



St Edward's School

Unity - Achievement - Faith

Most Able Student Policy

Reviewed and Approved by Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Curriculum Committee on 15 October 2025

Next review date: Autumn 2026

SLT is responsible for oversight of this policy's implementation

Mission Statement

MAY WE BE ONE

In purpose – educating for life in all its fullness

In faith – encountering God who lives among us, calling us to unity

In dignity – nurturing confidence and maturity

In community – striving together for justice, love and peace.

We are all called by Christ to live life in all of its fullness, and every person in our school is invited to pursue such fulfilment. As we educate, we remember that every person in our community is endowed with unique gifts, and boundless potential. Through our curricular and super-curricular provision we seek to create a rich range of activities, and support for wider learning, so that our students can climb higher, and go deeper, as they are stretched and inspired by their learning. Through this policy we aim to ensure that all students remain challenged and stimulated by a love for learning.

Introduction

Progress for All

This school provides for a broad range of abilities as a comprehensive school, and recognises that some students have significantly higher abilities than the national and school average across one or more subjects. Therefore, it will ensure that all students are supported in order to realise their potential. All classes have students that are more able in a specific subject and there are also students identified as having high prior attainment (HPA) from Key Stage 2 data, who are considered to be the most able students.

Definition

More able students are students performing at the top end of a given class.

Most able students represent the top by prior attainment and internal benchmarking.

Identification

There are a series of ways in which more and most able students are identified. These should be non-discriminatory and will include:

- Data from KS2 and KS3 tests where applicable/available
- Data from CATS for Years 7-11
- Data from GCSEs/ ALPS for 12 students
- Diagnostic testing

Teachers will also be invited to nominate students via: referral from lists of subject characteristics/criteria, collection of teacher observations, other relevant curriculum assessments/reports and performance criteria from practical subjects.

In addition to being identified via performance data, more-able students may also be identified from the following indicators:

- Learn quickly and easily though some might show slower but very sustained learning
- Generalise from specific facts
- Understand meanings
- Deal with abstractions
- Reason well
- Show developed metacognition
- Have a high retention of and use of specific and general vocabulary
- Be very curious keen observers and have a vivid imagination
- Have a particularly good working memory
- Use well developed techniques to retrieve information from the long-term memory
- Show originality or an unusual imagination
- See patterns and make connections
- Read fluently and transfer this skill e.g. to writing
- Enjoy working independently
- Be independent thinkers
- Show compassion, and moral sensitivity
- Be inquisitive and seek justification for actions

Aims of this policy

- To ensure that students identified as more and most able achieve their potential
- To check that the curriculum supports the more and most able across all Key Stages
- To ensure that all students progress rapidly from their starting points and are continually challenged supported in their learning
- To ensure that challenging targets for expected progress are set
- To ensure that all teachers identify more and most able students in their classes, and plan teaching and learning to stimulate and challenge these, whilst scaffolding to support all learners.
- To ensure that all students attain the highest grades possible.
- To close the gap between disadvantaged more and most able and those who are not disadvantaged
- To encourage more and most able students to have the highest aspirations for themselves, including access to top universities, training both within the UK and Internationally whilst maintaining a breadth of learning
- To increase retention of the most able in our Sixth Form

Purpose of this policy

- To gain and monitor an accurate central record of those expected to achieve highly in each subject area
- To ensure that staff consistently use identified pedagogy to: deepen knowledge, encourage effective independent learning in and out of the classroom and secure rapid and sustained progress
- To ensure that staff identify more and most able students at risk of underachieving
- To adjust pedagogy where required and provide personalised intervention if necessary
- To ensure that staff have developed 'a culture of high expectation' and 'teaching to the top' with all students rather than focussing solely on expected progress
- To enable resources to be allocated equitably
- To ensure students are identified on all seating plans

Underachievement

It is important to remember that not all able students show their ability in the classroom. During each round of monitoring, we encourage department scrutiny of prior data to ensure that highly capable students, at risk of underachieving, are identified and that appropriate intervention is put in place to ensure that no student is left behind.

More and Most Able with SEN

We recognise that some students in this category may have (among others): Dyslexia, Asperger's traits or behavioural challenges. Some may also be on the Pupil Premium register and qualify for support here also. Their needs should be met through quality first teaching and through the proper adaption of the curriculum offering breadth, depth, balance and relevance. Close monitoring of these students through SEN care plan reviews and cross-department communication is essential to ensure that the attainment gap between these groups of students and their more and most able peers is closed.

Provision

Provision for the more and most able must be made first and foremost within the normal curriculum. According to the DFE Inclusion Statement there are three ways of providing effective learning opportunities for all students:

“An **inclusive** curriculum:

- a) Sets suitable learning challenges for all
- b) Responds to the diverse learning needs of all
- c) Overcomes potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of students

Inclusion becomes a particular issue for students who show ability much above or much below their chronological age...”

Provision for Most Able should include:

- A visible culture of high expectations and ‘teaching to the top’ across all subjects
- An emphasis on all round development and not solely on academic attainment
- A focus on developing metacognitive processes
- Stimulating, well-planned work in lessons and Guided Independent Learning outside the classroom
- Well-differentiated schemes of work evidence stretch and challenge, alongside scaffolding to support ‘teaching to the top’.
- Increased pace, breadth, depth and independence as appropriate
- Skilled and challenging questioning that encourages a depth of exploration and building of deep understanding
- Opportunities to take part in enhanced learning activities through ‘The Edge’ program of activities
- An understanding of how to maximise the potential of the teenage brain
- Ensuring that high levels of oracy accompany academic development
- Accurate and formative feedback to promote target-setting
- Flexibility in work programmes, study methods and times of delivery when required
- Acknowledgement of their achievements

Provision could also include:

- Responsibility within school
- Mentoring and feedback
- Enrichment opportunities for breadth and depth
- Coaching
- Targeted support to secure attainment

At St Edward's we aim to provide as many of these opportunities as possible, whilst ensuring equitable allocation of resources. Subject Leaders must ensure that Schemes of Learning and relevant policy documents refer to provision for more and most able students. Where necessary, CPD is provided for staff to ensure delivery of an appropriate curriculum.

Student Grouping

Most and more able students may be grouped in a variety of ways, and in different ways within a single subject. They might be in both ability-based and mixed-attainment groups. They should not be isolated because of their need for work at an appropriate level. There should be evidence of adaptive planning, teaching and assessment for them, regardless of the group organisation.

Pastoral Provision

Some more able students might need targeted support in coping with the expectations to achieve highly all the time. The Pastoral Team and Tutors will also support parents and carers by signposting support and encouraging self-referral if appropriate. Some students might need additional support to complete work missed whilst representing their area or country in competitions.

Transition

Whenever possible, high ability students should be identified by feeder schools. Liaison with feeder schools by Deputy/Assistant Heads and Directors of Learning should generate a list of students to be monitored over the first term at St Edward's. As much detail as possible around prior attainment should be made available to subject teachers. The register of most able students in Year 7 will be compiled during the first term at St Edward's in line with their prior data and recent teacher assessments.

Monitoring

The school undertakes to maintain an updated overview of the progress of most able students. It will be the responsibility of the Subject Leaders and Directors of Learning to ensure that these students are offered a curriculum appropriate to their needs and abilities, in the same way as all other students, including those with Special Educational Needs. This will involve tracking the individual needs and progress of the students in a holistic manner. The progress of the more and most able students is regularly monitored by SLT members who oversee Learning and Teaching through scheduled and focused subject review meetings.