

Gifted and Talented (Senior School) Policy

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Students may be Talented when they have particular ability in Art, Drama, Music, Resistant Materials, Textiles or PE. Gifted students have particular ability in any other curriculum subject. Research suggests that in a comprehensive school with a full ability range it might be expected that 5% of pupils would be 'gifted' and 2% 'very able'. It also suggests that these figures can be misleading, as most gifted and very able children possess their exceptional talents in only one or a few curriculum areas. It is therefore possible for anything up to 30% of pupils to come into this category when all subjects are considered.

At Putney we believe that all our students are highly gifted, and the majority could be described as gifted or talented at some stage in their school career in academic, sporting, musical and artistic fields. We aim to support each pupil during their time here so that they flourish and reaches their potential. In addition, there are some students who are exceptionally able or exceptionally talented and we aim to provide opportunities for those students to engage with across all year groups.

We aim to:

- Provide an ethos of scholarship and promote an environment within which students feel able to seek further challenge and stretch their abilities.
- Enable students to maximise their potential within and outside the curriculum.
- Ensure that there is a shared purpose regarding our Gifted and Talented pupils and a consistent approach across the school which promotes good practice, flexible and independent learning and the use of a variety of teaching styles incorporating higher level thinking skills.
- Create an atmosphere that encourages excellence, promotes equality and is accepting of difference.
- Raise awareness of and to enable the consideration of issues facing this group of students.
- Give guidance on the procedures followed at PHS in the identification and support of these pupils.
- Foster partnership with parents to ensure that students make progress, and to recommend to parents when additional support is needed.

This policy links with all other school policies such as the whole school and department Curriculum and Assessment policies, Equal Opportunities and Special Educational Needs.

Identification:

- It is the whole school's responsibility to identify and support gifted and talented students. The criteria should be multiple and flexible. A mix of formal and informal assessment across all departments, which is inclusive in approach, will provide every pupil with an opportunity to show what they are capable of achieving. Identification is an ongoing process.
- Students are identified using three different criteria: external tests (such as MidYIS, GCSE and A Levels), internal examination/assessment results and on recommendations from members of staff.

In Year 7 all students take the MidYIS test which will identify students above a mean score 135. This is used as the initial basis for the G&T register. Any student who gains a scholarship (academic, music or sport) in Year 7 is also automatically put onto the G&T register.

Students will also be put onto the Talented register if they receive four or more teacher nominations in one or more separate subjects (including Art, Drama, Music, Resistant Materials, Textiles or PE). Students will be put onto the Gifted register if they receive three or more teacher nominations in three or more separate subjects (including any curriculum subject not listed above for the Talented register). These teacher nominations are taken annually in January/February.

Year 12 are added on the basis of their GCSE results initially: any student who achieves at least eight Level 9's is added to the register. They are also added if they gain a 16+ scholarship. More will then be added if they gain two or more subject nominations from their teacher, annually in November/December.

Talented musicians may be Music scholarship holders, students attending music conservatories or students who have achieved level 8 at the end of Y9 in their chosen instrument. This decision is made at the discretion of the department.

Any student who is part of the schools Elite Sports Programme is also automatically included on the Talented Register.

- The school has developed the use of Art, Drama, Music and PE scholarships at 6th Form level as well. These students may be considered to be exceptionally talented in these areas. Each department has developed their own criteria against which students of exceptional ability in the subject can be compared. The G&T register is issued to departments in the summer, following the end of year examinations, and students from Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 are recommended to the Gifted and Talented Coordinator for the forthcoming academic year. Students going into Year 12, from Year 11, are reviewed in November/December, following their GCSEs, to give teachers time to get

to know their classes. Similarly, new Year 7 students are reviewed in February/March, allowing time for teachers to get to know the new students.

- The register is reviewed annually. This enables appropriate support to be given for each student and appropriate targets to be set for students at reporting time.
- At the primary/secondary transition stage students from Lytton Grove, who are gifted /talented, are noted and the information is passed to the form tutor and the Head of Year.
- At the primary/secondary transition stage members of SLT liaise with feeder schools on a student-by-student basis, and where students are considered gifted/talented in a particular area, this information is passed onto the form tutor and the Head of Year.
- Once the register has been updated in the Summer Term, the newly updated data is shared with teachers in September. Staff should ensure that these students are identified in their planning.
- We do not formally identify students as Gifted and Talented to avoid potential demotivation; the list is confidential to staff only and should not be discussed with students.
- Any concerns about support of Gifted and Talented students should be passed to the Gifted and Talented Coordinator (MPE) in writing.
- Pupils of concern may be raised at the weekly briefing meeting or in departmental meetings and information fed back to the Gifted and Talented Coordinator.
- The Gifted and Talented Coordinator will liaise with the Deputy Head Academic, Deputy Head Teaching & Learning, Enrichment Coordinator, and HODs to ensure that students and parents are given appropriate guidance regarding enrichment activities, summer schools, and other activities as appropriate.
- The Gifted and Talented Coordinator will also work with key personnel at KS3, 4 and Sixth Form and liaise with the World Class Universities coordinator, and the Junior Gifted and Talented Coordinator to promote the Gifted and Talented programme.
- Every department has a designated G&T representative to ensure ideas are disseminated across the school. These representatives attend three whole-school G&T meetings a year.

