

The Academically More Able pupils (including SEND and EAL)

General Rationale

At Queen Margaret's School we recognise that there are girls of exceptional ability in one or more areas. It is important that the needs of the academically more able should be recognised and strategies for the identification, tracking and monitoring be developed. There should be provision for all girls requiring challenge, enrichment and support in order for them to achieve their full potential and raise their aspirations and achievement by developing a range of skills and aptitude in many areas.

It is generally agreed that there is no universally accepted definition of 'giftedness'. The Department for Education defines Gifted and Talented in the following way: Gifted and Talented is the term applied to those students who are achieving, or have the potential to achieve, at a level substantially beyond the rest of their year group. 'Gifted' learners are those who have abilities in one or more academic subjects. 'Talented' learners are those who have particular abilities in sport, music, design, or creative and performing arts. The term 'gifted and talented' pupils is relative to Queen Margaret's School and does not refer to the most able students in the national population.

Aims

- Development of holistic provision with a common understanding across the school for more able students in all subjects where stretch and challenge is an integral part of all lessons
- To ensure that more able girls are attempting a higher level of work and thinking in order to stretch and challenge themselves and not just more of the same.

Before Joining the School

Girls complete admissions tests in Maths and English. Overseas girls' previous schools will provide data of varying quality and context. Students joining in the Sixth Form from UK schools or UK affiliated international schools will have GCSE data. This information is shared with Heads of Department to aid with setting and to help identify potential Gifted and Talented students in order to potentially award academic scholarships (see below).

Lower School

In core subjects year groups are set according to ability. Extension opportunities are available in every lesson to challenge students. Research tasks, group work and presentations regularly allow students to stretch themselves and showcase their abilities. Assessment is challenging and rigorous, allowing students to display their skills in higher order thinking. Tutors of those who are Gifted and Talented can aid focusing girls on areas that they are motivated to explore further. Departments who enter girls for external challenges (including Schools Challenge and Maths Challenge) are fully supported with success celebrated.

Upper School

In core subjects, at GCSE, year groups are set according to ability. Extension opportunities are available in every lesson to challenge students. Research tasks, group work and presentations regularly allow students to stretch themselves and showcase their abilities. Assessment is challenging and rigorous, allowing students to display their skills in higher order thinking. Tutors of those who are Gifted and Talented can aid focusing girls on areas that they are motivated to explore further. Gifted and talented students have the opportunity to choose five GCSE options if desired, including Further Mathematics and the Higher Project Qualification.

At A level the Extended Project Qualification encourages girls to stretch themselves out of their comfort zone both academically and outside of the traditional academic environment. A fourth A level is also available. Potential Medicine, Veterinary Science and Oxbridge candidates are provided with extra support and guidance to prepare for selection. Departments who enter girls for external

challenges (including subject Olympiads) are supported fully with success celebrated. Provision for Academically more able students will take a variety of forms:

- Stretch and Challenge is an integral part of all lessons for all students to raise aspirations and achievement and prevent underachievement.
- The opportunity to expand academic horizons through lectures, visiting speakers, the Queen's Society, projects and access to higher level work
- Setting is used in the core subjects
- Attending both internal and external workshops and lectures
- Attending Open Days – particularly Sixth Form students
- Trips and activities for enrichment opportunities

Scholars

High achieving students are nominated as Scholars across a range of disciplines including Academic, Art, Choral, Music, Drama, Dance and Sport. In either case, scholarships are awarded after assessment by the relevant Department Head and interview with the Head. As Scholars, a mutual relationship is fostered that is designed to benefit both the Scholar and the school.

1. Self-understanding

Scholars are encouraged to demonstrate a thirst for knowledge and an excellent attitude to learning across all subject areas, as role models within the school. As such, every Scholar in the school has been assigned an academic member of staff to act as a personal mentor to help them develop their interests outside of the main curriculum, building self-confidence, independence, and resilience. The Mentors meet with their Scholars once every Half Term and As with all students, the Scholars are also encouraged to take full advantage of the plethora of internal and external events which help them to improve their own learning and performance.

2. Contribution to others, the school and community

It is a requirement of all scholarships awarded that the girls contribute positively to school life and the community. This takes many forms currently, with the following examples:

- Older Scholars acting as academic and pastoral mentors to younger pupils.
- Participation as tour guides in school Open Days to promote the school
- Taking the lead in items for assembly
- Taking up positions as school UVI Prefects and Year IV Monitors and on school committees such as the School Academic Voice
- Participation in Chapel reading and music concerts.
- Academic Scholars are expected to give an online Scholar's Talk to the School once a year on a topic of their choice.
- Academic Scholars are expected to participate in the regular Curiosity Challenges.

Process for Review and Development

- Review of the provision, its impact and subsequent development will be ongoing.
- Parents will be informed of progress twice a year in the Scholarship Reports.
- Coordinator to attend any new and viable CPD courses to develop knowledge and understanding.

Summary

Every opportunity is taken to challenge the able, gifted and talented girls at Queen Margaret's. As a result, they go on to achieve outstanding results and significant success once they have left the school.

Claire Sheard
Senior Deputy Head
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