



**THORNS**  
COLLEGIATE ACADEMY

Higher Attaining Policy  
2022-23

Reviewed date: April 2023

At Thorns Collegiate Academy we believe that all students are entitled to an education that will enable them to develop their full potential, be that intellectual, physical, aesthetic, creative, emotional, spiritual or social, by finding appropriate challenge in our learning environment.

### **Definitions**

The term 'Higher Ability' describes students who are considered to have an ability and attainment to develop to a level significantly ahead of their year group (or with the potential to develop those abilities or for high attainment).

'Gifted' refers to those students who have abilities in one or more academic subjects, such as Mathematics, English, Science, ICT and Humanities.

'Talented' refers to students who have practical skills in areas such as Physical Education, Art, Design and Technology and Performing Arts.

### **Key Objectives of the Policy and Provision**

To ensure that the most able students:

- Attain the highest possible competency level (Proficient) at the end of Key Stage 3
- Become highly effective learners and critical thinkers
- Become exceptional achievers and performers in their subject, art or sport.

In order to achieve these key objectives, the Academy will ensure that:

- Teaching and learning is challenging and varied, using strategies that are shared throughout the Academy
- Levels of attainment and achievement indicate a high level of sustainability over a period of time
- Students are accurately identified using a process that is regularly reviewed
- The curriculum offered by the Academy is flexible, allowing for enrichment and subject choice
- The ethos and pastoral care environment promotes ambition and achievement
- Staff have the opportunities to address teaching the most able through CPD opportunities
- Students are tracked and monitored effectively via interim assessment and intervention is carried out, where appropriate
- The Academy engages with the community and families
- The Academy provides opportunities for all learners to learn beyond the classroom and in and out of Academy environments, for example Focus Day provision **Identification**

Students who are highly able may have some of the general characteristics:

#### **Personal traits**

- Inquisitive, curious, alert and responsive to new ideas
- Quick/agile thinkers
- High self-motivation/initiative; can work well independently
- Socially adept

- Show leadership qualities
- Good/unusual sense of humour
- Sensitive/sensitivity and empathy with others

### **Learning Ability**

- Learn new ideas and concepts quickly/easily/readily
- Good at reasoning/logical/analytical thinking
- Good at dealing with abstractions/abstract thinking
- See relationships between things; can generalise from specific facts
- Good at understanding things/meanings; show unusual insights
- Able to memorise quickly/easily
- Follow complex directions easily
- Keen powers of observation
- Advanced vocabulary/verbally fluent/good self-expression
- Learned to read early, rapid readers
- Good attention, concentrate and persevere for long periods if interested

### **Learning Styles**

- Dislike repetition of concepts and closed tasks; get bored easily
- Informed/show interest in ideas and concepts beyond their years
- Creative/imaginative; original ideas in problem-solving; may be artistic/musical
- Inclined to choose unusual but effective methods of working, perhaps using a different line of logic or jumping steps
- Many interests/hobbies; read across a wide range of subjects
- Prefer verbal expression; reluctant to record things in writing
- Resent imposed timetable restrictions if interested in a task
- Perfectionists; may lean towards being obsessive

[2021 National Association for Able Children in Education]

This list is by no means exhaustive, with all staff encouraged to 'talent spot' and identify those students who display particular gifts or talents.

The following notes outline some of the ways in which More Able, Gifted and Talented students are identified in Thorns Collegiate Academy:

- Base line testing
- Prior data
- Key Assessments

### **Tracking and Assessment**

All students will be tracked and assessed throughout the year. The list of higher attaining learners can be added to or changed over time depending on student progress.

Some of the tracking and assessment methods in place for all students include:

- Teacher assessment
- Use of tests e.g. GL Progress Tests, subject specific assessments

- Regular tracking of performance of individuals and sub-groups
- Comparison with local and national outcomes
- Learner profiles

### **Curriculum, Teaching and Learning**

The main provision for the higher attaining student is driven through quality first teaching. The provision may include some or all of the list below:

- Opportunities provided to lead parts of lessons
- Additional learning activities provided via TEAMS or class sites
- Students are provided with additional activities/tasks in order to extend their learning and wider reading
- Lessons and activities may have extension tasks that use higher order thinking skills as a basis

Students may also have the opportunity to access experiences outside of the classroom such as talks from external providers, or participation in workshops or activities specifically designed for more able students.

### **The Role of the Head of Department**

The Head of Department should support with subject-specific guidance around the provision for high attaining students. Their role will be to:

- Oversee the interests of high attaining students within their department and to monitor their progress towards demanding targets
- Generate, review and update the Gifted and Talented register
- Obtain and monitor academic data and targets
- Identify any CPD opportunities that might be undertaken to improve the provision for high attaining students
- Ensure that provision for high attaining students is identified in planning for an enrichment opportunities e.g. Focus Day provision

### **Pastoral Care**

Specific challenges can be experienced by more able learners when it comes to their wellbeing, such as pressure to perform.

