



PROVISION FOR DIFFERENT NEEDS (ABLE, GIFTED AND TALENTED) POLICY

Note: Please also refer to the SEN Policy

Principles

Northampton High School values the individuality of every child and acknowledges the importance of helping all pupils to recognise the spectrum of their capabilities in order to fulfil their potential. We encourage all children to value their own particular gifts and to appreciate those of their peers.

Our aim is to help all pupils discover something they are good at in order to build their self-esteem, bolster their confidence and raise their aspirations.

To this end we prefer to refer to the 'provision for different learning needs' rather than isolating a specific group of so-called 'able, gifted and talented' students, although the use of these terms is widespread in education and can help in clarifying the rationale of certain programmes in use in school.

The SENCO has oversight of all special provision and reports to the Head and Deputy Heads. The Stretch, Challenge and Creativity Coordinator supports and develops the provision for discovering and building on the individual talents and passions of the students.

Stretch, Challenge and Creativity

In the Senior School the SC&C Coordinator organises a range of activities that will appeal to all students and a register is taken of sessions attended at all extracurricular groupings through SIMS Activities. The SC&C Coordinator and SLT review the registers with pastoral staff to ensure those identified as being able, gifted and talented are attending relevant activities and then follow up where opportunities are possibly being missed.

The advantage of the SC&C model is that all students are given opportunities to choose the activities they wish to take up and there is no outward 'labelling' of students. This lends itself more to a growth mindset approach and is in line with our continuous improvement assessment and marking policy, whereby all students are encouraged to set themselves ambitious targets.

Why mention able, gifted and talented pupils at all?

Educational research suggests that the quality of provision and approaches needed to challenge the most able will be of benefit to all pupils and that a focus on the gifted can help a school raise overall standards. Despite our selective intake we still cater for a wide range of abilities. To offer all children the same opportunity is not to offer them equality of opportunity, in fact education should be personalised and tailored to the needs of the individual to ensure that every pupil reaches the highest standards possible. After all, today's academically able and gifted pupils are tomorrow's social, intellectual, economic and cultural leaders, while our talented pupils could become the nation's inspiring sportsmen and women, artists, actors and musicians. So we do need to be aware of our most able pupils, as we are of our least academically able pupils and those with specific learning difficulties (SpLDs), such as dyslexia and slow processing speeds. Able, gifted and talented pupils can be at the other end of the spectrum of abilities and so also require special provision in order to flourish and fulfil their potential, they may of course also have SpLDs.

Identifying able, gifted and talented students

As much as possible the defining process in identifying which students should take part in given extension and enhancement activities as part of the SC&C programme is self-selection. As such there is no need to develop an artificial boundary for entry to what could be seen as an elite grouping, however, it is important to be able to identify able, gifted and talented students to ensure they are being offered relevant opportunities. There are many definitions of what constitutes an able, gifted or talented child and they all have their merits. The aim of using these definitions is to ensure that we accurately identify all such children and offer them varied and relevant opportunities to develop.

DfES definitions

- “Children and young people with one or more abilities developed to a level significantly ahead of their year group (or with the potential to develop those abilities)”.
- “Gifted: children at the upper end of the spectrum of academic ability.
- “Talented”: those with special ability in sport or the arts (Music, Art & Drama).

Howard Gardner’s Model of Multiple Intelligences

In his book “Frames of Mind” (1984) Howard Gardner proposes that there are 8 different kinds of intelligence, each of which becomes evident (either singularly or in concert) in different social contexts. Consequently, we recognise each of the following as valid fields within which children might demonstrate enhanced capability.

- Linguistic skills – reading, writing, speaking, listening, factual recall;
- Mathematical skills – number manipulation, logical and sequential processes;
- Naturalist skills – hierarchical ordering, awareness of natural world;
- Visual & spatial skills – observation, artistic representation;
- Musical skills – musical appreciation, singing, instrumental;
- Physical skills – fine & gross motor skills, sports, creativity;
- Social skills – relationships, leadership;
- Personal skills – self-awareness, emotional intelligence.

Sources of information

Our current method is based on the following sources of information:

- KS1-2 PIPS, NFER-Nelson, InCAS
- KS3-4 CEM MidYIS, CAT4, PASS
- KS5 CEM ALIS, GCSE results
- Any qualification offered by an external body, e.g. ABRSM, LAMDA.

Evidence of exceptional ability in a talent, such as an audition for a professional performance or a trial at county/national level. Also work samples, observation notes, checklists of characteristics, parent/peer/self-nomination. It is worth bearing in mind the range of intelligences and talents that may be displayed. Teachers could refer to Howard Gardner’s model of the 8 Multiple Intelligences.

