WEST BROMWICH
COLLEGIATE ACADEMY

More Able, High Achievers Policy

At West Bromwich Collegiate Academy, we believe that all students are entitled to an education that will enable them to develop their full potential, be that intellectual, physical, aesthetic, creative, emotional, spiritual or social, finding appropriate challenge in our learning environment.

Definitions

The term 'More Able' describes students who are considered to have an ability and attainment to develop to a level significantly ahead of their year group (or with the potential to develop those abilities or for high attainment).

'High Achievers' describes students who are excelling in a particular subject or area of the curriculum. We no longer label students as 'Gifted' or 'Talented' in a specific subject but use the overarching 'High Achiever' term to promote inclusivity between academia and practicality. Students can be considered a High Achiever in one or more subject. These subjects can correlate or be separate.

Key Objectives of the Policy and Provision

To ensure that most able students:

- Attain the highest possible competency level (Advanced) at the end of Key Stage 3 and in Key Stage 4 they are working towards a target grade of 7 or above.
- Become highly effective learners and critical thinkers.
- Become exceptional achievers and performers in their subject, art, or sport.
- Develop independency as high achieving learners.

To achieve these key objectives, the Academy will ensure that:

- Teaching and learning is both challenging and varied, using strategies that are shared throughout the Academy
- Levels of attainment and achievement indicate a high level of sustainability over a period of time
- Students are accurately identified using a process that is regularly reviewed.
- The curriculum offered by the Academy is flexible, allowing for enrichment and subject choice
- The ethos and pastoral care environment promotes ambition and achievement
- Staff have the opportunities to address teaching the most able through CPD opportunities
- Students are tracked and monitored effectively via interim assessment and intervention is carried out, where appropriate
- The Academy engages with the community and families in regards to More Able provision.
- The Academy provides opportunities for all learners to learn beyond the classroom and in and out of Academy environments, for example extracurricular provision.

Building on strengths and priorities for development

The More Able development review identifies strengths to build on: stretch and challenge is visible in many lessons; Academy teaching strategies continue to be promoted as a minimum expectation; a range of extracurricular opportunities and higher education experiences has been offered; and careers links are appearing in more lessons. These strengths provide a foundation for development, rather than evidence that practice is yet consistent across all subjects.

The Academy will prioritise consistent, clearly identifiable challenge in lessons, students' books and homework; adaptive teaching and timely feedback; stronger tracking of progress, attendance and enrichment participation; purposeful higher education and careers guidance; wider reading; and regular communication with families. Particular attention will be given to English and mathematics, students eligible for Pupil Premium, students with SEND and boys whose progress is below their individual targets. Student and staff voice, wellbeing and manageable workload will inform improvement.

Identification

Students who are more able may have some of the general characteristics:

Personal traits

- Inquisitive, curious, alert and responsive to new ideas
- Quick/agile thinkers
- High self-motivation/initiative; can work well independently
- Socially adept
- Show leadership qualities
- Good/unusual sense of humour
- Sensitive/sensitivity and empathy with others
- Socially immature/isolated; prefer computers to people

Learning Ability

- Learn new ideas and concepts quickly/easily/readily
- Good at reasoning/logical/analytical thinking
- Good at dealing with abstractions/abstract thinking
- See relationships between things; can generalise from specific facts
- Good at understanding things/meanings; show unusual insights
- Able to memorise quickly/easily
- Follow complex directions easily
- Keen powers of observation
- Advanced vocabulary/verbally fluent/good self-expression
- Learned to read early, often before school age; rapid readers
- Good attention; concentrate and persevere for long periods if interested

Learning Styles

- Dislike repetition of concepts and closed tasks; get bored easily
- Informed/show interest in ideas and concepts beyond their years
- Creative/imaginative; original ideas in problem-solving; may be artistic/musical
- Inclined to choose unusual but effective methods of working, perhaps using a different line of logic or jumping steps

- Many interests/hobbies; read across a wide range of subjects
- Prefer verbal expression; reluctant to record things in writing
- Resent imposed timetable restrictions if interested in a task
- Perfectionists; may lean towards being obsessive

[2021 National Association for Able Children in Education]

Identification is an ongoing, holistic process. Staff should recognise both demonstrated attainment and potential, including students whose abilities may not be fully reflected in a single assessment. The characteristics above are prompts for professional discussion, not a checklist that every More Able student must meet.

The following notes outline some of the ways in which More Able students are identified at WBCA.

