



CARDINAL NEWMAN  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

*November 2017*

Reviewed: *Achievement &  
Standards Committee*

Date of Next Review:  
*November 2019*

**Able and Talented  
Student Policy and  
Practice**

# ABLE AND TALENTED STUDENT POLICY AND PRACTICE

## Our Vision for Our Able and Talented Students

'The most important factor in turning ability into achievement is the opportunities a school provides within and beyond the classroom to motivate and engage as well as deepen and extend more able pupils' learning.' (National Association for Able Children in Education)

At Cardinal Newman Catholic School we recognise that central to our mission is the knowledge that every student has their own unique combination of skills, talents and abilities. We believe that every student must be enabled to develop those talents to the full and that every student has a right to experience teaching and learning which is challenging and inspiring. It is our belief that to achieve this we must identify and meet the needs, talents and skills of all our students, including our most able. We believe that:

- Defining ability is a complex and evolving process
- High ability includes all areas of human achievement
- Many children are capable of high achievement given the right opportunities
- There should be no ceiling on how many children in our school are defined as highly able
- We can and must provide opportunities for the highly able to flourish and achieve

High attaining students who have insufficient demands placed upon them can become bored and disillusioned. We know that where successful provision is made for a school's most able students there is an increase in the general levels of achievement for all students and a culture of success is created. Therefore, we strive to provide an education for all students that is challenging and exciting and which develops their skills to their maximum. All staff have a role to play in identifying and meeting the needs of our Able and Talented students.

## Policy Statement

The school aims to:

- 1) Identify and challenge our Able and Talented students as they transfer to Cardinal Newman from Year 6.
- 2) Raise awareness among staff of the needs of our Able and Talented students and support staff in providing for them.
- 3) Monitor the progress of Able and Talented students as they move through Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 and offer intervention where necessary.
- 4) Provide a differentiated school curriculum appropriate to the needs of our Able and Talented students.
- 5) Provide extra-curricular opportunities for our Able and Talented students throughout the school and college.
- 6) Review the Able and Talented Student Policy every two years, ensuring that it reflects best practice.

## How is our Able and Talented Student Policy put into Practice?

### Defining the Terms and Identifying our Able and Talented Students

#### Definitions

At Cardinal Newman Catholic School we recognise that defining ability is a complex process and that the term 'Able and Talented' is not sufficient to describe the different groups of able students who form our school population. We use the terms 'Able and Talented', 'High Prior Attainers', 'Disadvantaged High Prior Attainers' and 'High Attainers'. These terms are used to identify the following groups of students:

**1) Able and Talented:** those students whose attainment, as measured by end of KS2 test scores, places them in the top 10% of our school population, previously referred to as 'gifted and talented'. In Years 9-11 these students will be on the Extending Pathway. At Cardinal Newman our 'Able and Talented' students in Years 7 and 8 (2017-2018) will have scored 341 or more out of 360.

In Years 12 and 13 our Able and Talented students are defined as those who attained seven or more A/A\* grades (or equivalent) at GCSE. These students form our Oxbridge Plus group.

**2) High Prior Attainers:** students who entered KS3 with L5 in English and Maths. In Years 9-11 these students will be on the Extending Pathway. For our current Year 7 and 8s (2017-2018) 'High Prior Attainers' will be defined as those students who entered Year 7 having scored between 330-340 out of 360 in their three KS2 tests. They will be on the Extending Pathway.

**3) Disadvantaged High Prior Attainers:** disadvantaged students in receipt of pupil premium funding who entered KS3 with L5 in English and Maths. In Years 9-11 (2017-18) these students will be on the Extending Pathway. For our current Years 7 and 8 students, 'Disadvantaged High Prior Attainers' will be defined as those pupil premium students who entered Year 7 having scored between 330-340 out of 360 in their three KS2 tests.

The benchmarks for 'Able and Talented', 'High Prior Attainers' and 'Disadvantaged High Prior Attainers' will be kept under review and amended when national guidelines for the interpretation of the new KS2 tests are published.

**4) High Attainers:** students whose abilities may have gone unrecognised or unrecorded in KS2 but who are identified by their teachers and from their performance data as high attainers in subjects other than English and Maths during the course of KS3. This group includes students who have exceptional talents in Science, Modern Foreign Languages, Music, Drama and/or Sport or who demonstrate high levels of achievement in extra-curricular activities outside school.