MidYIS (Middle Years Information System) tests

These tests are taken by girls in Years 7 and 9. They are designed to measure, as far as possible, ability and aptitude for learning rather than achievement. The tests are comprised of Vocabulary, Maths, Non-verbal and Skills sections. All sections contribute to an overall measure of ability that strongly predicts subsequent achievement. Each MidYIS Test is standardised on a large sample of pupils and can, therefore, provide high scores which are meaningful:

130 +	top 2% nationally + used to designate ‘mentally gifted’
120+	top 10% nationally
100	Mean national score
117-119.0	School Year 7 averages since 2010

These tests rarely produce false positives, but false negatives are more likely, hence the need to retest in Year 9. This is also essential to help identify pupils whose abilities have been latent so far, or for new pupils joining us.

MidYIS Attitudinal testing also takes place and helps the pastoral team to develop programmes to support able learners who have a negative academic self-image, for example.

GL CAT4 Testing

This is being introduced in 2016-17 as a further measure to develop understanding of students' academic profiles.

Senior School Faculty system

The faculties in the Senior School have a key role in supporting able, gifted and talented students and developing the provision for different needs across the ability range. Staff are asked to suggest students who might be missed by the processes used above, for example, those who might not perform well in traditional tests and exams but who have great potential in their subjects nonetheless. Each faculty has a provision for different needs (able, gifted and talented) policy held in the faculty handbook. This outlines the approaches taken in class to cater for different learning needs.

In the Senior School Internal Examinations are taken in June in all subjects, but there are limitations in using these alone as the results can be substantially altered by effort on the part of the student or other external influences such as the degree of parental support. This method of identification is likely to miss some pupils who are underachieving or who lack motivation and this must be taken into account by teachers and reported to subject leaders or heads of faculty. GCSE performance aids the identification of new pupils joining us in Year 12. The results of the Entrance and Scholarship Examinations can also provide important input.

In the Junior School, assessments, project work and tests are completed throughout the year where results are used to identify able, gifted and talented students and provide for different learning needs across the ability spectrum.

Methods used to identify Talented pupils

Talented pupils are nominated by teaching staff in the **PE, Music, Art and Drama** subject areas and any other relevant external organisations or individuals e.g. sports coaches, peripatetic music teachers, Speech & Drama tutors. The examinations of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music or the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) can also provide useful evidence to support these nominations. In sport, representation at County, Regional or National levels are also key indicators.

Other evidence

Evidence can also be provided from pupil's work completed out of class (during lunchtime or after-school clubs) or at home, as some pupils produce their best work away from the distraction of the classroom. Using a variety of methods for identifying able, gifted and talented pupils encourages all partners in children's education to be "on the lookout for excellence" thus reinforcing the positive school ethos and our aim to help all children discover something they are good at.

PROVISION

In the classroom

In the Senior School, each faculty develops its own subject/class specific strategies to provide stretch and challenge for able, gifted and talented pupils. These strategies are documented in the faculty handbooks. All teaching staff are expected to be aware of any able, gifted and talented pupils in their classes and to provide for different learning needs.

Methods and strategies recommended:

- **Differentiated activities** – by outcome and by task

- Using the school Thinking Skills programme to ensure **HOTS** (higher order thinking skills) not **MOTS** (more of the same)
- **Extension tasks** available which should be interesting, motivating and preferably contain an element of choice
- Open-ended activities, projects and problem solving are built into lesson planning
- Emphasis on developing **Thinking skills**
 - **E.g. Six Thinking Hats** approach
 - Thinking Skills lessons in all subject areas using Thinking skills slides which are located in all classrooms
- Working in ability related peer groups will often help – get the class used to changing working groups
- Encourage involvement in **enrichment activities**, clubs, teams and competitions
- Use **targeted questioning** to extend and deepen thinking during oral work.
- Use of **Bloom's taxonomy** when differentiating tasks and questions, i.e. Evaluation, Synthesis, Analysis, Application, Comprehension, Knowledge.

Acceleration

This strategy is not actively practised. Keeping pupils in their peer groups is deemed to be more important for their social and emotional development. The taking of tests and exams earlier than would usually occur is also not encouraged. Enrichment and enhancement activities are the preferred route, allowing pupils to develop a deeper understanding of subjects without the added pressure of further examinations.

Extracurricular

There are many opportunities outside of the classroom for pupils to develop skills, talents and abilities and to nurture interests and aspirations. These include clubs, societies and groups, educational visits and one-off events, such as lectures and annual competitions. The REC programme (from September 2016) is designed to offer a range of activities that will appeal to all students and tracking is maintained via the SIMS Activities module (see above).

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