



**ST JAMES**  
Senior Girls' School

## **More Able and Talented Policy**

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**St James Senior Girls' School**

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## Aims

St James Senior Girls' School recognises that every pupil has strengths, abilities and talents which are capable of being realised. This includes providing for those who are particularly able, academically or talented in music, art, drama, sport or dance.

Our policy is to cater for all pupils with abilities and talents within the resources and experience available to the school and to identify and meet these needs as efficiently as possible.

More able and talented pupils need to learn how to deal with challenge as much as any other pupil and therefore it is important to identify them and make sure that they are provided with challenges that will stimulate and widen their minds.

Young people develop at different rates physically, mentally and emotionally. Much development goes on unseen and manifests at a later time. Aptitude tests and school exams show a certain amount, but they are not complete pictures and they can only show part of each pupil's qualities and abilities. History is full of great men and women whose gifts emerged later in life, through hard work and determination. It is therefore vital not only to provide for those who are already displaying gifts and talents but also to encourage every pupil's confidence in her particular abilities and to provide enrichment for all pupils for further development in all areas.

## Definitions

More able and talented pupils achieve, or have the ability to achieve, at a level significantly in advance of their peers. This may be in all areas of the curriculum or in a limited range.

## Identification

We use a variety of approaches to identify more able and talented pupils so that pupils' needs and abilities are considered flexibly and intelligently, taking into account those who are late developers or underachieving for emotional reasons or because of a learning difficulty.

The More Able and Talented register is compiled afresh at the start of each academic year and revised in the Spring Term for Year 7 in the light of the autumn assessment results and new MidYIS data.

The criteria used are as follows:

- subject nominations – each subject nominates pupils in each year group as 'more able'. Teachers refer to the criteria given above and may also refer to QCA guidance for their own particular subject;
- referral from junior schools/previous schools;
- MidYIS/Yellis/ALIS results.

Subject nominations are collated and pupils with the most nominations are put onto the shortlist. Pupils who have received nominations from two of the following departments: sport, art, music, dance and drama are put on the register as 'talented'. The More Able and Talented register is flexible and subject to change from year to year. More able pupils are highlighted in our rolling spreadsheets and noted discreetly in teachers' mark books; talented pupils are

marked with a blue 'T'. Each department is also asked to keep a note of the pupils that they nominated as more able/talented; they may mark up these pupils in their mark books even though they have not been added to the official register.

After the register has been compiled, comparison is made with MidYIS scores and pupils who may be underachieving are 'flagged up' and their needs considered.

Pupils and parents are not informed of who is on the register, as it is felt that this would make it harder for the register to be flexible and adapt to the changing needs of pupils throughout their schooling.

### **Bespoke provision**

There are a few exceptional pupils who we feel require bespoke input. We refer to this group as the Horizon Group. These pupils are asked to select a topic to research and are given support by the More Able and Talented Coordinator to help them with either depth or breadth in that subject. The pupils then keep a blog of their work. They also present their findings in the Summer Term to an audience of parents and teachers.

There will be a few pupils in the school who require a more individual curriculum. This may, very occasionally, include early entry for public examinations. See below (Provision).

### **Coordination of Provision within the School**

The More Able and Talented Coordinator is one of the Senior Teachers, who has responsibility for:

- day to day operation of the school's More Able and Talented Policy
- coordinating and monitoring provision for more able and talented pupils
- maintaining the school's More Able and Talented register and updating the 'rolling spreadsheets' of pupil data accordingly
- liaising with and advising the SMT and Headmistress
- liaising with and advising Form Teachers and Heads of Section
- liaising with and advising Heads of Department and Subject Teachers
- contributing to the 'in-service' training of staff, through lesson observations and presentations in staff meetings
- liaising with external agencies as necessary
- giving occasional presentations in assembly
- informing the parent body occasionally on matters relating to academic enrichment
- administering the Horizon Group

### **Heads of Department have responsibility for:**

- identifying students who meet the criteria given above and passing on these names to the MA&T Coordinator
- providing schemes of work that contain enrichment/extension material;

- ensuring that more able and talented provision is considered in departmental development plans;
- ensuring that teachers have registers that recognise who has been identified as more able and talented;
- ensuring that the enrichment/extension material is being used by subject teachers.

