

Most Able Learners Policy

The community of St. Mark's believes that every individual is created by God and is precious to God. Each person is called to serve God and their neighbour and to fulfil their potential. St. Mark's has at its heart a love of God, the education of its pupils and a mission to serve our neighbours and community. We seek to foster a spirit of truth, reconciliation, justice and peace. We are committed to developing the spiritual, intellectual, moral, cultural, social and physical potential of all our members within a safe and supportive environment.

Aims

The most effective provision for the most able pupils will only be achieved if it is actively sought. Providing challenge for the most able pupils raises the achievement levels of all pupils. Through our focus on the teaching and learning of the Most Able students we aim to:

- Provide all pupils with learning experiences and opportunities, which will help them to fulfil their God-given potential and secure the highest possible levels of scholarship.
- Support all staff in meeting the needs of the most able, in understanding what constitutes outstanding teaching and learning for the most able, and in the identification of these pupils.
- Help stimulate and motivate our most able pupils, especially those who are underachieving and those that are disadvantaged.
- Ensure the Most Able fulfil their potential and achieve the highest grades.
- Increase the number of pupils who leave St Mark's with the entry requirements, skills and confidence they need to succeed at Oxford and Cambridge, and Russell Group universities.

Identification

The Most Able Learners Register comprises:

- A cohort of approximately the top 10% in each year group who have achieved the highest scores at KS2.
- Those pupils with high scaled scores of 110 or more in Reading, 110 or more in Maths and those working at a greater depth within the expected standard in Writing at KS2.
- Pupils with Pupil Premium eligibility who may have a different profile and yet show potential are also considered.
- At KS5, students with the highest point scores at GCSE and those with A/A* targets for A Level.

In addition

- The most able cohort is modified in light of progression through the school.
- Teachers will also nominate pupils who demonstrate strength in a particular subject and these registers are maintained by Departments and made available to the Most Able Coordinator.

Ofsted has placed a strong focus on improving the transfer between primary and secondary schools in order that Year 7 teachers know which pupils achieved highly, know which aspects of the curriculum the most able pupils have studied in Year 6, and use this information to plan and teach lessons that build on prior knowledge and skills so that repetition is avoided. Some pupils will already have been identified as most able in their primary schools and hence recognised at the point of entry to St Mark's, but others will emerge later and only in response to challenging opportunities offered by the secondary curriculum.

Provision

Teaching and learning at St Mark's promote pupils' intellectual, physical, moral, spiritual and cultural development and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. Participation in all aspects of school life is essential for pupils to develop into accomplished individuals who, in addition to achieving excellent results in public examinations:

- have intellectual curiosity
- are creative and original thinkers
- become reflective, rigorous and academically resilient life-long learners
- become active citizens and make well informed choices
- have self-esteem and are sensitive to others
- show compassion, honesty and reverence.

Effective teaching for the most able will be characterised by:

- a classroom culture of high expectations and aspirations in which scholarship is rigorously reinforced
- carefully considered higher order questioning and prompts to encourage intellectual debate, develop academic register and the highest levels of cognitive rigour
- awareness of which pupils in their teaching groups are on the most able register with particular attention given to disadvantaged students
- well-paced lessons that incorporate activities which stimulate creativity, imagination and independence
- opportunities for pupils to develop excellent learning habits including risk taking
- assessment and feedback used effectively as an integral part of the learning experience
- lessons planned flexibly in response to pupils' needs
- work that continues to be challenging and demanding from transition to secondary school and throughout the Key Stages so that the most able pupils make rapid progress
- evaluating the quality of homework set for the most able pupils to ensure that it is suitably challenging.

The role of the Most Able Coordinator

To support the progress of the most able pupils and fulfilment of God-given potential, the Most Able Coordinator will:

- monitor the progress and attainment of pupils through the School's IPM process, external exam results and annual reports;
- share the analysis with Departments, PPLs and SLT;
- use SIMS data to put in place measures to address under-achievement amongst the most able cohort;
- contribute towards the mentoring of underachieving, most able Year 11 pupils;
- contribute towards whole staff INSET relating to the most able pupils;
- keep teaching staff well informed about Ofsted requirements for able pupils;
- attend relevant CPD events regarding able pupils including visits to other successful schools;
- develop strategies for the improvement of most able provision in consultation with the Head teacher, SLT, governors and staff;
- provide a programme of challenge and enrichment for pupils in Key Stage 3;
- maintain and develop the school's most able policy;
- maintain an up-to-date register of most able pupils for staff;
- communicate with parents, staff and governors about the provisions being made for the most able pupils;
- use leading research in the field of education for the most able learners, for example NACE, The Brilliant Club, The Sutton Trust, and PixlEdge as a stimulus for innovation to improve academic performance;
- provide advice and guidance on career and further education choices and to assist with study and life skills.

Monitoring and evaluation

The scope and quality of the provision for the most able pupils, in a context of challenge and high standards for all, will be evaluated regularly as part of whole-school evaluation.

Senior Leadership Team

- Work with all staff to achieve a culture of high expectations and excellence.
- Ensure that a rich provision across the school allows all pupils to achieve to the best of their ability, and provides further opportunities for identification.
- Ensure that the Most Able Coordinator and all staff are fully trained and equipped to provide outstanding outcomes for the most able pupils.
- Ensure that sufficient funding is made available to support activities for the most able students, both within the core curriculum and in extra-curricular provision.
- Monitor the achievement of the most able pupils rigorously, as part of whole-school evaluation.
- Provide leadership opportunities to extend the most able students.

Subject Leaders

- Ensure the following criteria are included in each scheme of work and are met by staff:
rich, challenging tasks; opportunities for higher order thinking and metacognition; opportunities to develop independence, research techniques, and resilience; challenging homework.
- Identify high ability underachievers in their curriculum area and intervene effectively.
- Share excellent practice in teaching the most able.
- Record what high ability looks like in their subject for different year groups.

Governors

The Governors' Curriculum Committee will support the work of the school in this area by monitoring and evaluating the implementation and impact of the Most Able Learners Policy.

November 2018

This policy will be reviewed annually.