

# CHALLENGING OUR MOST ABLE POLICY

## **Rationale**

Sir Harry Smith Community College recognises that all children are entitled to an education that will enable them to develop to their full potential, be that intellectual, physical, aesthetic, creative, emotional, spiritual or social, finding appropriate challenge in our learning environment.

At Sir Harry Smith Community College, we are committed to meeting the needs of all students, recognising the need to provide a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum to identify and extend our most able students. It is the intention of the school to provide adequate support, giving students the opportunity to maximise their potential, making education an enjoyable, exciting and worthwhile experience. Provision must also be made so parents can feel confident of a curriculum that caters for their children.

## **Aims**

To identify and make effective provision for our most able students in a secure yet challenging educational environment that will stimulate their interests and allow them to achieve to the best of their ability.

In order to do this the school will endeavour to provide;

- an environment in which achievement in all activities is valued and celebrated,
- awareness of the particular educational needs able students have, and offer opportunities for them to reach their full potential by providing a sufficiently challenging school curriculum and extended curriculum,
- access to differentiated provision through enrichment and extension activities in all subjects,
- to encourage the expression of talent and to make students aware of the benefits and challenges of being a talented performer,
- develop and maintain an ethos where it is 'acceptable' to be bright and to recognise achievement
- to help able students develop the personal qualities, which will enable them to maximise their potential,
- to provide a partnership with parents to ensure good communication and support,

## **Identification Strategies**

Sir Harry Smith Community College recognises the importance of using a variety of strategies to identify more able students and it is important that all

the individual curriculum areas of the school both academic and pastoral, plan their own strategies to identify these students.

### Characteristics to look for in highly able students

- Think accurately and quickly
- Work systematically
- Generate creative working solutions
- Work flexibly, process unfamiliar information and apply knowledge, experience and insight to unfamiliar situations
- Communicate their ideas and thoughts 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
- Demonstrate particular physical dexterity or skill
- Make sound judgements
- Be outstanding leaders or team members
- Be fascinated by, or passionate about, a particular subject
- Demonstrate high levels of attainment across a range of subjects within a particular subject or aspects of work
- Have a wide vocabulary
- Asks lots of questions and learns more quickly than others
- Have a retentive memory
- Be curious and can concentrate for long periods on a subject of interest
- Have a wide knowledge and interest in the world
- Enjoy problem solving, often missing out the intermediate stages in an argument and making original connections
- Have an unusual and vivid imagination
- Set themselves high standards and are perfectionists
- When not sufficiently challenged, may become apathetic or disruptive.

The following list may provide useful alternative strategies for identification for departments. The most reliable identification will draw upon a number of strategies and will not rely on test results alone.

### **Additional Identification Strategies:**

- End of Key Stage benchmark assessment data (students achieving at a higher level than expected for their age)
- Recommendations from Primary School
- Subject specific criteria
- Departmental assessments and internal examinations
- Information from external agencies, e.g. clubs / societies
- Discussion with colleagues
- Teacher knowledge and observation

### **Pastoral Care**

The programme for our most able students embraces the support the pastoral system has to offer. We understand that the identification of a student may lead to peer problems and so we have strategies in place to support these students within the cohort.

### **Provision**

Our most able students need opportunities to develop the range and quality of their skills through tasks that stretch them technically, physically and mentally.

At Sir Harry Smith Community College, provision for our most able aims may include the following:

- All schemes of work to include specific enrichment materials.
- Awareness amongst staff of their role in the identification of more able students based on subject specific criteria and the need to make the curriculum sufficiently challenging.
- The effective assessment of students' potential and performance.
- Enrichment and extension activities.
- The active encouragement of highlighted students to enter local and national competitions and tests of all kinds.
- Opportunities for more able students to work together.
- Encourage close links between school and home.
- Recognition, rewarding and celebration of achievement.
- Close liaison with external support agencies if applicable.
- Transition units to allow pupils smooth progression from primary to secondary school

### **Gifted and Talented Definition**

Sir Harry Smith Community College's definition for a Gifted and Talented student is, 'those pupils who, in some aspect, achieve or have the potential to achieve significantly beyond normal expectations'

Within the school, this is divided into two main categories;

- *Gifted* – students with extraordinarily high ability or potential in academic subjects.
- *Talented* – students with high ability or potential in the expressive or creative arts or sport.

**Conclusion**

- Students will be monitored and membership of the cohort will be flexible, as the school recognises that students develop at different rates.
- At all times the well being of the individual student belonging to the cohort must be paramount. The key concept to the education of our most able students is that there must have opportunity, **challenge, and enrichment.**
- Opportunities for enrichment may be offered beyond the normal school day.