



High Starters (AKA Gifted and Talented)

Last Reviewed: May 2017

Next Review: May 2019



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, 2008¹

It should be noted that the national academy for gifted and talented pupils was scrapped in 2010², and the label has since fallen into disuse by the government. The term 'most able' is now used by the DfE and Ofsted. The DfE have no national definition of 'most able' and expect schools to develop their own systems of identifying and tracking their most able students. Ofsted assess the outcomes of students attaining most highly at KS2 in order to consider whether the most able students are making as much progress possible in KS4.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 It was agreed by the Leadership Group 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 maximise their potential. We look to provide effective learning opportunities across the curriculum for all learners and this includes strategies and opportunities that challenge the High Starters to reach their full potential.

1.3 Our approach is to provide personalised learning that tailors 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. The High Starters provision will normally work within their Year group, but opportunities will be presented for them to work with their intellectual peers to allow challenge to take place.

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 and high achievements 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 which aim to provide intellectual challenge and develop physical and social skills.

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

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

- To review the curriculum to provide accelerated progression pathways for High Starters.
- To develop and sustain a high achieving learning ethos throughout the school.

3. IDENTIFICATION:

- 3.1 Following previous guidelines laid out by the DCSF, High Starters should make up between 5% and 10% of the cohort³. 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 centralised 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 transparent, 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 in order for them 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:-

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

- 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
- 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 Enrichment

The Coordinator for High Starters will plan an enrichment programme for those students identified as High Starters within the school. 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 offer additional and different experience to broaden the perspectives of the High Starter cohort. For example, Year 10 students have recently participated in a Ministry of Defense Interschool Challenge, where students took the role of the British government when dealing with an international crisis. Other opportunities in the school include Debate Club, which has been running since 2013/14. Students entered a formal Debate Competition for the first time in 2014/15, and attendance of the club continues to grow. The main enrichment program, IGNITE, allows students to express, share and demonstrate their love of a particular topic area by producing a piece of work which is published into a student journal. This journal will be published every year, and form a record of achievement for the participating students, as well as a platform for students to showcase their efforts and interests.

Currently, High Starters from across year groups also participate in a vertical program called BBC School Report. Students from across year groups work together to produce and showcase an area of interest, or a school event which they feel needs to be covered. This allows students to develop their teamwork, confidence and interpersonal skills.

Students are encouraged to apply to the most competitive universities, including Oxbridge. This is achieved via visits to universities (e.g. Oxford in Year 10 and 12) and a Competitive Universities programme in Year 12, which aims to guide students in applying to university. Furthermore, subject teachers are given guidance as to how to enrich their student's subject knowledge, via super-curricular encouragement. Guidance for competitive universities will also be starting in Year 7, across year groups with the aim of raising aspirations further at a younger age.

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 A-A* 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.

High Starter activities are integrated into 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).

Students are interviewed and information is kept with the High Starter Coordinator.

6. PERSONAL / EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES

It is essential that the High Starter programme embraces the support the Sandringham pastoral system is able to offer. Teachers must be aware that the identification of a student as a High Starter may lead to peer problems, and therefore must be open to strategies to support students within the High Starter cohort. The school must be able to accommodate the individual within the institution. This may mean that students work in different places and at different times to others in their peer group.

7. HIGH STARTERS COORDINATOR, ALT AND GOVERNOR

Governor – Rachel Houlden

- 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 – Martin Young

- To develop a programme of extra-curricular activities and raise the profile of High Starters.
- To report back to SLT and Governors periodically about the development and implementation of the programme.