- Base line testing – students complete various tests (specifically Literacy and Numeracy) at the beginning of the Academic year. More Able students are then placed in the Saturn/Neptune group within each classroom.
- Year 7: Data and general information passed on from primary schools, including evidence of high attainment and potential. Primary school link staff support transition and the sharing of information about More Able students and subject-specific High Achievers.
- Years 8 and 9: Data from previous years and information from students' L4L teachers as well as progress throughout their time at WBCA in comparison to their peers.
- Key Assessments - Throughout the academic year consistently high performing students are identified. They have the opportunity to demonstrate their gifts and/or talents through a number of avenues: classroom performance (competencies), key assessments and extra-curricular clubs.
- Mock Examinations – KS4 Mock examinations allows for an insight to see where More Able students from KS3 are working at and whether additional provision is needed to achieve high target grades (7+).
- Staff recommendations and evidence from classroom learning, problem-solving, enrichment and challenge activities will be considered alongside baseline, GL and other assessment information. No single test score determines access to challenge or inclusion on the More Able register.
- Mensa activities, including a supervised testing session, have taken place at the Academy. Evidence from these activities can contribute to identifying students' reasoning strengths and potential, alongside teacher judgement, assessment information and students' work. Mensa participation or membership is not a requirement for More Able identification or access to provision.

Tracking and Assessment

More Able learners will be tracked and assessed throughout the year. The register is reviewed regularly and may change as further evidence of attainment or potential emerges. The More Able Coordinator and Heads of Department will review progress at assessment points, drawing on teacher assessment, GL information, work and student discussion. A

decline in a test score will prompt further review rather than automatically removing a student from provision.
Reviews will compare attainment with individual targets, with particular attention to English and mathematics and progress towards grades 7 and above where appropriate. Where students are below target, staff will agree timely subject support, mentoring or intervention, communicate the next steps and review their impact. Assessment and moderation will inform the level of challenge and support needed.

Progress, access and participation will be reviewed for More Able students eligible for Pupil Premium, those with SEND and boys, without lowering expectations or treating group membership as a measure of ability. Seating plans and relevant provision information will help staff plan Active Observation and timely feedback. Staff will use Provision Map information and review scaffolding and access arrangements for students with SEND. Financial barriers to resources, revision and enrichment will be addressed through appropriate Academy support.

Some of the tracking and assessment methods in place for More Able Learners include:

- Teacher assessment;
- Use of tests e.g., cognitive ability tests (CATs); GL Exams
- Regular tracking of performance of individuals and sub-groups;
- Comparison with local and national outcomes;
- Learner profiles and portfolios;
- Arrangements for receiving information or passing it on at transfer and transition.

Management of More Able Provision

More Able Student Coordinator – U Newby has the overall responsibility for the More Able

Coordinator role. The policy will be developed in collaboration with the SLT and

Heads of Year to:

- Identify pupils with high potential, recognising that whilst some pupils are overt about their abilities, some may actively hide it and others may not readily be able to display their ability due to the need to develop higher order communication skills in English.
- Improve motivation and attainment of our most able pupils by ensuring that benefit from a coherent, co-ordinated and distinctive teaching and learning programme, which will provide a consistent challenge and which will be responsive to their individual needs.
- Encourage pupils in developing their personal skills as well as their knowledge and understanding.
- Encourage high learner self-esteem so that pupils can be confident and yet critical, and evaluate their own learning.

- Monitor progress and achievement and to set individual targets for identified pupils in accordance to school's policy and practice.
- Promote aspiration and excellence in all pupils.
- Provide a range of out of hours enrichment and extension activities.

Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

Provision for More Able

We endeavour to meet the needs of More Able children through careful identification and monitoring strategies and by providing access to a curriculum that will not only support the development of the whole child intellectually, socially, and emotionally, but will enable them to show aptitudes and quality of thinking.

We strongly believe that engaging teaching and learning for all is the key to securing achievement for every child. Through creative curriculum activities, more-able pupils are given a wide variety of exciting challenges and experiences, developing the ability to question, explain, persevere, communicate their thoughts, and take risks in their learning whilst building relationships.

More Able students will have access to open-ended tasks, higher-order questioning, complex resources and opportunities to apply learning in unfamiliar contexts. Adaptive teaching will retain ambitious learning goals while providing scaffolding where needed, including for students with SEND. Challenge should deepen learning rather than simply increase the quantity of work, and should not be reserved only for students who finish early.

