

HIGHFIELD SOUTH FARNHAM
SCHOOL

The Continual Pursuit of Excellence



MORE ABLE,
GIFTED &
TALENTED POLICY

REVIEW: EVERY THREE YEARS

LAST REVIEW DATE: 2025

INTRODUCTION:

At Highfield South Farnham School, we believe 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. We are committed to providing a stimulating and suitably challenging curriculum for all our pupils, in the pursuit of excellence.

All pupils have individual needs, which put personalised learning at the heart of our teaching and learning programme. More Able, Gifted and Talented (MAGT) pupils should be given the opportunity to access an optimal breadth and depth of learning; as such we aim to provide opportunities to develop specific skills and talents. At South Farnham School, we recognise that MAGT pupils will be capable of working at a significantly higher cognitive level than their peers in some areas and that learning needs to be adapted accordingly. We are, however, responsible for the whole child's development and recognise that in other areas, MAGT children need the opportunity to develop alongside their peers. By stimulating and providing challenges for all pupils we will give the greatest opportunities to all pupils.

This policy should be read alongside the following school policies:

- Inclusion Policy
- SEND Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Equality Policy

This policy has been developed through a process of consultation with teaching staff and governors. This policy will be reviewed every three years.

HOW DO WE DEFINE MORE ABLE, GIFTED AND TALENTED?

More Able

Pupils whose progress and attainment significantly exceed age-related expectations.

Gifted

Pupils with an innate ability, who present a natural, outstanding aptitude or competence for exceptional performance.

Talented

Pupils who excel in one or more specific fields:

- Creative and Performing Arts – Art, Design & Technology, Drama, Music;
- Physical Education/sporting ability; and/or
- Extra-curricular pastimes – e.g. Chess.

It is worth remembering that MAGT pupils can also be:

- of high ability but of low motivation;
- of good verbal ability but have poor writing skills;
- very able but with a short attention span;
- very able with poor social skills; and/or
- keen to disguise their abilities.

Identification of MAGT pupils

The identification of MAGT pupils is a process which the whole teaching and support staff participate in, as well as parents, carers and the children themselves. At Highfield South Farnham School, we identify children as MAGT when they either perform above national expectations for their age or demonstrate strategies or styles of learning significantly beyond their year-related expectations.

The identification begins when a child joins the school. The school is keen to understand their achievements and interests in particular areas. Discussions with parents and carers will enable us to create the best possible picture of the child, and records of awards and achievements in academic, sporting, musical, artistic and any extra-curricular activities will be helpful in this respect in building up a representative picture of the child.

Identification of MAGT pupils should take into account:

- Teacher observation and assessment, based on agreed criteria such as generic and subject checklists.
- Potential as well as proven achievement
- National Curriculum attainment
- Standardised test scores including:
 - CEM BASE
 - EYFS learning goals
 - KS1 SATs results
 - CAT-4s
 - NFER results and age standardised scores
- The views of a wide range of adults, including teachers, previous school, support staff and parents
- Relevant information from previous educational providers
- Involvement and achievement in school, county, national competitions
- Achievements in extra-curricular activities
- Nomination by external agency, peer group or parent
- Discussion with the child.

As a school, we recognise that MAGT pupils may:

- be good all rounders
- be high achievers in only one area or strand of the curriculum
- be of high ability but low motivation
- be of good verbal ability but poor writing skills
- be very able with short attention span
- be very able with poor social skills
- possess superior powers of reasoning
- show originality and initiative
- be frustrated if they cannot achieve the excellence they demand of themselves
- have keen powers of observation
- spot the direction of a story or situation well ahead of their peers
- have exceptional curiosity and constantly want to know why
- have a wide range of interests which they follow with great enthusiasm
- be unwilling to follow instructions for class task preferring to do things in an individual manner
- when interested become absorbed for long periods
- absorb and store information quickly
- have exceptional ability in Art, Music or Sport

Responsibilities

Teachers:

- Identify the pupils who meet the criteria;
- Use enrichment/extension opportunities appropriately; and
- Identify and address underachievement.

Senior Leadership Team

- Identify the pupils who meet the criteria;
- Identify and address underachievement;
- Prepare subject specific criteria;
- Inform teachers of these criteria;
- Identify the students which meet the criteria and share these names with teachers;
- Ensure that enrichment/extension materials are being used appropriately by staff;
- Encourage children to enter local and national events and competitions.