Areas we must consider at Thorns Collegiate Academy and target are as follows:

- Ethos of provision for emotional, social, intellectual development and self-esteem
- Pastoral support from session 1 teacher, Head of Year and/or subject teachers
- Mentoring, coaching and peer support
- Learner voice – feedback, one-to-one discussion, questionnaires, representation on school council
- Partnership with parents and carers

## **Parental Support**

Support from parents and carers is a key factor in the success and development of all young people, including the more able.

## **Subject Most Able Lead Teachers**

Each subject area has a member of staff designated as their Most Able lead.

Their role is to:

- Oversee the interests of Most Able students and to monitor their progress towards demanding targets
- Ensure that the Most Able policy is implemented
- Generate, review and update the Most Able register
- Obtain and monitor academic data and targets
- Regularly feed-back to students and parents regarding progress
- Ensure that the CPD co-ordinator is aware of the specific professional development needs for staff to ensure high quality delivery of Most Able provision
- Develop enrichment activities beyond the classroom targeting Most Able students

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

The effectiveness of the Academy's provision for its Most Able cohort is ultimately monitored by outcome in terms of progress and attainment by academic results at GCSE.

## **Appendix 1: Subject Specific Details**

<b>Business</b>
<b>G&amp;T link staff member: C. Pickering</b>
<b>Additional notes on identification of Most Able students:</b> <b>Business Studies</b> Enthusiasm Natural flair for subject Willingness to participate Apply to real context Independent learning  <b>Accounts</b> Application of numeracy to real life context Higher level technical knowledge Strong numeric understanding
<b>Additional notes on provision for Most Able students (including a list of Most Able activities provided by the department):</b>

- Differentiated activities in lessons and focus days
- Masterclass revision KS4 BTEC students studying marketing & Finance
- Enterprise projects to identify gifted and talented students
- Industrial & Business links – Transervice Training Limited (logistics sector), JLR, Alton Towers HR, customer service, marketing. Local SMEs inc' Soccer Kings. Nationwide, Black Country Chamber of Commerce.
- Open door policy with students to support creation of small business ideas
- Create BTEC assignments that develops scope for students to extend learning outside of the classroom
- Development of GCSE Business resources within "Teams" that allows most able students to develop their skill set by exploring the expectations of high achieving students.

#### **Computer Science**

**G&T link staff member: J. Sihota**

##### **Additional notes on identification of Most Able students:**

- Students learn and apply Computing techniques quickly
- They will exploit the potential of the different programming languages
- Students will explore Computing concepts independently
- Students will initiate ideas and solve problems by developing programs that meet the client's requirements

##### **Additional notes on provision for Most Able students (including a list of Most Able activities provided by the department):**

- Programming activities that stretch the more able
- Girls coding challenges at KS3
- Introduction to the cyber explorer challenges in Year 9

#### **Travel and Tourism**

**G&T link staff member: C.Pickering**

##### **Additional notes on identification of Most Able students:**

##### **Travel and Tourism**

Passion for subject area

Genuine interest in components of the industry

Students with a wide range of travel experience

##### **Additional notes on provision for Most Able students (including a list of Most Able activities provided by the department):**

- Differentiated activities in lessons and focus days
- Create BTEC assignments that develops scope for students to extend learning outside of the classroom

## **Art & Design**

**Most Able link staff member: Angela Sutton**

### **Additional notes on identification of Most Able students:**

- Curiosity, brave creative decision making
- Natural ability and accuracy in drawing
- Natural ability with construction techniques
- Creativity and flare for design and ideas process
- Willingness to go above and beyond

### **Additional notes on provision for Most Able students (including a list of Most Able activities provided by the department):**

- Differentiated SOW that challenges MAT students through the use of more complex or challenging tasks, questioning and extension activities.
- Department homework that enables students to challenge and stretch themselves by selecting appropriate challenges.
- Focus days providing students with curriculum enhancement tasks and challenges
- After school clubs – Arts Ambassadors KS3 and KS4 coursework sessions
- Class sites have full SOL available to students to look through and see the whole project outlines
- Use online tools to gather and support independent inquiry 'Student Art Guide' and Pinterest.

## **Design**

**Most Able link staff member: Byron McFarlane and Angela Sutton**

### **Additional notes on identification of Most Able students:**

- Curiosity
- Natural ability and accuracy in the workshop
- Natural ability operating machinery / (CAM)
- Natural ability using CAD
- Flare for design
- Ability to see outside the box and problem solve.
- Creative
- Willingness to go above and beyond

### **Additional notes on provision for Most Able students (including a list of Most Able activities provided by the department):**

- Differentiated SOW that challenges MAT students through the use of more complex or challenging tasks, manufacturing processes, layers of questioning and extension activities.
- Department homework that enables students to challenge and stretch themselves by selecting appropriate challenges.
- Focus / Stem days providing students with curriculum challenges which usually immerse students in a live context to design for.
- After school clubs.