Provision for More Able students will be provided by the More Able Students Coordinator but will require implementation by their class teacher. Ideas for departmental development of More Able students can be found here:

- Opportunities provided to lead parts of lessons
- Additional learning activities provided via class TEAMS or Challenge Menus
- Students are provided with additional activities/tasks in order to extend their learning and wider reading. They are provided with activities as additional/ alternative homework.
- All lessons and activities have extension tasks that use higher order thinking skills as a basis or include Next Step activities
- Students may be able to participate in assemblies
- External speakers, workshops designed for all students but with a focus on More Able
- Careers guidance on Options and Routes – focus on Further and Higher Education

Homework and wider reading

Homework will include purposeful stretch and challenge across year groups, with clear expectations for completion and review. Where appropriate, tasks may include flipped learning, revision, wider reading and application of knowledge. Departments will monitor More Able students' engagement and address barriers to completion. Wider-context reading will be built into curriculum planning through relevant library books and available resources such as The Day and Sora, rather than being left solely to students' independent choice.

Stretch/Challenge Extensions in Lessons

Developing a deeper understanding through encountering more complex resources and materials, tackling more challenging questions and tasks, demonstrating higher levels of thinking, and presenting increasingly sophisticated responses. These challenges should also be targeted at students achieving the next competency or level above peers.

Teachers will make stretch and challenge easy to recognise through the shared Academy challenge symbol and clear explanations of the learning expected. Challenge may be presented on lesson slides, within planned tasks, through questioning, in students' books or through digital resources. Students should understand how to access challenge and how it helps them progress. Challenge is part of everyday teaching, not a separate optional activity solely for identified students.

Challenge stickers and feedback options

Challenge stickers are an available option for making stretch and challenge visible in students' books. Teachers may use a sticker to introduce a planned deeper-thinking task, provide an individual next-step challenge during Active Observation, or identify a response that requires further development following assessment. The task or instruction should make clear what the student needs to do, with time provided to respond.

Where a sticker is not the most appropriate format, teachers may use the shared challenge symbol alongside a written or printed task, or a clearly labelled digital challenge. These options should make the challenge and student response readily identifiable. Departments will agree a consistent approach to identifying challenge and checking responses in line with Academy assessment, marking and feedback guidance. A sticker alone is not evidence of impact: monitoring will consider the quality of the task, the response and the progress made.

Learning walks, book and work scrutiny, and student voice will check that challenge is consistently available and understood across subjects and year groups. Reviews will include how challenge is identified in books, how students respond and how feedback moves learning forward. Effective practice will be shared through departmental discussion and CPD, with Challenge Champions considered as a means of supporting consistency.

The More Able Coordinator and Teaching and Learning Team will support staff through shared resources, modelling, CPD and professional reading, including available NACE

resources. Staff will be supported to use Academy-approved technology and AI to help plan appropriately demanding tasks, subject to teacher review and Academy guidance. Digital challenge resources, including Teams or OneNote where appropriate, may support independent learning. New approaches will be evaluated before wider adoption and should reduce duplication rather than create additional marking demands.

The Role of the Heads of Department

Each subject area will require a member of staff to help with subject-specific guidance in More Able students, their role will be to:

- Oversee the interests of More Able students and to monitor their progress towards demanding targets
- Ensure that the More Able policy is implemented
- Generate, review and update the More Able register
- Obtain and monitor academic data and targets
- Regularly feed back to students and parents regarding progress
- Ensure that the CPD co-ordinator is aware of the specific professional development needs for staff to ensure high quality delivery of More Able provision
- Develop enrichment activities beyond the classroom targeting More Able Students
- Plan identifiable stretch and challenge within schemes of learning, lessons and homework, using Active Observation to adapt teaching and provide feedback.
- Review progress and intervention at assessment points, including English and mathematics and access for Pupil Premium and SEND students, and track enrichment participation.
- Develop wider-context reading and subject-specific careers links, share effective resources through Trust subject networks, and protect time for staff development.

Enrichment/ Extracurricular

Enrichment activities at WBCA must provide opportunities for learners to reveal and develop their abilities.

The More Able Coordinator and departments will maintain a calendared enrichment offer and record invitations, attendance and participation. Reviews will identify students who are not accessing opportunities, explore barriers with students and families and arrange support. Evaluation will consider engagement, learning and aspiration as well as the number of activities offered.

The More Able Coordinator will work with the Careers Lead to connect subject challenge with post-16 pathways, aspirational careers and further and higher education. Building on university experiences already offered, planning will seek opportunities for every year group to encounter higher education through visits, workshops or visitors. Partnerships, including those with Girton College and the University of Birmingham, will be reviewed for their contribution to students' informed choices.

Areas we can consider include:

- Opportunities for problem-solving, decision-making, analysis, synthesis, creative thinking, speculation, evaluation and research;
- Planning and monitoring of enrichment activities, including clubs, societies, activity days, masterclasses, day and residential visits, visiting specialists, weekend activities, summer schools;
- Collaboration with other schools, external organisations, governors and other individuals with appropriate expertise;
- Opportunities for learners to engage with "real life" scenarios;
- Use of local resources such as libraries, art, drama or theatre groups;
- Opportunities to participate in performances, sports activities, community and other projects;
- Participation in national schemes, competitions and festivals.

