



## High Starters (AKA Gifted and Talented)



Last Reviewed: May 2019

Next Review: May 2021

### HIGH STARTERS (AKA GIFTED AND TALENTED)

Gifted and talented learners were defined by the previous Labour government as, '*Children and young people with one or more abilities developed to a level significantly ahead of their year group (or with the potential to develop those abilities).*' DCSF, 2008<sup>1</sup>

It should be noted that the national academy for gifted and talented pupils was scrapped in 2010<sup>2</sup>, and the label has since fallen into disuse by the government. However, the notion of gifted and talented is still a useful label to measure the provision for students at the upper end of the 'ability' range.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 It was agreed at Leadership in the 2014/15 academic year to change the terminology from Gifted and Talented to High Starters, in order to reflect Growth Mindset literature that people are not innately gifted or talented and that effort is a key characteristic of being a high achiever. High Starters captures the fact that some students are performing at a level over and above their age-related peers in a certain area, but that this situation is flexible; most High Starters will have to work hard to maintain this advantage, while other students can become High Starters through improving their performance.

1.2 At Sandringham School we are committed to providing an environment, which encourages students to meet their potential. We look to provide effective learning opportunities across the curriculum for all learners; this includes strategies and opportunities to challenge the High Starter students.

1.3 Our approach is to provide a personalised learning experience which tailors each student's education to individual need, interest and aptitude. Provision for the High Starters is not a 'bolt on' but an integral part of effective teaching and learning. We regularly look to the Student Leadership Team (SLT) as a way to monitor and adapt our approach.

#### 2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To raise achievement and aspiration among all students by challenging and supporting High Starters to push the boundaries of what is possible.
- To encourage and maintain a culture where students are recognised for their high achievements and that these are celebrated.
- To identify, and keep under review, a register of High Starters.
- To ensure that learners who are recognised as being a High Starter receive a personalised education, that enables them to attain their full potential.
- To provide a range of differentiated teaching and learning activities on a day-to-day basis which aim to provide intellectual challenge and develop physical and social skills.
- To review the curriculum to provide accelerated progression pathways for High Starters.
- To develop and sustain an ethos throughout the school in which students are encouraged to aspire towards high achievement.

<sup>1</sup><http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/Getting%20StartedWR.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/7062061/Ministers-pull-the-plug-on-gifted-and-talented-academy.html>

### 3. IDENTIFICATION:

- 3.1 Following previous guidelines laid out by the DCSF, High Starters should make up between 5% and 10% of the cohort<sup>3</sup>. If it is perceived by any of the concerned parties that inclusion is no longer beneficial, students may be moved out either temporarily or permanently. Behavioural problems will never be a reason for non-inclusion on the register.
- 3.2 Under the previous guidelines, gifted students have high attainment in academic subjects and talented students have evident high attainment in a creative or expressive art or a sport. However, at Sandringham we recognise that being a High Starter covers much more than the ability to succeed in tests and examinations and would identify students with potential to achieve to a level significantly ahead of their year group.
- 3.3 High Starters students are identified in two distinct ways:
- 3.3.1. Teacher nomination: students with passion and potential in individual subjects are nominated by their teachers after October half-term, and a centralized database is created. This list can be adapted throughout the year.
- 3.3.2. CATs scores in Year 7: Approximately 20% of students are identified in this way. Other identification methods, including self-nomination and parental-nomination, can be used. Students are considered on a case by case basis.
- 3.4 Our methods of identification make use of both formative and summative information. At Sandringham we use information from national and faculty assessment data, information from feeder schools and teacher nominations. Identification of High Starters will not be made solely on academic achievement but on certain indicators of the potential to achieve at a high level. Staff will be trained to recognise indicators of potential and as individuals develop at different rates, staff will review lists annually. By utilising a range of identifiers and a periodic review, we ensure that the process of identifying High Starters is fair, effective and representative of our cohort.

### 4. PROVISION

#### 4.1 The Curriculum

The school will provide High Starters with their full entitlement to the National Curriculum and, additionally, provide access to curriculum enhancement in both National Curriculum areas and, where appropriate, outside. Each faculty has a statement in their handbook relating to how they provide for High Starters.

