

HEATHLAND SCHOOL ABLE, GIFTED AND TALENTED POLICY

Policy reviewed – sept2020

Policy presented to Senior Management Team (SLT)- sept2020

Due for review –sept2022

Definitions

Academic subject is one that is:

- Studied by students as part of their regularly timetabled week
- Externally assessed by an examination or a series of examinations
- A subject that involves a substantial proportion of written work

Able:

An able student is one who shows ability above average across a range of subjects.

Gifted:

A gifted student is one whose aptitude for an academic subject is considerably above the expected aptitude for a student in that year group. Nationally, students in the top 10% of their age range are considered 'gifted'.

Talented:

A talented student is one whose aptitude for a non-academic subject is considerably more than the expected aptitude for a student in that year group. Nationally, students in the top 10% of their age range are considered 'talented'.

Able, Gifted and Talented:

This term is used to describe a student who falls into either or both of the categories. Identifying

Students

Heathland School recognises that students may be able/gifted/ talented in certain areas and not in others. Able, Gifted and Talented students will be identified, in many cases through assessed indicators of ability such as NFER testing, CAT testing and end of year examinations. They may also be identified through staff nomination which may be based on observation of the above, but which does not have to be. Parent, peer and self-nomination for Able, Gifted and Talented consideration will be treated on a case-by-case basis.

Heathland School recognises that testing can sometimes be unrepresentative. Able, Gifted and Talented students may therefore be nominated by other indicators, including, but not limited to:

- Being able to process information at a rapid rate
- Being able to make connections, provide sophisticated insights and be able to cross-reference between academic disciplines and /or across academic levels, including (but not necessarily) connections, insights and cross-references to their own independent learning
- Demonstrating advanced levels of maturity and comprehension for their age (not compared to their peer group, but compared to staff's previous experience of that age level)
- Demonstrating independent thinking, autonomy of study and originality of thought
- Displaying intellectual curiosity and thirst consistently
- Having a highly capable memory and the capacity to recall and retain information with minimal effort
- Refining their own research and study skills independently
- Showing a willingness to improve their own level of achievement for reasons of personal preference rather than to gain staff-offered rewards or to avoid staff-threatened sanctions
- Showing a willingness to undertake problem solving exercises or tasks independent of staff suggestion or supervision.
- Showing a willingness to take 'intellectual risks' in academic work.

Recording Students

Heathland School will create and regularly update a list of those students considered to be Able, Gifted and Talented. The students will be divided into two groups:

Group A: those students who are recognised as Able, Gifted and Talented according to the externally assessed criteria that Heathland School subscribes to.

Group B: those students who are deemed to be Able, Gifted and Talented by some or all members of staff but who do not meet any of the externally assessed criteria. Those students in List B will have listed the subjects in which they are deemed to be Able, Gifted and Talented.

Heathland School recognises that students develop at different rates. It will therefore be possible for students to join, leave, and/or re-join the Able, Gifted and Talented List B as the years pass.

All staff are responsible for identifying students within their own discipline that they consider to be Able, Gifted and Talented, assuming that there are students (and there might not be) who meet the criteria. The register will be reviewed by the SENCO, the Head of Department (Seniors). Teacher (Juniors) at the beginning of the Autumn Term, where candidates for inclusion or removal will be considered. It may be deemed necessary to interview the student, the member of staff who has nominated the student, to review the work of the student or to observe the student in an activity such as PE or Music.

Parents will be informed when students are included or removed from the register.

Approaches to Able, Gifted and Talented Students

In order to provide for the Able, Gifted and Talented students at Heathland School, the following strategies should be put into place:

- Opportunities for extension work suitable to Able, Gifted and Talented Students should be embedded in every department's Scheme of Work
- Tutors with Able, Gifted and Talented students and all staff should actively encourage the student and set challenging targets for them
- Where possible and when advisable, Able, Gifted and Talented students may participate in 'accelerated learning' by sitting public examinations in advance of their cohort
- All students, not just those who are Able, Gifted and Talented, should have their work celebrated by wall displays and other media
- When possible and appropriate, students who are Able, Gifted and Talented may participate in events organised for other year groups and/or in external events relevant to their field of excellence. Examples include, but are not limited to, visiting speakers, academic lecture days, public speaking competitions and conferences
- There should be as many opportunities as is viable for Able, Gifted and Talented students to take part in events that demonstrate their field of excellence, including but not limited to Mathematics Challenges, essay-writing competitions and other competitions
- On occasion, it might be possible to suspend the regular curriculum to instigate a whole-school unique learning experience, or to suspend the regular curriculum for certain year groups to instigate a year-group-wide unique learning experience, such as a French Day. When this occurs, students that are Able, Gifted and Talented in the relevant field should be encouraged to participate fully
- Departments are encouraged to build cross-year-group links with other Key Stages to celebrate the achievements of Able, Gifted and Talented students among other benefits

- The Careers department and Inspiring Futures will provide support and guidance relevant to Able, Gifted and Talented students

The role of the Head of Department teacher and the SENCO

With regard to Able, Gifted and Talented students, The Head of Department teacher and the SENCO will:

- Be responsible for the maintaining of the Able, Gifted and Talented list on an annual basis
- Advise colleagues on ways and opportunities to enrich the learning experience of Able, Gifted and Talented students beyond those ways and opportunities already devised and identified by members of staff
- Pass on details of appropriate INSET and training events to colleagues
- Communicate with parents of Able, Gifted and Talented students about any significant opportunities for enrichment that may exist, over and above those notified by other staff.

Teaching Strategies

Although these strategies are effective with all students, they are particularly relevant to those that are Able, Gifted and Talented and all staff are encouraged to ensure that the following are present in their lessons:

- Differentiation by task, expectations, resources and input
- Embedding of extension activities into all Schemes of Work and encouragement to pursue fields of enquiry beyond the syllabus, particularly those prompted by personal interest to stimulate an interest in and a thirst for knowledge
- Development of independent thinking skills and autonomy
- Provision of open-ended tasks and opportunities for problem solving and investigations
- A variation of teaching styles and tasks, to accommodate different learning styles- including, but not limited to, verbal, aural and kinaesthetic
- Encouragement of students to take responsibility for their own learning
- Encouragement of a metacognitive approach to learning, with students evaluating their own strengths and weaknesses and the thought processes enacted in different tasks

Extension and Extra-curricular

Heathland School is committed to providing a wide range of extra-curricular activities, which should include those intended to stretch the most able students. Members of staff should inform Able, Gifted and Talented students of additional opportunities available to them outside of school, including, but not limited to club sport presentation, theatre trips and lectures. Heathland School has a variety of activities available to encourage students to explore their personal interests. Whilst these change periodically, through them, students are given the opportunity of furthering their own knowledge and/or ability.

Resources

Members of staff should inform students of appropriate learning materials, including resources available through libraries and the Internet. A list of specific Able, Gifted and Talented websites will be compiled and circulated when ready to all members of staff. All staff should suggest appropriate sites for inclusion in the list to the Head of Department teacher. It is expected that all teaching staff will actively seek out resources appropriate for Able, Gifted and Talented students in their subject(s).

Outside Agencies

Teaching staff are encouraged to have links with external organisations including but not limited to University faculties, national associations and organisers of local and national competitions.