Examples of provision offered within the Academy, subject to availability and review:

- Year 9 -10: Scholars Programme by the Brilliant Club - The Brilliant Club's Scholars Programme gives pupils from non-selective state schools the opportunity to work with a PhD researcher to experience university-style learning. It helps pupils to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to secure a place at a competitive university and succeed when they get there. We work with pupils from aged 8 to 18, supporting pupils to make an informed choice about their future.
- Extracurricular clubs targeted with subject-specific stretch and challenges. I.e., Young Engineers and Chess Club. (Teachers to keep a note of attendance so More Able students can be monitored).
- Opportunities under the RAISE programme at the University of Birmingham.
- Debate Mate (KS3) – A debating club delivered by our staff along with trained university students. The club raises speaking and listening attainment, as well as improving a range of high order thinking skills and non-cognitive abilities such as confidence, teamwork and leadership.
- Opportunities with Girton College, Cambridge University. Workshop carried out by Girton College Alumni, for Y10 and Y11 students discussing the process of applying to Oxbridge and Higher Education.
- Target Oxbridge – An opportunity for eligible students of African/Caribbean heritage to explore Oxbridge pathways and applications. Academy students have previously participated; access to future opportunities will be reviewed as part of enrichment and careers planning.

Past Opportunities within school:

- Year 9: Brilliant Club for English Mentoring. Students receive a 1:3 mentoring in specified themes within English by a Post-Graduate Tutor to stretch and challenge their abilities.
- Students have also been encouraged to join the National Saturday Club as well as a Virtual Summer Camp by Debate Mate.

Pastoral Care

Specific challenges can be experienced by more able learners when it comes to their well-being, such as pressure to perform.

Attendance will be monitored alongside attainment and participation, with early support where absence limits access to learning or enrichment. The More Able Coordinator, Heads of Year and attendance team will work with families to understand barriers, support catch-up and review interventions. Regular student voice will explore whether students feel challenged, supported and able to access provision, including any pressure associated with high expectations.

Areas we must consider at WBCA, and target are as follows:

- Ethos of provision for emotional, social, intellectual development and self-esteem;
- Provision for personalised learning;
- Pastoral support from class teacher, form tutor or coordinator;
- Mentoring, coaching and peer support, e.g. buddy scheme;
- Learner voice – feedback, one-to-one discussion, questionnaires, representation on school council;
- Partnership with parents and carers.

Parental Support

Support from parents and carers is a key factor in the success and development of all young people, including the more able. Communication with parents to answer the following questions is important for the More Able Learners:

- What does it mean to be “more able”?
- How do you know if you have a more able child?
- How do schools identify children with special abilities?
- What is the current approach to children with high ability?
- What should schools provide for more able children?
- What information about your child and the school’s provision can you expect to be given?
- What questions could you ask of the school?
- How do you overcome barriers and difficulties?
- What can you do to help your child at home?

The Academy will work closely with parents and carers so that More Able and High Achiever provision is understood. Communication will include positive updates, progress towards targets, enrichment opportunities, attendance or homework concerns and practical ways to support challenge and wider reading at home. Departments and the More Able Coordinator will follow up where engagement or participation is limited, offering accessible communication and support with digital platforms where needed.

The More Able and Stretch and Challenge area of the Academy website will be reviewed and updated regularly so that families can find relevant opportunities and guidance. Parents' evenings and other family engagement opportunities will be used to explain challenge provision, listen to family views and agree support.

PROCESS FOR DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

This policy and the impact of More Able provision will be reviewed annually by the More Able Coordinator and Senior Leadership Team. The policy is not restricted to a particular academic year. The accompanying development plan will record priorities, responsibilities, success measures and review points, distinguishing established strengths from actions still being developed.

Points under consistent consideration:

- Alignment with the school improvement or development plan;
- Focused monitoring of the quality of teaching for more able learners;
- Criteria for assessing the impact of the policy.
- Consistency and impact of challenge in lessons, books and homework, including sticker or equivalent identification and the quality of students' responses.
- Progress against individual targets, particularly in English and mathematics, and the impact of support for Pupil Premium students, students with SEND and boys who are below target.
- Attendance, enrichment participation, careers and higher education experiences, wider reading and family engagement, including barriers to access.
- Student and staff voice, wellbeing and workload, the impact of CPD and technology, and sharing effective practice through departmental and Trust networks.