PUTNEY
HIGH SCHOOL
GDST
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

Senior School Gifted and Talented Policy

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Senior School Gifted and Talented Policy

Students may be talented when they have a particular ability in Art, Drama, Music, DT Product Design, Textiles or PE. At Putney, we designate these students as High Performing (HP). Gifted students have a particular ability in any other curriculum subject. At Putney, we designate these students as High Achieving (HA). 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% 'talented'. 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 extremely 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 reach their potential. In addition, there are some students who are exceptionally high achieving or exceptionally high performing, 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 all 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 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 these students make good progress and are fully challenged.

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

The High Achieving Register

To formalise the process of identification onto the High Achieving register, students will be identified in the following ways:

Year 7:

In Year 7 all students take the MidYIS test. This is used as the initial basis for the High Acheiving register.

Years 8-11:

The highest achieving students in the reports of the previous year, particularly the end of year examinations, as reported by the Data & MIS Manager, will be on the High Achieving register.

This will use standardised end-of-year exam results at Key Stage 3 to control for differing marking schemes between subjects.

Year 12:

Students with the best GCSE results will be on the High Achieving register.

Year 13:

As with Years 8-11, the students with the highest reports from Year 12 will be on the High Achieving register.

In each year group the top 10% of students will be identified, though there may be more if there is a tie.

Academic scholars are not automatically added to the High Achieving register, though we expect these students to appear. It will provide a good basis for the Head of Academic Enrichment, who academically mentors these students, to see that they are achieving to their highest capabilities.

The High Performing Register

Students will be put onto the High Performing register if they receive teacher nominations in one or more separate subjects (including Art, Drama, Music, DT Product Design, Textiles or PE).

Talented musicians may be Music scholarship holders, students attending music conservatories or students who have achieved Grade 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 High Performing Register.

At the primary/secondary transition stage members of SLT liaise with feeder schools on a student-by-student basis, and where students are considered HA or HP in a particular area, this information is passed on to the form tutor and the Head of Year.

Review and Concerns

- The register is reviewed annually in the autumn term. Year 8-13 are available in September and Year 7 once the MidYIS results are available. This enables appropriate support to be given for each student and appropriate targets to be set for students during progress mentoring and reporting.
- We do not formally identify students as HA or HP to avoid potential demotivation; the list is confidential for staff only and should not be discussed with students.
- Any students who were on the High Achieving or High Performing registers in the previous year but have not been identified as such in their current year will be flagged with the Head of Academic Enrichment. Using the data produced at each reporting cycle, the Head of Academic Enrichment will take an appropriate course of action. In the first instance this will be communicated to classroom teachers, form tutors and the head of year. More robust support may may include meetings with the student, parents or teachers, or academic intervention.
- Any concerns about support of HA and HP students should be passed to the Head of Academic Enrichment (CSC) in writing.
- Pupils of concern may be raised at the weekly briefing meeting or in departmental meetings and information fed back to the Head of Academic Enrichment
- The Head of Academic Enrichment will liaise with the Deputy Head Academic, Assistant Head (Teaching & Staff Development), HOYs and HODs to ensure that students and parents are given appropriate guidance regarding enrichment activities, summer schools, and other activities as appropriate.
- The Head of Academic Enrichment will also work with key personnel at KS3, 4 and Sixth Form and liaise with the Head of Futures, and the Head of Junior Learning Enrichment to promote the Academic Enrichment Programme.

- Every department has a designated staff representative to ensure enrichment ideas are disseminated across the school. These representatives attend three whole-school meetings a year.

Teaching and Assessment

- Providing for HA and HP pupils is a whole school responsibility. It is the role of every teacher to plan for the needs of their HA or HP students, where relevant to their teaching practice. Provision for HA and HP students is an integral part of effective school practice, lesson planning and our pedagogical approaches.
- Gifted and Talented 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 provision for HA and HP students across the school.
- 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 and provide an environment in which HA and HP students can flourish and raise expectations for all pupils.
- 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 High Performing' 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. In February 2024, a whole school INSET on adaptive teaching for all students encouraged staff to review their work thus far. 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 provision for HA and HP students 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, and Psychology Society. Student leadership in clubs is widely promoted, and in this way we see HA and HP students 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 discuss new ideas linked to and outside the curriculum. This programme includes speakers in PSHE, parts of our Year 10 PPE programme and evening "Audiences with...". The audiences are an extension of this programme with high profile external speakers which have included Fleur Anderson, Dido Harding, Jeremy Hunt, A. C. Grayling and Henry Marsh.
- Outside the classroom our super-curricular Athena programme runs from Y7-Y13, taking a different and growing format in each year group. Our Year 7s embark on 'Badge Challenges' which develops their independent thinking skills. In Years 8 and 9 the students get a taste of seminar-style learning led by Athena prefects and mix these with their independent challenges. 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. For KS4 and 5 students the Athena programme becomes more academically rigorous, where student pursue scholarship and academia at a high level. 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', drilling into and discovering their academic passions. In 2023-24, 169 students took part in the programme with 111 achieving their awards.
- In the 6th form, students are able to enrol 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 Coordinator 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. Student achievements are 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 lists are issued to all year groups, including Sixth Form, based on recommendations from each academic department. These are updated annually.
- Members of the Academic SLT will work with the Head of Academic Enrichment to quality assure the program and provision. The effectiveness of the programme will be evaluated regularly by the Head of Academic Enrichment with help from members of SLT.