Coordination and Monitoring

Records for the MAGT pupils are coordinated by the SENCO. They are reviewed on an annual basis, in association with pupil progress, staff feedback and information gleaned from subject areas and weekly staff meetings.

Talents and abilities emerge at different times due to developmental issues, and as new opportunities arise, therefore, inclusion in the cohort is not permanent. If it is perceived by parties that inclusion is no longer beneficial, pupils may be moved off, either temporarily or permanently.

We recognise that some pupils who are MAGT do not always show their ability. This may arise from learning difficulties such as dyslexia, or personal circumstances.

The school aims to work with support programmes and parents to ensure a consistent achievement at the appropriate level for each child.

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by SLT through:

- tracking the progress of children identified as MAGT
- analysing test results and checking planning, marking and other records
- observing children, planning, marking and feedback
- developing methods of measuring the impact of the initiative on specific pupils and the general raising of standards
- ensuring teachers are responsible for maintaining documentation of pupils' progress and achievements
- reviewing and revising this policy as the need arises.

Extension, Acceleration and Enrichment

Opportunities to broaden pupils' learning experiences may include:

- Adaptation, where pupils may be challenged according to ability, and aspirational tasks are planned into lessons to provide activities requiring extended higher order thinking skills;
- Working on academic concepts which allow pupils to access broader knowledge and develop more sophisticated thinking and reasoning skills.
- Internal opportunities for pupils to take part in organised challenge activities,
- Enrichment which enables pupils to study aspects of a topic that there would not normally be time to study, or adding extra subjects or specialised calendar events to the curriculum or extracurricular activities programme
- Partnership with other schools or external organisations, for example workshop event and local, regional and national schemes/competitions.

APPENDIX 1 – General checklist for identifying more able, gifted and talented children.

MAGT children may:

- possess extensive general knowledge, often know more than the teacher and find the usual reference books superficial
- show good insight into cause-effect relationships
- easily grasp underlying principles and need the minimum of explanation
- quickly make generalisations and extract the relevant points from complex materials
- have exceptional curiosity and constantly want to know why – are inventive and original
- ask searching questions which tend to be unlike other children's questions
- often see the unusual rather than the conventional relationships – can pose problems and solve ingeniously
- display intellectual playfulness, fantasise and imagine and are quick to see connections and to manipulate ideas
- give inventive responses to open ended questions
- have a keen sense of humour in the unusual and are quick to appreciate nuances and hidden meanings
- appreciate verbal puns, cartoons, jokes and often enjoy bizarre humour, satire and irony
- criticise constructively even if sometimes argumentatively
- be unwilling to accept authoritarian pronouncements without critical examination and want to debate and find reasons to justify the why and wherefore

- have cognitive speed faster than physical capabilities so are often reluctant to write at length
- prefer to talk rather than write and often talk at speed with fluency and expression
- be reluctant to practise skills already mastered, finding such practice futile
- read rapidly and can retain what is read and recall detail
- listen only to part of the explanation and appear to lack concentration or even interest, but always know what is going on
- jump stages in learning and are often frustrated by having to fill in the stages missed
- leap from concrete examples to abstract rules and general principles
- have quick absorption and recall of information, seem to need no revision and are impatient with repetition
- be keen and alert observers, note detail and are quick to see similarities and differences
- see greater significance in a story or film and continue the story
- see problems quickly and take the initiative
- have advanced understanding and use of language, but are sometimes hesitant as the correct word is searched for and then used
- become absorbed for long periods when interested and may be impatient with interference or abrupt change
- be persistent in seeking activity completion when motivated and often set very high personal standards – are perfectionists
- be more than usually interested in ‘adult’ problems such as important issues in current affairs (local and world), evolution, justice, the universe etc.
- be concerned to adapt and improve institutions, objects, systems and can be particularly critical of school for example
- be philosophical about everyday problems and common-sense issues
- be perceptive in discussion about peoples’ motives, needs or frailties
- daydream and seem lost in another world
- show sensitivity and react strongly to things causing distress or injustice
- empathise with others and often take a leadership role, are very understanding and sympathetic
- be confident and competent
- express own feelings
- attribute ideas to others
- be self-effacing
- reflect on own performance

APPENDIX 2 - Subject Specific Checklists

While general checklists can be used to identify MAGT pupils across the curriculum, it is useful to identify pupils against subject-specific criteria. This enables the school to identify those pupils who may be manifesting ability within one or more subject areas and can indicate pupils who have strengths intelligences rather than across the broader curriculum. The following checklists are useful for refining teacher observation.