Teaching and Assessment:

- Providing for gifted and talented pupils is a whole school responsibility. It is the role of every teacher to plan for the needs of their gifted students. Provision for gifted and talented students should be seen as an integral part of effective school practice, lesson planning and in our pedagogical approaches.
- Gifted and Talented department representatives were introduced in 2012 to support the whole-school Gifted and Talented Coordinator. These representatives across every department meet regularly and act to cascade key ideas and updated strategies back to their departments. This has increased the consistency of gifted and talented policy across the school.
- All staff are regularly asked to submit Gifted and Talented nominations from across their classes throughout the year. The Gifted and Talented coordinator uses this information to update centrally held G+T registers. These are regularly circulated throughout the whole staff and allow them to tailor their lessons, and to ensure they are stretching the most able in each and every activity.
- Subject teachers have a key role in determining both the curriculum offered as well as the actual classroom approach/tasks within their subject. The teacher is the most important support to the student and Schemes of Work should provide differentiated tasks and opportunities for a mix of broadening (enrichment), extra depth (extension) and moving ahead in the curriculum (acceleration). As part of putting together schemes of work each department ensures they identify space for higher order thinking activities and independent learning, aiming to craft a differentiated programme that stimulates and challenges students across the range of abilities. Providing a differentiated programme that stimulates and challenges students across the range of abilities, will aid identification, provide an environment in which gifted students can flourish and raise expectations for all pupils.
- In February 2015, whole-school INSET on differentiation encouraged departments to adapt their existing SOW to suit both SEN and G&T students. All staff are encouraged to take part in CPD which focuses on stretching the most able. Training includes that on Higher Order Thinking activities, 'How to develop an ethos of Scholarship', 'Harkness: fostering independent learning', 'Gifted and Talented' and 'SEND/Differentiation'. In 2022-23 a new CPD Pathway focusing on 'Bridging the gap between school and university' sees a group of staff do a deep dive on this topic of stretch at the top end. We have a culture of sharing good practice, which is enabled through department representatives meeting on a termly basis to discuss best practice at Teaching and Learning Meetings where differentiation is a regular theme.

Co-curricular Provision:

Provision should build on a sound base of challenging day-to-day classroom provision supplemented by school-wide and out-of-school opportunities that enable pupils to develop their individual strengths. Each Department has identified their provision within their handbooks and where appropriate identifies targets specific to Gifted + Talented provision in their annual departmental audit/developmental plan, should HODs see fit.

- Our super-curriculum programme sees 160+ clubs and societies available every week, including those with an academic focus; for example, Medical Society, Debating, Greek Club, Mathletes, Code Breaking and Current Affairs Society. In the Sixth Form and into Y10 & 11 there are specialist academic enrichment opportunities including specialist groups such as Feminist Book Club, Psychology Society and People of Colour Society. Student leadership in their clubs is widely promoted and, in this way, we see the most gifted leading the development of scholarship through the school.
- The school PIE (Putney Ideas Exchange) Speaker Programme has been in existence since 2011, aimed to provide students with the opportunity to listen and meet with individuals from specialist industries, speaking on topics outside of the curriculum. The evening PIE+ Lecture Series is an extension of that programme. Speakers have included Fleur Anderson, Dido Harding, Jeremy Hunt, A. C. Grayling and Henry Marsh.
- Outside the classroom our super-curricular programme and provision runs from Y7-13. At KS3 bespoke G+T challenges are undertaken by all pupils. At Year 7 students embark on a 'Badge Challenge' which develops their independent thinking skills. At Y8 the BAFTA challenge combines both critical thinking with creativity, asking pupils to respond via mixed-medium to current affairs topics. At Year 9 students develop curiosity, self-discipline and originality in our essay competition. At KS3 we also run the 'Putney Pioneers' where Y13 6th Form Mentors meet regularly with KS3 students to run academic enrichment and extension seminars.
- At KS4+5 students are offered the opportunity to enroll in our Athena Programme where students pursue scholarship and academia at a high level outside of the classroom. They customise a program of extension, supported by seminars, and evidenced in a report/presentation/viva voce, focusing on their academic passions. In this way they develop not just independent learning and critical thinking but amass a strong "Academic CV", really drilling into and discovering their academic passions. In 2021-22 184 students took part in the Athena Programme with 82 achieving their awards. At Year 13 students can also work as Athena Ambassadors, running workshops and seminars for students in KS3.

- In the 6th form, students are able to enroll in Futures; these are weekly academic extension classes which enable students to go beyond the constraints of the syllabus and prepare them for university applications and places. The Oxbridge programme supports students who are identified as having gifts/talents that enable their application to highly competitive courses such as those at Oxbridge, Medicine, English and Law.
- Achievements, gifts and talents need to be recognised and celebrated by students, staff and parents. The Gifted and Talented coordinator maintains a list of student achievements which is then disseminated within and outside the school community via Newsletters, the Magazine and Press articles as well as presentations at assemblies. In this way we foster this culture of achievement involving the commitment of everyone connected with the school, celebrating and rewarding the achievements of all pupils.
- Extension reading booklets are issued to all year group, including Sixth form, based on recommendations from each academic department. These are updated annually.
- The effectiveness of the programme will be evaluated annually by the Gifted and Talented Coordinator and the Deputy Head Academic. This is also informed by pupil voice sessions and bi-annual meetings by academic SLT with those on the G+T registers.