

Poole Grammar School	Policy	
Aspiration and Challenge		Issue 1
		February 2024

1. Aims

1.1 Overall aim

Improve opportunities to identify and nurture students who are ‘more able’, ‘exceptionally able’ and ‘talented’ (ME&T). To create an environment where teachers at Poole Grammar School have high expectations and are committed to providing a sufficiently challenging curriculum for all students, including the more and exceptionally able.

1.2 Specific aims

- to provide a greater emphasis on creating opportunities for ME&T students to flourish;
- to celebrate and publicise individual and group high achievement and to create an ethos of high achievement across all students;
- to ensure staff are supported to feel comfortable and confident about working with, and providing challenge to, ME&T students;
- to encourage a greater number of students to move on to challenging and aspirational courses and destinations after leaving school, including apprenticeships;
- to monitor the welfare of ME&T students to ensure that they are coping with the demands associated with that status.

2. Connections to other key policies

Improving the provision of opportunities to identify and nurture those who are ME&T will also depend upon:

- excellent teaching and learning within lessons – the principles of which are set out in *Poole Grammar School’s Teaching and Learning Policy (PGS/P/63)*
- students with additional needs, for example SEND needs or mental health needs, having those needs met through the principles set out in *Poole Grammar School SEND Policy (PGS/P/27)*
- Poole Grammar School is committed to providing a sufficiently challenging curriculum for all its pupils (the principles of which are as set out in Poole Grammar School’s Curriculum Policy (PGS/P/10 A).
- this policy has due regard for the Equality Act 2011 whereby the policy’s actions advance equal opportunity, foster good relations and seek to eliminate discrimination for all members of the school community.

3. Principles

3.1 Identification

The DfE have no national definition of ME&T and expect schools to develop their own systems of identifying and tracking their ME&T students.

As Poole Grammar School is an academically selective school we will have a much higher percentage of ME&T students and the school’s curriculum is already set up to reflect this. Consequently, the school’s focus will be on identification of ‘exceptionally able & talented’ students. They are intellectually independent and may be identified as ME&T in a number of subjects. In PGS this is likely to be closer to 10% of the cohort.

Students with SEND, EAL students and Pupil Premium students may also be ‘exceptionally able’ and teachers must seek advice and guidance from the school SEND Co-ordinator, EAL co-ordinator and PP co-ordinator when planning to stretch and challenge these students.

As a school, we identify ME&T students using a variety of identification methods:

- National Curriculum assessments – KS2, KS3, GCSE;
- entrance test data;
- MIDYis data;
- teacher assessments;
- assessments made through other organisations, for example music services, national sports governing bodies;
- teacher recommendations/observations;
- scrutiny of student work.

3.2 Opportunities

All schemes of work must deliver a curriculum that is challenging for all, including ME&T students.

Exceptionally able students should:

- be allowed to move on more quickly to more challenging activities involving higher order thinking skills;
- have more opportunities to engage in independent study;
- have their prior knowledge and understanding considered, in order to avoid unnecessary repetition of work, which is both boring and very de-motivating.

Heads of Department must ensure that within their subject:

- teachers are clear on how to identify exceptionally able students;
- the curriculum may be adapted to cater for exceptionally able students;
- there are extra-curricular opportunities that help develop the exceptionally able, but are not necessarily exclusively for the exceptionally able.

3.3 Catch up

Some ME&T students may miss significant numbers of lessons due to external commitments, for example sporting competitions or performing arts events. The school will take reasonable action to ensure such students' progress in learning is maintained, whilst considering impact on teacher workload.

3.4 Aspiration and challenge coordinators

A named staff member will co-ordinate the school's response to meeting the needs of ME&T students. This will include coordination and participation in South West Academy Trust events.

3.5 Monitoring and evaluation

Teaching staff will be able to review the identification of exceptionally able students at each progress check. More able or exceptionally able status can be added or removed as appropriate.

Provision will be monitored through:

- lesson observations, learning walks and department reviews;
- work sampling;
- meetings between Heads of Department and SLT Links;
- student voice activities;
- tracking of progress of students in the cohort and outcomes from public examinations.

4 Aspiration and challenge strategy

The Deputy Head Teacher (academic) must ensure that an aspiration and challenge strategy for the school is in place. The strategy must be reviewed on an annual basis.

The aspiration and challenge strategy will:

- identify areas for improvement in aspiration and challenge;
- provide clear actions to facilitate improvement;
- set realistic timescales for improvement;
- indicate staff members responsible for implementing the actions.

Each new version of the school's aspirations and challenge strategy will be presented to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and to the Governors' Education Committee (GEC) for ratification.

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Next review		