC Most Able/Talented 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 (Most Able/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/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.

Careers Guidance and Support

HCC provides award-winning careers guidance and advice to students in all key stages (*Careers Programme of the Year 2021*).

Extracurricular Activities

These are highly valued for all children and for the Most Able/Talented 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 Most Able/Talented 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/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 Most Able/Talented 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. Most Able/Talented Lead/Lead Practitioner.
4. Directors of Learning
5. House Leaders.
6. School Governor/s with responsibility for Most Able/Talented.

Review and Development

Each year the school will draw up a register of Most Able/Talented 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.
- Trustees are involved.
- A variety of methods are employed.
- Talented students are monitored and membership of the cohort is flexible.
- Membership of the Most Able cohort 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 Most Able/Talented 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 Most Able/Talented student cohort as they stand.
- The college utilises a range of strategies to improve the teaching and learning of Most Able/Talented students.

APPENDIX B

G&T Cohort (2022-23)

Refer to School Information System (SIMS)

APPENDIX C

Most Able Cohort (2022-23)

Refer to School Information System (SIMS)

APPENDIX D

COVID-19 Response (2020-21/2021-22)

In the absence of scaled SAT scores for Y7 students due to COVID-19, the Most Able cohort (2020-21/2021-22) is determined using Y6 Teacher Assessment (Reading/Writing/ SPAG/Maths) and **Cognitive Ability Test (CAT) scores**. The Most Able & Talented cohort continues to be determined using CAT scores and teacher recommendation.