- 4 x 4 in Schools, Jaguar/Land Rover project whereby students design and race a vehicle in an international competition.
- Drone power project – KS4 students design and make a drone for racing.
- Highways England – The DT department has attended fevents aimed at MAT students to immerse them in engineering careers, events take place at the Birmingham NEC.
- Class sites developed to include forms with questioning and exam prep to promoted extended study.
- Bought into FOCUS DT which is an online revision tool at KS4.

## **World Languages**

**Most Able link staff member:**

**Languages – Liz Haycock**

**Additional notes on identification of Most Able students:**

- MFL: Ability to manipulate language successfully across various topics and in different contexts.
- MFL: Using knowledge and skills to deduce meaning from texts with unknown content.
- MFL: Application of grammar in oral and written language.
- MFL: Independent research skills
- MFL: Excellent recall

**Additional notes on provision for Most Able students (including a list of Most Able activities provided by the department):**

- MFL: University Visits – 'Routes into Languages' Conferences
- Most Able resources that allow students to think/ work in different ways
- High level reading materials provided to support deeper understanding of topics

## **English**

**Most Able link staff member:**

**English – Tom Pell and Simon Avis**

**Additional notes on identification of Most Able students:**

English:

- Excellent recall skills
- Creative and original
- Analytical/ logical/ critical
- Grasps concepts/ conceptual thoughts
- Natural skill/ flair
- Curious/ self-motivated
- Brings their wider understanding to the subject and Cultural Capital units

**Additional notes on provision for Most Able students (including a list of Most Able activities provided by the department):**



- English operates a 'teach to the top, scaffold from the bottom' approach, using high quality WAGOLs, heavy uses of Cultural Capital and real-world links to encourage HAPS to grow into curious and independent thinkers and learner
- Year 11 – Cultural Capital/Targeted Focus Day/G&T Library
- Year 10 – Cultural Capital/Targeted Focus Day/G&T Library
- Year 9 – higher level contextual info (esp. in literature based interleaved SoW), modelling of higher-level responses
- Across all years – resource sharing/ careful selection of class teacher/ learning walks to quality assure teaching/ moderation of marking
- L4L – Big Read approach mirrors English department analysis, enabling the embedding of skills in L4L that can grow in KS4 to enable access to top marks
- L4L – Big Write model currently in editing process to enable similar pedagogical approach

## **Geography**

**Most Able link staff member: James Willetts**

### **Additional notes on identification of Most Able students:**

#### **Geography**

- Students who verbally provided outstanding responses to higher order thinking skills questioning through Geography lessons.
- Students who consistently complete class work to an outstanding level and attempt the extension tasks available in every Geography lesson.
- Students who question theories and processes and are inquisitive in their thought process, wanting to understand more about the landscapes around them and increase their spatial awareness.
- Students who confidently and consistently attempt every challenge task and complete their own independent work to a high level.
- Students who reflect on their own work and can take on board feedback and provide themselves with accurate feedback and then improve their work so that they can achieve higher levels working towards their target grades.

### **Additional notes on provision for Most Able students (including a list of Most Able activities provided by the department):**

- Opportunities provided to lead parts of lessons
- Additional learning activities provided via class site
- Students are provided with additional activities/tasks in order to extend their learning and wider reading. They are provided with activities as additional homework
- All lessons and activities have extension tasks that use higher order thinking skills as a basis.
- Most Able students are to be encouraged to create their own short revision videos that can be used as revision for other students.
- Tuesday lunchtime drop in session for Most Able and high achieving students on a weekly basis.
- Career knowledge using Geography.

- \* Flipped learning tasks, differentiated or additional, targeted at stretching the more able and encourage additional independent learning
- \* Use of A-level resources in lessons to stretch and challenge at KS4, piloted in Humanities.
- \* Recommended extra-curricular reading (articles, books etc)
- \* 'Target Grade 9' resources provided to all Humanities students targeted 8-9 in Year 11
- \* GeoResources and Geofiles used to provide more challenging case study files in Geography

## **History**

**Most Able link staff member: Sam Hampton**

### **Additional notes on identification of Most Able students:**

#### **History**

- Initial account taken of target grades
- Enthusiastic historians identified through engagement in lessons
- Students identified that display good 'historical' skills such as source analysis
- Assemblies- Remembrance Day, black history month, Holocaust.
- Villiers Park Educational Trust- online extension activities for A-level students
- External speakers, workshops
- Humanities visit- Berlin

