
	High Starters Policy		
	Last reviewed: April 2023	Next Review: April 2025	

1. PRINCIPLE

The purpose of this policy is to inform staff about the core principles to support students who are identified as High Starters.

- 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 We are committed to providing an environment which encourages students to meet, and exceed, their potential. The term High Starters refers to students who are performing at a level over and above their age-related peers in a certain area. Our aims are to ensure that teachers and staff can offer personalised support, extend learning beyond the classroom and offer a range of opportunities to broaden students' experiences. Provision for High Starters is an integral part of effective teaching and learning. The specific strategies and systems related to High Starters will be led by the High Starters Coordinator.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To identify, and keep under review, a register of High Starters;
- To raise achievement and aspiration among all students by challenging and supporting High Starters;
- To encourage and maintain a culture where students are recognised and high achievements are celebrated.
- To review the academic progress of students and support other leaders in identifying student needs and implementing support and interventions where appropriate;
- To provide professional development for teaching staff in order to enhance their teaching and learning to provide intellectual challenge and support so that students achieve highly;
- To ensure students have access to opportunities, activities and events which extend their learning and broaden their academic and social progress;
- To support students in their progression to high education through application support

3. IDENTIFICATION:

- 3.1 Following previous guidelines laid out by the DCSF, High Starters should make up between 5% and 10% of the cohort¹. 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.

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

- 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 15% 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.

Teachers are made aware of students in their classes who are identified as High Starters through centralised Class Profiles and flags on Bromcom. Subject teachers are expected to identify High Starters on their seating plans so that those students are highlighted.

4. PROVISION

4.1. 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. Directors of Learning will advise teachers within their faculty on strategies to challenge High Starters, ensure opportunities for extension are detailed in schemes of learning and provide opportunities for students beyond the classroom. It is expected that staff provide challenging activities and tasks on a day-to-day basis in all lessons and avoid 'singling out' students. This may include providing and signposting:

- Additional support and challenge through specific extension activities
- Enrichment opportunities both in and outside the classroom
- Planned differentiation to motivate and challenge High Starters students
- Contributions to extra/cross curricular High Starter provision
- 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 and CPD (led by the High Starters Co-ordinator) will support the development of teaching practice to cater for High Starters and how to create the optimum level of challenge.

4.2 Aspiration

High Starters will have access to a range of opportunities where they can challenge themselves beyond the curriculum. This will include sessions held within school led by school staff or external speakers, educational visits

outside of school as well as opportunities to lead their own learning and contribute to student voice through the Student Leadership Team. We aim to encourage independence from students to personalise their own education and experience while in school and will provide them with a range of activities, events and experiences during their time here. We also encourage students to engage with the Super Curriculum and participate 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. Opportunities to visit universities (including Oxford and Cambridge) will be organised for Year 10 students and a comprehensive support programme is offered for candidates in Year 12 and 13 to guide students with their applications to university. 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

High Starter Coordinator

- To develop and refine our High Starters provision by providing training (via INSET / CPD) for teaching staff.
- To keep abreast of the latest research in relation to best practice provision (e.g. via NACE).
- To monitor and evaluate the progress made by High Starters - and report this to LG and the relevant PD.
- To report back to SLT and Governors periodically about the development and implementation of the programme.
- To work with the LG link to integrate a focus on High Starters provision into our self-evaluation processes (e.g. Learning Visits, Work Scrutinies, Lesson Observations, Appraisal).

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.