English

- show close reading skills and attention to detail
- show attention to spelling and meaning of words
- are sensitive to nuance of language use, use language precisely
- have a well-developed sense and appreciation of humour
- have fluency and breadth of reading
- contribute critical responses, can analyse own work
- be able to read with more meaning, drawing on inference and deduction, can ‘read between the lines’
- analyse insights confidently when discussing their own and others’ writing intentions
- approach writing tasks thoughtful and with careful preparation
- draw out relationships between different texts read
- can reflect on language and linguistic forms they encounter
- can transfer their skills across the curriculum

Mathematics

- grasp the formal structure of a problem: can generate ideas for action
- can generalise from examples

- recognise pattern: can specialise and make conjectures
- can generalise approaches to problem-solving
- reason logically: can justify and prove
- use mathematical symbols as part of the thinking process
- think flexibly, adapting problem-solving approaches
- may work backwards and forwards when solving a problem
- may leap stages in logical reasoning and think in abbreviated mathematical forms
- remember mathematical relationships, problem types, ways of approaching problems and patterns of reasoning

Science

- recognise patterns and relationships in science data: can form a hypothesis based on valid evidence and draw conclusions
- use subject vocabulary effectively in construction of abstract ideas
- think flexibly, generalise ideas and adapt problem solving approaches
- recognise and process reliable, valid and accurate data: can explain why data is unreliable, invalid or inaccurate
- can evaluate findings and think critically
- enjoy reasoning logically

Computing

- use computing hardware and software independently
- use computers and technology to support their studies in other subjects
- use computing skills and software to solve problems
- consider the purpose for which information is processed and communicated and how the characteristics of different kinds of information influence its use
- consider the limitations of computers and technological tools and information sources
- consider some of the social, economic and ethical issues raised by the use of computers and technology

Humanities

- analyse and creatively interpret historical and cultural content
- show genuine interest and curiosity in humanities topics
- maintain focus and constantly refine their understanding
- exhibit confidence in using diverse humanities skills
- quickly grasp and apply new humanities concepts
- ask challenging questions that show significant understanding
- draws conclusions and justification based on evidence
- can independently gain knowledge from a wide range of sources
- transfers knowledge, skills and understanding to new contexts
- logical, systematic approach to tasks
- wide vocabulary related to humanities topics

Art

- analyse and interpret their observations and present them creatively
- are enthusiastic and interested in the visual world
- enjoy experimenting with materials, able to go beyond the conventional
- can sustain concentration, constantly refining ideas
- have confidence using a wide range of skills and techniques
- quick to learn and transfer skills

Music

- hear music 'in the head'
- have a strong musical memory
- demonstrate power of expression and skill beyond competency
- are particularly sensitive to melody, timbre, rhythms and patterns
- respond emotionally to sounds
- demonstrate coherence and individuality in developing musical ideas
- show a commitment to achieving excellence
- have the motivation and dedication to persevere and practise

Modern foreign languages

- show an interest and empathy to foreign cultures
- are curious about how language 'works', its meaning and function

- recognise grammatical patterns and functions of words
- use linguistic / non-linguistic clues to infer meaning
- identify and memorise new sounds and 'chunks' of language
- can listen and to reproduce sounds accurately
- apply principles from known language to the learning of new ones
- have effective communication strategies

Physical Education

- use the body with confidence in differentiated, expressive and imaginative ways
- can adapt, anticipate and make decisions
- have a good sense of shape, space, direction and timing
- have a good control of gross and fine body movements and can handle objects skilfully
- produce a seamless fluency of movements with an intuitive feel for elegant movement
- show high level of understanding of principles of health-related exercise and their application in a variety of activities
- can technical terms effectively, accurately and fluently
- can perform advanced skills and techniques and transfer skills between activities
- can analyse, evaluate their own and others' work using results to effect improvement
- take the initiative, demonstrating leadership and independence of thought