\* 'Challenge questioning' embedded within planning and delivery across the department

\* Use of A-level resources in lessons to stretch and challenge at KS4, piloted in History

\* Recommended extra-curricular reading (articles, books etc)

\* 'Target Grade 9' resources provided to all History students targeted 8-9 in Year 11

## **L4L**

**Most able link staff member: Louise O'Gorman**

### **Additional notes on identification of Most Able students:**

- Resilience shown in aspects of problem solving or independent working
- Enthusiasm identified through engagement in lessons
- Students who verbally provide outstanding responses to higher order thinking skills questioning
- Students who consistently complete class work to an outstanding level and attempt the extension tasks available.
- Contributions to class discussions and debates
- Level of interest and attitude in the classroom.
- Students who question theories and processes and are inquisitive in their thought process.
- Students who confidently and consistently attempt challenge tasks and complete their own independent work to a high level.

- Students who reflect on their own work and can take on board feedback and provide themselves with accurate feedback and then improve their work so that they can achieve higher levels.

**Additional notes on provision for Most Able students (including a list of Most Able activities provided by the department):**

- Opportunities provided to lead parts of lessons.
- Additional learning activities provided via Teams and Eduu School resources
- Students are provided with additional activities/tasks in order to extend their learning and wider reading. They are provided with activities as additional homework.
- Lessons and activities have extension and challenge tasks

**Mathematics**

**G&T link staff member: Anna Mulholland**

**Additional notes on identification of Most Able students:**

- Resilient when problem solving
- Inquisitive and interested to problem solve
- Able to work independently
- Grasp abstract mathematical concepts quickly
- Make connections within mathematical topics and cross curricular
- Work beyond the task given and the level of work given (grades 7+)

**Additional notes on provision for Most Able students (including a list of Most Able activities provided by the department):**

A differentiated SoW which provides enough challenge for all students as well as high ability. Questioning used to allow for students to extend their learning, make conjectures and investigate mathematical concepts

- UKMT national Maths challenge
- Seating plans for classes to reflect Most Able students
- Maths Feast- aimed at Yr 10 high ability students who are tested on communication and teamwork skills. This is organised by the Maths Further Support Programme
- Grade 8/9 focused revision classes and maths forms (where possible) run for Year 11
- Grade 9 revision resources shared with students
- Maths Inspiration online events

**Performance (PE)**

**Most Able link staff member: Geordan Edmonds**

**Additional notes on identification of Most Able students:**

- Play for external teams or club of a good standard
- Attending extra-curricular clubs
- Representing their school in district or county fixtures

- Achieving a high level practical assessment grade within their year group
- Consistently high performance across one or multiple sports
- High level of motivation and positive attitude to learning
- Demonstrating integrity in lessons and extra-curricular opportunities

**Additional notes on provision for Most Able students (including a list of Most Able activities provided by the department):**

- 'Challenge questioning' embedded within planning and delivery across the department
- Students encouraged to take leadership and coaching role in lessons
- Recommended extra-curricular clubs to attend
- Additional private extra-curricular club (Elite's only)
- Fixtures after school
- Subject specific trips and visits
- School sports representation

**Performance (Performing Arts)**

**Most Able link staff member:** Kelly Watson

**Additional notes on identification of Most Able students:**

- Access and retain information quickly and accurately
- Able to communicate effectively with an audience / develops audience rapport
- High-level improvisation skills
- A talented performer (Music, Dance and Drama) or composer / technician (Music)
- Higher level of independence / self sufficiency
- Higher level of rehearsal resilience
- Good analytical skills (especially of themselves)
- Insightful listening skills/response to stimulus

**Additional notes on provision for Most Able students (including a list of Most Able activities provided by the department):**

- Extra-curricular performance clubs – Music, Dance and Drama
- Peripatetic musical instrument lessons
- Targets trips/visits
- Collaboration with professionals / professional companies
- Theatre School (auditioned)
- Clubs ran by local music hub
- Regular programme of performances.
- Arts Ambassadors

**Science**

**Most Able link staff member:** Emma Dyson

**Additional notes on identification of Most Able students:**

- KS3 – consistently scored 6 and above in all end of topic tests
- KS4 – students with a progress score of 8+ and have consistently scored 70% or above in all end of topic tests.

**Additional notes on provision for Most Able students (including a list of Most Able activities provided by the department):**

- More able students are grouped into the same class and are prescribed a more challenging which includes focusing on the application of knowledge to Level 3 exam questions.
- Grade 8/9 revision guides used during Study Support with Y10 & 11 students
- Subject specific trips held for students
- Most able session 7 carried out throughout the week
- Questioning used to challenge the most able students during lesson times
- Challenge tasks to support the most able to push themselves to grade 8/9 used during lessons