In addition to the criteria listed above, we use the following information

- a) Information from Primary Schools
- b) Cognitive Ability Tests performed by all students in Year 7
- c) Subject specific identification criteria determined within the different departments.

For the purposes of this policy the term 'Able and Talented' is used to refer to all of the above groups.

## Identification of Able and Talented Students in the Classroom

In identifying Able and Talented students in the classroom we look for students who display the following characteristics:

- They master subject content easily and transfer their insights to new problems
- They make connections between past and present learning
- They work at a level beyond that expected for their age group
- They produce original and creative responses to common problems
- They show curiosity, ask questions and enjoy engaging in debate or discussion

We believe that these characteristics are not unique to any one specific group of individuals. At Cardinal Newman we aim to provide all our students with challenging and exciting teaching, summarised in the revised Cardinal Ten (September 2017) and ensuring that excellent teaching is the norm in every lesson, with all students experiencing lessons where their teachers provide excellent subject knowledge, high quality feedback, scaffolding and questioning and high levels of challenge.

## The Role of the Departmental Able and Talented Leads

Every department has a member of staff with responsibility for Able and Talented students. Members of this group have the following roles and responsibilities:

- 1) to attend and contribute to meetings of the Cross-Curricular working group for Able and Talented students and to keep their department informed of developments and initiatives designed to support Able and Talented students
- 2) to identify those students who meet their department's criteria for being 'Able and Talented' in that subject and to ensure that these students are known to the department
- 3) to meet with the students identified in [2] above, ensuring that their progress is monitored and that they are supported in reaching their full potential
- 4) to observe lessons with a particular focus on how Able and Talented students are being challenged and engaged at a level appropriate to their potential
- 5) to participate in work scrutinies, ensuring that Able and Talented students receive feedback which enables them to reach their full potential
- 6) to work with Subject Leaders to ensure that Able and Talented students are experiencing a challenging and differentiated curriculum
- 7) advertising and promoting opportunities for Able and Talented students outside the curriculum and in the wider community

## Monitoring and Tracking Able and Talented Students

- Students who are Able and Talented will be identified on SIMS mark sheets and on MINT seating plans.
- The school's academic database will enable teachers to track the progress of all students throughout each Key Stage. Mark sheets will highlight the Able and Talented students within a subject area.
- Staff will monitor the progress of those students who have been identified as Able and Talented on entry to the school in Year 7 through the school's assessment schedule.
- At the end of the year departments, led by their Able and Talented Leads, will conduct a review of the progress made by all Able and Talented students in Years 7-13.
- Appropriate intervention strategies to challenge and inspire Able and Talented students will be implemented by departments where necessary.
- Any changes made to mark sheets will be shared with teachers and Form Tutors. Students can be identified as Able and Talented whenever they demonstrate high levels of academic ability. Departments must therefore be prepared to be flexible in accepting students into their Able and Talented cohorts.
- Pastoral staff will be informed of the most able students in each year so that Form Tutors and Pastoral Leaders can also monitor progress. Specific pastoral initiatives, such as the Scholars' Programme, will ensure that Able and Talented students from disadvantaged backgrounds are known and their needs recognised all the way through their school career.
- Students entering Newman College with high GCSE points and/or known to be Able and Talented are also notified to staff. Their progress is monitored in the same way as stated above and the weekly Oxbridge Plus group, run by the Pastoral Leaders for Years 12 and 13 in conjunction with the Assistant Headteacher responsible for Able and Talented students, exists to ensure that these students receive appropriate advice, guidance and challenge.

## A School Curriculum Differentiated for the Able and Talented

Different curriculum areas organise their classes in different ways; some divide students into sets, whilst others teach students in broader bands of ability. Examples of ways in which the curriculum is designed to provide maximum levels of challenge for Able and Talented students include:

- 3 Languages taught in Year 7
- 2 languages taught in Year 8, with students offered a choice of which languages to study
- Setting for Maths in Year 7
- Setting for Maths and English in Year 8
- Setting for Maths, English and Science in Year 9
- Setting for Maths, English, Science and RE at KS4
- Triple Science at GCSE
- History, Geography Art and DT taught as discrete subjects
- An Arts curriculum which encompasses Art, Music and Drama
- A full curriculum offer for Year 9
- A free choice of options for Year 10
- Setting throughout
- Express Music – Year 10
- Latin timetabled after school for students in Years 9 and 10
- Italian club after school
- Early Entry languages

Subject teachers must recognise that every class will contain students with a range of abilities and needs. In response they must employ differentiated teaching methods, using a variety of strategies, resources and materials to ensure that their most able students are challenged and engaged.

