



**Churchdown School Academy**  
ACHIEVING SUCCESS FOR ALL

## Highly Able Pupils Policy

### Introduction and aims:

Churchdown School is a highly successful school which encourages and celebrates all achievements including intellectual, artistic and physical achievements. We have high expectations for all of our pupils, but recognise that diversity of interests and abilities exist. We also recognise that, in wider culture, intellectual achievement in particular may not always be celebrated or expected. It is therefore important to develop further our provision of appropriate learning opportunities for our highly able pupils. We believe that there is no ceiling to learning and achievement. Our aim is that all pupils, including highly able pupils, make excellent progress, enjoy learning and develop their personal qualities.

### To achieve these aims we will:

- share and celebrate our ethos with all members of the school community
- identify highly able pupils and regularly review the register of highly able pupils
- communicate with pupils and parents/carers about the subject of raising aspirations
- ensure that learning activities are appropriately challenging for highly able pupils
- provide experiences outside of the classroom that cater for the needs and interests of our highly able pupils
- provide regular, high quality professional development for our staff, on the topic of: teaching and supporting highly able pupils
- track the progress of highly able pupils and ensure teaching & learning methods are reviewed and developed as appropriate
- track the progress of highly able pupils to review student support and the wider opportunities we provide
- evaluate regularly our policies and practice

### Terminology and Definition:

At Churchdown School we believe that excellent achievement is largely a product of opportunity, effort and persistence. Therefore we prefer to use the term 'highly able' rather than 'gifted', as 'gifted' is quite a passive term whereas a 'highly able' student may be so due to a variety of factors, including the passion or hard work which may have got them to this position. The organisation 'Potential Plus UK' highlights the social stigma attached to the word 'gifted' and believes that the word is "...limiting, exclusive and at times unnecessary." A report published by the Sutton Trust in July 2012 recommends that the "confusing and catch-all" term 'gifted and talented' be abandoned. It recommends that the focus should be on children capable of excellence in school subjects, with these pupils termed as 'highly able'. Therefore, taking into account recent, reputable research, Churchdown has chosen to use the term 'highly able'.

At Churchdown we define a 'highly able' child as one who shows particular ability or passion for learning in one or more subjects: this could be in the academic, sporting or creative/expressive curriculum, or a combination of these. We have also decided to use an umbrella term for all initiatives which aim to

encourage highly able pupils: 'Nurturing intellectual curiosity and intrinsic motivation – Stretch and Challenge at Churchdown School.

#### **Identification:**

- Ability is often subject-specific and therefore our Register of Highly Able Pupils clearly identifies the subject(s) in which a student is highly able.
- Multiple criteria and sources of evidence are used to identify high ability, including the use of a broad range of quantitative and qualitative data, including: information from primary schools; attainment data such as KS2 SATS and GCSE results; teachers' assessment data (e.g. from tests and projects); teachers' ongoing observation of pupils; nominations from parents and pupils themselves.
- It is our aim that the register of Highly Able Pupils is fully representative of the school's population (e.g. by gender, ethnicity and socio-economic background).

#### **Organisation:**

All teachers take a collective responsibility to provide appropriate challenge and support for highly able pupils. Specific roles and responsibilities are outlined below.

#### **The Director of 'Highly Able' provision**

The Director of 'Highly Able' provision will:

- Provide advice and support to colleagues by keeping abreast of current knowledge in the field of provision for highly able pupils
- Oversee the Register of highly able pupils
- Oversee the selection / nominations of pupils for non-subject-specific Stretch and Challenge ventures
- Analyse progress data of highly able pupils, including and especially pupils who are entitled to free school meals or those who also have a special educational need or disability
- Ensure that an appropriate intervention plan is in place if any significant slippage in progress of a highly able student is identified
- Review and update the 'Highly Able' Policy every two years
- Audit whole school provision for highly able pupils
- Identify and address staff training needs in the field of teaching/supporting highly able pupils
- Ensure that highly able pupils are involved in their own target setting and progress monitoring
- Ensure that highly able pupils' views on provision for their learning needs are sought and responded to
- Ensure that highly able pupils are presented with inspiring opportunities outside of the classroom, paying particular attention to highly able pupils who are from the poorest backgrounds (entitled to free school meals)
- Communicate with parents about the provision for highly able pupils

#### **Subject teachers**

Subject teachers will:

- Use baseline data, their own marking/assessment and their own observations/informal assessment to identify students who are highly able within their classes, and to pass on these names to their Head of Department
- Consider the needs of each highly able student that they teach in their lesson planning, so that they provide appropriately challenging learning experiences in lessons and for homework
- Keep abreast of strategies for teaching highly able students (e.g. through following the guidance documents provided in school, and through engaging in staff training)
- Be responsible for encouraging students to work independently and use their initiative

- Value students' interests and preferred learning styles
- Support students in setting targets and encourage them to reflect on the process of their own learning and consider the factors which help them progress

### **Heads of Department**

Heads of Department will:

- Review their subject-specific Register of Highly Able Students twice per year (June/July and November/December) and communicate any changes to the Director of Highly Able provision
- Oversee the quality of subject-specific teaching of the students who have been identified as 'highly able' in their subject
- Monitor regularly the progress of highly able students in their subject, and ensure that any slippage in progress is acted upon
- Include strategies and opportunities for 'highly able' students within their departmental development plans and evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies and opportunities
- Provide subject specific extra-curricular opportunities to share with students
- Work with the Director of Highly Able provision to invite guest speakers in to deliver aspirational talks for students

### **Heads of Year**

Heads of Year will:

- Put forward names of students they believe would benefit from careers interviews and specific extra-curricular activities
- Support with any focussed interventions with specific students such as putting forward names for work experience
- Oversee the delivery of any tutor-time activities aimed at highly able pupils
- Monitor student progress within their year group and communicate any concerns with the Director of Highly Able provision
- Work with the Director of Highly Able provision to provide guest speakers for aspirational assemblies

### **Provision:**

Examples of the provision for highly able students at Churchdown School include:

- A broad curriculum offer for all year groups
- Setting of groups by ability in selected subjects
- Regular staff training based on the most up-to-date pedagogy available on provision for the highly able
- A central register of highly able students for staff to access and address as appropriate
- Fast-tracking in certain subject areas
- Appointment of well qualified, subject specialist teachers
- Setting challenging targets both inside and outside the classroom
- Learning activities, in lessons, which are appropriately stretching
- Extra-curricular projects and competitions (such as 'opportunity homework' and the 'EPQ')
- Extra-curricular trips and visits (such as 'Women mean Business' breakfast attendance, University campus days and Climate change conferences)
- Aspirational 'open ticket' work experience
- Aspirational Careers Events (such as Careers Fair, Guest Speakers and Business Breakfasts)
- Tutorial time Stretch and Challenge programme for certain year groups
- Academic mentoring

- Leadership opportunities (such as the Employability Champions initiative and KS5 Academic mentoring)