



Provision for the More Able

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1. Policy Statement

At Harborne Academy , we want all of our students to fulfil their potential, including the more able pupils.

It is our ambition to:

1. Drive our more able students effectively and develop a culture of high expectations for students and teachers of all key stages;
2. Meet the educational needs of our more able pupils, ensuring there is a high level of challenge in the classroom;
3. Ensure that our more able pupils leave school with a qualification that best reflects their ability and potential, along with the skills and confidence they need to succeed.

2. Identification

We identify students in Harborne Academy as being a 'more able' pupil if they enter the academy with high levels of prior attainment. Most typically, this is indicated by a Level 5 within their KS2 SATS results. In absence of KS2 data, pupils sit a CATs test upon entry; in this case the results from their CATs testing will quantify their identification as a more able pupil.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

1. The Coordinator for more able pupils is responsible for:

- i. Keeping a record of students who have been identified as more able;
- ii. Using this record to monitor the progress of more able students;
- iii. Providing advice and guidance to more able students about the opportunities open to them;
- iv. Developing opportunities beyond the classroom by establishing links with outside providers;
- v. Monitoring student participation in all activities involving more able pupils;
- vi. Communicating with parents/carers;
- vii. Meeting, or helping to meet, the distinct needs of those who are more able.

2. Departments are responsible for:

- i. Identifying more able students upon entry;
- ii. Differentiating the curriculum to meet the needs of AIM students;
- iii. Consistently providing students with work and learning that is appropriately challenging;
- iv. Monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in every key stage.

3. Heads of Year Groups are responsible for:

- i. Celebration assemblies rewarding effort, aspiration, and achievement (all years);
- ii. Transition arrangements with primary schools (Skills School only);
- iii. Monitoring options in Years 9 and 11 as well as university choices in the Sixth Form (Years 9, 10 and 12 respectively).

4. Provision

More able students should not be seen as ‘the end product’; being identified as more able is just the start of it. After this point, we need to challenge and provide for our most able students so that they will flourish, succeed, and achieve.

One distinct area that needs our attention is the provision for more able pupils within the academy, as this is not only an issue within the school but has also been identified nationwide. The most able students report, published 4 March 2015, finds that many of the most able children who attend non-selective secondary schools are failing to achieve their potential, compared with students who attend selective and independent schools. The report follows up on an earlier survey carried out in 2013 – and concludes that very few improvements have been made over the intervening 2 years. Hence our provision must be seen to be challenging these findings.

All more able provision begins with high-quality teaching first. We know that more able students thrive on higher cognitive learning and need far less time to grasp key concepts before they are ready to put their skills into practice. These pupils also relish the challenge of extension tasks and activities, pushing learning to the higher end within subjects; this is reflected within our planning and teaching of lessons. We also offer a range of activities at lunchtime and after school to provide an additional challenge. These activities are listed on the school website.

Provision will not just end here, however, as we strive for our pupils to excel not only within school, but also after and beyond their time at the Academy. For this to occur, we aim to create and maintain relationships with outside agencies and external speakers, showing pupils pathways to different careers and further educational opportunities as well as raising their aspirations and motivations.

We are planning to expand what we offer our most able. In the future, we would like to provide programmes that are even more tailored and intensive, particularly where underachieving students are concerned (see Supporting students who are underachieving, below). Such programmes might include expert-led masterclasses, local arts provision, summer schools, or specialist advanced courses like the Open University’s Young Applicants in Schools Scheme (YASS).

1. Monitoring underachievement

We keep a more able register to help us monitor student progress. Parents will be informed by letter if their child has been identified. When we review our data, we will pay particular attention to groups of vulnerable more able students, including:

- i. disadvantaged pupils who attract Pupil Premium funding
- ii. black and minority ethnic (BME) groups
- iii. those with English as an additional language (EAL), including bilingual students
- iv. those with special educational needs
- v. those with medical conditions or disabilities
- vi. poor attenders
- vii. young carers
- viii. looked-after students

Teacher assessments can identify students who are not making expected progress but we also look out for underachievement in other ways. For example, more able students can sometimes become perfectionistic or overly self-critical, which can result in them purposefully avoiding new activities for fear of failure. Other students might start to withdraw socially and in lessons, or show other signs of low self-esteem.

2. Supporting students who are underachieving

As with all students, where more able students are not doing as well as they should be, we would like to offer whatever resources we can to help put them back on track.

Our support would start with specific programmes for small groups of students. These could cover a range of topics: study skills, social skills, creative thinking, personal targets, and so on. If individual students are still underachieving at the next review point, we might look to provide something more tailored and intensive, like specific mentoring or one-to-one tuition.

5. Final Thoughts

‘Provision for the more able’ is a whole-school culture, not a category: a culture of learning, achieving, and excelling. It means more than just scoring highly on a test; it is about being exceptional in some way. It is about showing a real flair for something, a flash of brilliance, perhaps. But even the most brilliant of students will still need nurturing, whether it is through greater challenges, fresh opportunities, or just extra encouragement. We want all our students to have high aspirations, to be the very best they can be, to develop existing talents and discover new ones.

Harborne Academy wants to give every student the chance to flourish. We are proud of our students, and working with them is an absolute privilege.