It is the responsibility of each department to develop subject specific approaches to teaching and learning which support the needs of more able students through the following:

- Provision of a higher standard of work than the norm for the age group
- Work covered in significantly more depth (deeper, critical thinking)
- Work which promotes higher level thinking skills
- The inclusion of additional subject areas where appropriate
- The use of supplementary materials beyond the normal range of resources

### **Extra-Curricular Activities for Able and Talented Students**

The school organises a wide range of extra-curricular activities, many of which are of particular relevance to Able and Talented students. These activities provide opportunities for students to acquire new skills, areas of knowledge and responsibilities, often bringing them into contact with other Able and Talented students. Opportunities available within the school include:

- Sports clubs and representative teams
- Debating – run by Sixth-Form students for students in Years 10 and 11
- School orchestras, bands and specialist instrumental teaching
- Music, drama, dance productions and workshops
- Art and Photography
- Master Classes
- Clubs and Societies e.g.; IT Robotics , Art Club, Science Dept. 'HISPARKS' cosmic ray detector project
- The opportunity to serve as a representative on Year Committee or the School Council
- Years 10-13 Oxbridge programme
- Joint events with local schools and universities
- Opportunities to attend university partnership courses

We work with a number of external partners to provide our Able and Talented students with opportunities which are designed to promote high aspirations. These include:

- A programme of visits to Churchill College Cambridge and St. John's College Oxford for students in Years 10-12
- A programme of talks and outreach activities run in school by the Widening Participation Officers from Churchill College Cambridge and St. John's College Oxford
- A mentoring programme for female students from disadvantaged backgrounds run by Newnham College Cambridge
- A programme run in school by IntoUniversity designed to raise aspirations and to support our Disadvantaged High Prior Attainers in Years 10 and 11 in applying to university
- Brightmed: a programme run by Brighton and Sussex Medical School which aims to identify and support able and talented young people who have the potential to become tomorrow's doctors
- University of Sussex First Generation Scholars' Scheme (Years 9,10 and 11)
- 'Brilliant Club': Years 7 and 8, starting summer 2018
- Oxbridge Plus: A weekly session for students in Years 12 and 13 designed to support and challenge students intending to apply to universities with challenging entry requirements

## Staff Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for the support of Able and Talented students lies with Peter Shears (Assistant Headteacher).

It is the responsibility of Subject Leaders to implement this policy by working with their representative on the Able and Talented leads group to:

- identify the most able students taught within their department;
- ensure that student progress is monitored annually and any necessary remedial action is taken;
- ensure that their department provides students with a challenging and differentiated curriculum;
- support professional development within their department for the teaching of Able and Talented students;
- advertise and provide opportunities for Able and Talented students outside the curriculum and in the wider community.

It is the responsibility of Pastoral Leaders to implement this policy by:

- identifying students with marked leadership or social skills;
- working with tutors to help monitor the progress of Able and Talented students;
- providing students with opportunities for leadership and responsibility;
- encouraging Able and Talented students to identify and explore opportunities in the wider community;
- celebrating student achievement;
- liaising with the Assistant Headteacher responsible for Able and Talented students.

## Success Criteria and Review of the Provision and Policy

The Success Criteria for this policy are:

- Able and Talented students achieve their full academic and creative potential, evidenced firstly in data from KS3 assessments and internal and public examination results and secondly from their contributions to Art, Music, Drama and other creative areas of the curriculum.
- Teaching and learning in all subjects demonstrates insight into the needs of Able and Talented students and lessons are planned and delivered in ways which are appropriate to those needs.
- High levels of self-esteem, confidence and social skills are demonstrated by Able and Talented students in every aspect of school life.
- High levels of motivation and participation by Able and Talented students are evident in class and in extra-curriculum activities.
- Places offered to and secured by Able and Talented students at the Russell group of universities and similarly challenging post-sixth form destinations.

The policy will be reviewed every two years by the Senior Leadership Team.