

RATIONALE

Wellfield High School is committed to providing the best educational experience for all its students. Excellence is encouraged from all, and opportunities to excel are provided for each student. Our Curriculum Statement says that: 'Our aim is to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, focused on maximising student potential and progress that allows all students to flourish and be the best they can become.' This policy seeks to outline how we will achieve this for those students we consider to be 'most able', within our broad and balanced curriculum and through opportunities outside of the classroom.

AIMS OF THIS POLICY

To focus on 'most able' provision and the quality of teaching and learning across the curriculum, in order to raise standards and allow all students to achieve their potential.

To enable students to respond to challenges commensurate with their ability, by learning effectively and achieving the best outcomes and qualifications.

To encourage students to build on and develop their knowledge, experience, skills and understanding in order to reach and exceed individual targets, independently and through extra-curricular activity.

To ensure that, where necessary, individuals receive academic or pastoral support to overcome identified barriers to learning at a challenging level.

To maintain an ethos in which achievement at a high level is recognised and celebrated.

IDENTIFICATION

Our aim is to try to build up a comprehensive picture of each student's ability by using as many indicators and as much information as possible. Identification is inclusive rather than exclusive. The identification process starts before students enter at Year 7 and continues throughout KS3 and KS4.

Initially, the more able students at Wellfield will be identified using prior attainment at Key Stage Two. Depending on year of entry, this will be a level 5 SATS average including at least one 5B or better, or in the case of students examined from 2016 onwards, an average scaled score of 108 or more.

In line with the above, a broadly holistic approach is also taken to the identification of 'more able' students, including some or all of the following:

Other Year 6 transition information

Baseline testing in school and other assessments, including end of session exams

Teacher or faculty recommendation based on application and ability in the classroom

Parental liaison, when a talent nurtured outside of school might go unnoticed within the immediate boundaries of our curriculum.

This leads to the creation of a 'More Able' register, so that classroom teachers and faculty leaders are aware of the students with the highest potential within their lessons and subject areas. Attainment data is gathered and reviewed at regular intervals throughout the academic year and progress can be monitored in this way.

THE CURRICULUM

All faculties and teachers have a responsibility for their learners' progress. Once a 'more able' student is identified, staff ensure that appropriately challenging content is made available through high quality teaching and learning, is accessed by the student, and that the means of making exceptional progress are made clear. The school ethos of predominantly mixed ability teaching advocates an approach of 'teaching to the top' so all teachers, in the first instance, plan content with their most able students in mind.

TRACKING AND INTERVENTION

All teachers are aware of the students in their groups who are on the 'most able' register. Target grades at Key Stage Four and Ability Banding at Key Stage Three support this further. Academic targets that are appropriately challenging and aspirational, and teachers will measure progress against these. This then means that intervention and guidance by the teacher can take place if, at assessment points, a student is underperforming for their ability.

Also, the senior leader with responsibility for the most able will have the means to track the progress of each individual on the register from a cross-curricular standpoint at key points in the year, and instigate any broader intervention that might be beneficial, eg. mentoring, organisational skills, subject-specific support. This register is also cross-referenced with registers for other learner groups in school to ensure the support and intervention offered is bespoke and well-targeted.

ENRICHMENT / EXTRA-CURRICULAR

Opportunities often arise outside of the classroom, and students on the register will be made aware of appropriate extra-curricular activities as and when they occur.

Internally

Faculties run a number of clubs, groups and subject-specific programmes to further enhance the learning experience of more able students. As these may change in name and nature across an academic year, students are advised to discuss with their teachers their availability. Across the academic year, opportunities for competitions will also be publicised and targeted where appropriate.

Externally

In partnership with Runshaw College we arrange a broad spectrum of activities and visits for more able students in years 9 and 10. The provision regularly includes:

Surprising Science
New Approaches to Drawing
Freedom and the Existence of God
Challenging History
Geography: Creating Sustainability
Maths Challenge
Mock Trial Event
The Full English Experience
Masterclass Day (incorporating a number of subjects)
Spelling Bee.

Selection and attendance for these internal and external events – and others like them that run through the school year – are cross-checked against a spreadsheet to ensure they are offered to the full range of our more able students, and are therefore not just aimed at a handful of learners. We also discuss these clubs, events and competitions in terms of being for the ‘able and ambitious’, therefore opening the door for others who are keen to challenge and push themselves further.

MANAGING PROVISION

The progress of all learner groups is a high priority for Wellfield High School and the most able are no exception. We work hard to support our staff and students with its continued success through the following:

The ‘Most Able’ Co-ordinator is a member of the Senior Leadership Team and therefore drives developments and initiatives in this area through the weekly Strategic Planning Team meeting with the Heads of Faculty.

The 'Most Able' Co-ordinator monitors the progress of targeted students through the school's interim data, and – with the support of the Progress Leaders and Heads of Faculty – prompts the necessary intervention to keep students on an aspirational flightpath.

Subject teachers are kept well-informed and in a timely fashion about able students so that teaching and learning can be pitched accordingly.

Tutors are kept abreast of the performance of able students so that pastoral and/or academic intervention can be put in place where necessary.

The 'Most Able' Co-ordinator and relevant subject staff keep able students informed of extra-curricular opportunities as they occur.