The school's standard assessment and marking policy will be used. Subject teachers will be made aware of those students on the High Starter register and should seek to monitor progress. Furthermore, subject teachers should identify High Starters on their seating plans so that those students are highlighted.

Faculties will advise teachers within their faculty on strategies to challenge High Starters. Each faculty will have its own policy statement and subject specific High Starter register. It is the responsibility of each Director of Learning to ensure that opportunities for the advancement of High Starters are detailed in schemes of work. This includes:-

- Updating the information management system as to a list of High Starters
- Additional support and challenge through extension activities, in addition to enrichment opportunities both in the classroom and outside school

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<sup>3</sup><http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/Getting%20StartedWR.pdf>

- Differentiation to encourage and motivate High Starters students
- Faculty contributions to extra/cross curricular High Starter provision
- Effective provision for transfer, transition and progression of High Starters
- Regular opportunities to discuss and develop provision for High Starters in faculty meetings.

The school will seek to discover and utilise a range of strategies to improve the teaching and learning of High Starters. Teaching thinking and problem-solving, higher order skills, study skills, communication skills; and teaching for a range of learning styles will be encouraged in Schemes of Learning. INSET may be required to facilitate this delivery.

## 4.2 Aspiration

The High Starters coordinator will plan and support a programme to encourage Higher Starters to challenge themselves beyond the curriculum. This will include sessions held within school led by school staff or external speakers, as well as educational visits. The aim of the programme will be to encourage independence from students to personalise their education. Opportunities to encourage this are provided across the academic year. This includes encouraging students to engage with the super curriculum, contributing to the annual Ignite journal and participating in activities offered during theme weeks, such as Science Week and Politics Week. In addition, students are also encouraged to develop their personal and social skills by taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award and the Arts Award.

Students are encouraged to aspire towards and apply to competitive universities, including Oxford and Cambridge. There are opportunities to visit Oxford and Cambridge University as part of the 'Futures' ELD in Year 10 and a comprehensive support programme is offered for candidates in Year 12 and 13 to guide students with their applications. For students applying to Oxford and Cambridge or for medical and veterinary courses, interview support is provided via weekly small group discussion, a formal mock interview process and workshops with Oxbridge admissions tutors. Furthermore, subject teachers are given guidance as to how to enrich their student's subject knowledge by recommending super curricular activities.

## 5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The evaluation process is designed to assist senior leadership team and teachers to plan for improvement and to target resources more effectively (i.e. Process for Development and Review). It also should increase teacher understanding of what works and engender confidence in order to try new things.

Targets are published for all identified 9-7 students in all subjects and these are cross-referenced to exam and test results. Faculties self-evaluate and review their provision and the outcomes of interventions to inform future High Starters provision.

Monitoring 'in-class' opportunities and challenge for High Starter students forms part of performance appraisal, target setting, assessment, planning and quadrant analysis. Faculties should put into place systems for identifying and addressing underachievement. (This should be part of an effective whole school system rather than something separate for the High Starter cohort).

New staff are inducted in policy and practice relating to High Starter students (i.e. Continual Professional Development). The High Starters Co-ordinator will also deliver CPD sessions to all staff to help develop provision across the school.

## 6. PERSONAL / EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES

It is essential that the High Starter programme works within the school ethos of 'Everybody Can Be Somebody'. Identification of a student as a High Starter may lead to peer problems and students from the High Starters cohort have also reported their dislike at being publically identified. In addition, it is

important that other students in the school do not develop a sense of inferiority next to their High Starter peers. Consequently, inclusion on the register will not be shared with students and parents. Consequently, it is important that staff provide challenging activities and tasks on a day-to-day basis in all lessons and avoid 'singling out' students.

## **7. HIGH STARTERS COORDINATOR, ALT AND GOVERNOR**

### **Governor**

- To have a clear understanding of the aims of High Starter provision and take an active interest in the programme.
- To utilise knowledge of High Starter objectives and programme to contribute a High Starter perspective, where relevant, to governing body discussions.

**High Starter Coordinator** To develop High Starters provision within the school by providing extra-curricular student opportunities and INSET for staff.

- To report back to SLT and Governors periodically about the development and implementation of the programme.