

More Able & Talented Policy

“Everyone here has the sense that right now is one of those moments when we are influencing the future” (Steve Jobs)

At St. Illtyd's Catholic High School, we believe that all pupils should be stretched in order that they fulfil their potential. Challenge, engagement and progress are the three underpinning values of all lessons and all staff work towards developing our pupils as independent learners with clear aspirations for their future and a growth mindset that will enable them to achieve their goals.

The aim of this policy is to:

- ensure the more able pupils in the school are stretched and challenged
- raise attainment and aspirations across the school
- develop a curriculum that caters for and enriches the more able pupil
- extends opportunities outside of the classroom to create an ethos of aspiration to all pupils
- ensures all pupils' talents are identified and nurtured, in keeping with the Catholic ethos of the school

More Able and Talented

The Welsh Government document '*Meeting the Challenge: Quality Standards in Education for More Able and Talented Pupils in Wales*' states that the term more able and talented “encompasses approximately 20% of the total school population, and is used to describe pupils who require enriched and extended opportunities across the curriculum in order to develop their abilities in one or more areas.”

More able and Talented pupils are those who are working considerably above their peers across the school, who are identified through both formative and summative data as requiring differentiated tasks and more challenging learning opportunities. They are pupils who demonstrate an exceptional skill in a specific area, such as a creative or sporting talent.

Identification

Through regular data analysis, each Head of Year identifies pupils within the year group who are achieving the top levels/ grades across a range of subjects. These pupils are then included in the 'horizons' group and the Head of Year plans tasks specifically aimed at increasing challenge and aspiration amongst their horizons pupils.

In addition to this, each department is asked to set criteria which helps them to identify pupils who are more able or talented in their individual subject.

When pupils have been identified, the honours programme leader co-ordinates and promotes these names and makes this register of pupils accessible to all staff. Subject leaders are asked to regularly update this register and ensure that these pupils are catered for both in and out of lessons.

Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning strategies could include where appropriate:

- extension opportunities – e.g. individual long term research avoiding repetition
- child initiated learning opportunities
- differentiated teacher questioning (HOT questions, re-questioning answers)
- targeted use of peer tutoring
- adopting a problem solving approach
- adopting a skills based approach
- encouraging pupils to debate and think from different points of view
- encouraging identified pupils to share their expertise and skills, supporting others whenever possible.

In short we aim to create a learning culture which encourage and nurture the qualities expressed in the identification sheets.

Schemes of Work should also take into account the need for teachers to plan individual tasks which considers the needs of MAT pupils and suggested activities should be built in.

(see appendix 1 and 2)

Top achieving pupils

The honours programme leader, in conjunction with the Head of Year, is responsible for using data to identify pupils in KS4 who have the potential to achieve A* and A grades across a range of subjects.

Upon identifying these pupils, the honours programme leader will meet with each of these pupils individually in order to discuss their current and expected progress. They will design a profile of their own goals, likes and dislikes and strategies to help them to develop. When this is completed, the honours programme leader will promote these pupils to all staff and place their profiles on a display in the staff room so that everyone is aware and working towards a common goal in raising their attainment further and in ensuring that they are secure in achieving the A*/A grade in as many subject areas as possible.

In addition, subject leaders discuss the support and progress of these targeted pupils through their line management and through meetings with the school's raising standards leader.

Furthermore, the honours programme leader will act as a mentor to these pupils, meeting with them on a regular basis to discuss their progress and involving them in any extra-curricular activities aimed at developing more able pupils.

St. Illtyd's Honours Programme

We have a unique system to support the development of pupils with a high IQ- the Honours Programme.

Each year, all pupils are given the opportunity to sit the Mensa Cattell III B test. Pupils who achieve an IQ above 148 qualify to become a member of Mensa and this also places them in the top 2% of people in the country with respect to their IQ.

In order to recognise this achievement, the school has developed a programme specifically for pupils who have achieved an IQ above 148 and we have extended this to pupils who were relatively close to achieving this measure (pupils can re-sit the test but need to wait twelve months before doing so).

The honours programme is run during registration periods and is made up of two form classes:

- Year 8 and Year 9 honours pupils
- Year 10 and Year 11 honours pupils will be led by the honours programme leader

The honours programme will:

- develop a growth mindset amongst pupils
- encourage pupils to work collaboratively
- develop independent learning and life skills
- break down their inhibitions to make them more confident

- design a flight path for all pupils beyond St. Illtyd's
- cover subject matter aimed to stretch pupils beyond the realms of the school curriculum

This will be achieved by focusing on two key aspects:

- Oracy- pupils will be taught the oracy framework and methods of improving their physical, linguistic, emotional and cognitive oracy skills so that they become confident and competent talkers and listeners. They will be expected to present their work on a regular basis, including to their parents during the school's reporting day.
- Project-based learning- a project designed that aims to answer an essential question with a planned end product which will be presented to an authentic audience. Honours pupils will take full responsibility for the planning stages of each project.