### **The Deputy Head (Academic) has responsibility for:**

- monitoring the schemes of work
- working with the MA&T Coordinator
- making provision for more able students on meeting agendas

### **Resources**

An annual budget (Academic Enrichment) is given, in line with other departments within the school, to cover the purchase of materials. Voluntary help is sometimes provided by outside speakers and advisors. The Minerva Society is used to offer extracurricular extension for all pupils but is especially useful for MA&T pupils.

### **Provision**

Much is provided in school within lessons by various kinds of differentiation and extension, carefully planned in schemes of work. These include:

1. Differentiation by outcome. This allows responses at very different levels to the same initial stimulus.
2. Differentiation by input. The tasks for pupils may be varied both in terms of style and content. Different materials may be used by the most able.
3. Differentiation by pace. More able and talented pupils need the facility to proceed more quickly, perhaps starting further on in an exercise and moving on to extension material.
4. Differentiation by setting or by grouping within a mixed ability class.

It is the school's policy (for almost all pupils) not to accelerate pupils ahead of their age group but some extra subjects are available for able pupils and exceptionally able pupils may be offered an individualised timetable in which they can work ahead at their own pace in certain subjects.

Classical Greek is offered at Year 8 to the most able linguists. The AQA Further Mathematics Level 2 qualification is offered to those pupils in Year 11 who achieve highly in the January mathematics mock exam. Extra classes in French and Spanish are provided to native speakers so that they can take public examinations early.

A wide range of lunchtime clubs and after school activities are available which provide enrichment and extension in numerous areas of the curriculum. Outings and events provide further enrichment opportunities.

In addition to clubs, occasional extra lessons and outings are offered which are aimed at the most able, although any pupil who wishes to join them may usually do so. For example, Year 10 are offered the opportunity to attend an annual conference for more able and talented pupils, held in either Oxford or Cambridge.

Independent learning is encouraged both within subject schemes of work and by specific provision. The school librarian teaches library and research skills. Subject notice boards are frequently updated and include material that encourages independent learning. The Academic Enrichment notice board has displays to encourage creative thinking.

Pupils are encouraged to enter internal and external competitions and to attend courses or exhibitions. These are promoted on subject notice boards, the school's intranet and by announcements in lessons and assembly. Successes are recognised and celebrated.

### **Communication within School**

Provision is made for the MA&T Coordinator to speak at staff meetings. These meetings are minuted. In addition, the MA&T Coordinator meets regularly with the Deputy Head (Academic).

Meetings about individual pupils are held whenever a need is identified by the Form Teacher, Head of Section, parent or subject teacher. Similarly, meetings are held whenever the MA&T Coordinator has information to pass on regarding the progress and welfare of the pupil.

### **Parents**

It is our policy not to inform parents about which pupils are on the More Able or Talented register. This is because we want to review the register at the start of every academic year. This means that pupils are added and removed with each round of nominations. However, parents are invited to attend the Horizon Group's presentations in the Summer Term.

Parents are informed of outings or events which their daughters may attend. Pupils and parents are also informed of organisations which offer provision and support for more able and talented pupils and their families.

Form Teachers and Heads of Section keep in contact with parents as needs demand and meetings are easily coordinated with the form teacher or Head of Section on any specific educational need or other matter. Reports are sent out in full twice a year and the third term has an end of term grade sheet; there are also half term grades to keep parents informed of progress.

### **Complaints Procedure**

A complaint relating to the assessment or provision for more able and talented pupils should be addressed to the pupil's Head of Section and/or the Deputy Head (Academic). If it is not possible to resolve the issue or concern, parents may wish to contact the Headmistress. In exceptional circumstances, the Governor overseeing the provision for More Able and Talented pupils for the School can be asked to look into the complaint.

### **Governors**

Mrs Annabel Lubikowski is the Governor for More Able and Talented matters.

<b>Signed by:</b>	<b>Hugh Venables</b> <b>Chair of the Senior Girls' Committee</b>
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Policy owner (SMT)	Deputy Head (Academic)