Parents and carers are a key part of the honours programme and will be asked to participate in activities where they suggest improvements and share ideas that will further help pupils within the group to progress.

Roles and responsibilities

Honours programme Leader

- Assemble and maintain the register of more able and talented pupils, in accordance with whole school tracking and departmental identification.
- Lead staff discussion and raise awareness through INSET provision and the sharing of best practice.
- Liaise with subject leaders and heads of year.
- Audit MAT provision, including details of extension / enrichment activities within and outside the curriculum in each department.
- Identify, publicise and mentor pupils targeted to achieve A*/A grades in KS4.
- Support school leaders in maintaining and advancing the A*/A performance indicator.
- Organise, promote and run the annual Mensa tests.
- Identify pupils who are suitable for the honours programme.
- Plan and deliver the oracy framework to honours programme pupils.
- Support honours programme pupils in the development of their projects.
- Liaise with parents and staff to keep them informed and supportive of the honours programme.

- Extend opportunities for pupils by linking with other schools and agencies.
- Maintain all policy documents and develop provision across the school.

Heads of year

- Use tracking to identify and monitor the Horizons group
- Track progress and administer interventions
- Provide pupils with opportunities to raise aspirations within more able pupils

Staff

- Identify pupils within their teaching groups on the more able and talented register.
- Use a range of teaching strategies that can be used to meet the needs of more able and talented pupils.
- Ensure schemes of work have opportunities to stretch the more able and that they suggest activities to enable this.
- Promote extra-curricular activities aimed at supporting more able pupils.
- Be aware of pupils targeted for A*/A grades or on the honours programme and support these pupils as necessary.

Pupils

- Set high expectations for themselves and monitor their own progress through tracking.
- Engage in dialogue with teachers to enrich their experiences of those subjects.
- Participate in opportunities organised by the school, and identify opportunities for the future.
- Develop a growth mindset so that they are clear that intelligence can be developed and that effort leads to success.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership team and Governors.

Appendix 1- Suggested classroom activities

Questioning:

Pre-planning higher order questions using the questioning grid in the T&L blog

Pose, pause pounce bounce- re-questioning pupils to further probe understanding

Use questioning dice in Teacher's Toolkit. MAT pupils have to come up with 3 questions relating to the lesson using the dice.

Experts in the classroom/ peer tutoring: Use pupils as a support teacher, circulating and challenging pupils (NOT giving the answers!)

Thunks: This is an opportunity for imaginative work either verbally or in written form. What if ... all the oceans dried up? There was no such thing as gravity? Parents could choose the characteristics of their children?

Limit the time available for tasks: A straightforward task becomes more challenging with a time limit. Pupils will have to make decisions on what is possible rather than what is desirable and subsequently resolve a series of compromises.

No Correct Answer: requires pupils to make selections and JUSTIFY (the key point) their choice. Such tasks require students to use their critical thinking skills as well as to make use of a wide variety of information.

Decision-making: An example is to ask pupils what should be left in and what should be left out, therefore providing a constraint and forcing them to prioritise, select and discard (EVALUATE - which is a higher order thinking skill!)

Let Pupils do Their Own Planning- Teacher shares the basic planning with the group and elicits suggestions for possible alternatives. If we are feeling brave, we can ask our students to give us feedback on how our lessons can be improved!

Include Technical Language: use linguistic terminology early on in a scheme / lesson in order to provide the students with the language they need to analyse their work and that of others. They are also enabled to be more rigorous in explaining their ideas and thinking processes.

Philosophy: using philosophy encourages children to think critically. It helps students to: be reflective about their own and other people's judgements; improve reasoning; strengthen personal judgements and explore subtleties.

Abstract Material: this is a source of real challenge e.g. proverbs and allegories, stimulating images.

Confusing the Order: confusing the order in which the reader can use the information increases difficulty. So does making the pupil withhold information for later use.

Debating: an opportunity for pupils to challenge each other and be encouraged to justify their opinion. I have had success with giving pupils an opinion they don't necessarily agree with, and encouraging them to think from a different perspective.

DRAFT

Appendix 2 – Identification sheet- qualities of a MAT pupil

MAT Checklist

Department: _____

Year group: _____

Please write the name of the pupil in the column, and then tick the characteristics you have seen them demonstrate.

Think quickly and accurately;					
Work systematically;					
Generate creative working solutions;					
Work flexibly, processing unfamiliar information and applying knowledge, experience and insight to unfamiliar situations;					
Communicate their thoughts and ideas well					
Be determined, diligent and interested in uncovering patterns;					
Achieve, or show potential, in a wide range of contexts					
Be particularly creative					
Show great sensitivity or empathy, and make sound judgements					
Demonstrate particular physical dexterity or skill;					
Be outstanding leaders or team members					
Be fascinated by, or passionate about, a particular subject or aspect of the curriculum					