



MALVERN COLLEGE

ACADEMIC STRETCH AND CHALLENGE POLICY

Aims

At Malvern College we are committed to providing an environment which encourages all pupils to maximise their academic potential. The Policy of Academic Stretch and Challenge is an integral part of the school's commitment to providing an environment and framework of equal opportunity within which all pupils are entitled to have their needs recognised and addressed and are enabled to realise their potential.

By framing a policy of Academic Stretch and Challenge, Malvern College aims not only deliver effectively for the more able pupils but also seek to benefit pupils of all abilities through the principle that 'a rising tide floats all ships'. It must not be seen as an elitist programme but one which raises standards and enthuses both pupils and staff alike.

In order for very able pupils to receive a coherent approach, the school appoints a Director of Teaching and Learning (DTL) to oversee and co-ordinate the provision of academic stretch and challenge. It is necessary for all staff to provide a consistent approach in line with this policy. Each department is asked to nominate pupils, to consider their provision for this cohort and to monitor and develop that provision in line with curriculum developments and other school policies.

Definition of 'Able and talented'

The Department for Education recognises a group constituted of "children and young people with one or more abilities developed to a level significantly ahead of their year group (or with the potential to develop those abilities)."

The DfE recognises that

- there is no single perfect instrument for identification; institutions are advised to use a 'best fit' model that draws on a range of evidence including qualitative and quantitative elements;
- identification and provision are inseparable, because identification includes spotting potential through participation in learning opportunities;
- a continuous cyclical process of identification and review is recommended, rather than a one-off process;
- our collective understanding of what constitutes ability is still evolving.

Malvern College's definition of those requiring Academic Stretch And Challenge:

"Pupils who have ability or abilities beyond the large majority of their peer group and who consequently require more academic stretch and challenge than that appropriate for the large majority."

Identifying pupils in need of Academic Stretch

The strength of a boarding school is that we have a holistic view of the pupils. The Policy recognises that need for academic stretch may become apparent in a variety of whole-school contexts and not simply in the academic classroom.

Date of Policy: 01/09/2019

Next review: 01/09/2020

Owner: SGA



Very able pupils are identified by making a judgment based on an analysis of various sources of information including:

1. MiDYIS, Yellis or ALIS data
2. Entrance and Scholarship Examinations, internal and public examinations
3. Teacher nomination (based on classroom observation, discussions with pupils, work scrutiny)
4. Nomination by staff with pastoral roles such as Housemasters/mistresses and Tutors
5. Peer or self-nomination
6. Parental nomination / discussions
7. Predicted test/examination results

Any individual member of staff can nominate a pupil.

HoDs should spend departmental time identifying those in need of academic stretch in their specific subject. The DTL provides guidance on this.

Subject teachers should be aware of the indicators of under-achieving pupils when identifying the 'more able'.

A register of pupils recognised to be of significantly high ability or with the potential to achieve significantly highly is maintained by the Director of Teaching and Learning and is made available to all staff on Buzz.

The Curriculum

- Subject teachers are made aware of those pupils on the Able and Talented register and will be required to differentiate for them in their teaching.
- HoDs advise colleagues within their department on subject specific strategies to challenge pupils in need of academic stretch.
- The Director of Teaching and Learning advises colleagues of general strategies in the teaching of this cohort.
- Each department will have its own policy statement in its Departmental Handbook and Development Plan.
- The College will seek to discover and use a range of strategies to improve the teaching and learning of the able and talented. CPD may be required to facilitate this delivery.
- Opportunities for extension and enrichment are built into our planning and both are needed if pupils' abilities are to be monitored effectively.

Enrichment

Enrichment relates to breadth of study experience. It involves offering learners a wide variety of opportunities, both within and outside the curriculum, and exposing them to experiences not usually encountered as part of the standard curriculum.

Malvern College maintains two academic societies, The Aston Society in the Lower School and the Wheeler-Bennett Society in the Sixth Form.

The Aston Society

The Aston Society is co-ordinated by the DTL, and members form roughly the most able 5-10% of the cohort. Criteria for selection are currently based on nominations from five or more departments for inclusion on the Register. FY members are invited at the end of the Autumn Term, and membership continues throughout the Lower School.

The DTL provides mentoring for these pupils on a 1:1 and small group basis, and organises a programme of twice-termly lectures and activities for the Society aimed at enriching curricular subjects and exploring links between them. At any one time two year groups are invited to attend these events: the FY become eligible at the end of the Autumn term when the Hundred need to focus on GCSE preparation and cease attending meetings. Mentoring continues throughout the Lower School. A programme of Masterclasses is also scheduled each year, with teachers from a range of departments presenting to an audience of lower school pupils who elect to attend.

Aston Society members (as well as other potentially interested pupils on the Register) are also invited to attend other co-curricular activities, lectures and events, including those intended for the Sixth Form.

The Wheeler Bennett Society

The Wheeler-Bennett Society is co-ordinated by the teacher i/c and members are nominated by teaching staff at the end of the Lent term of the Lower Sixth. Members present academic papers to each other on a regular basis.

Extension

Extension (also referred to as enrichment through depth), involves children and young people following the standard curriculum but developing a deeper understanding through encountering more complex resources and materials, tackling more challenging questions and tasks, demonstrating higher levels of thinking, and presenting increasingly sophisticated responses.

Classroom

Departments and subject teachers will come up with their own subject specific ideas.

1. setting challenging goals;

2. encouraging independent learning, especially through the use of group learning;
3. deepening learning opportunities - enrichment;
4. extending learning opportunities;
5. supporting risk-taking;
6. using resources effectively;
7. asking effective questions;
8. understanding the various needs of the learner;
9. affirming creativity;
10. encouraging perseverance;
11. identifying potential;
12. addressing underachievement;
13. encouraging pupils to mentor others (as explaining ideas to others helps the mentor's retention and understanding)

Out of school

- work experience
- links with universities
- national competitions/festivals
- university masterclasses
- residential experiences
- CCA programme
- Art, Music and Drama activities
- sporting opportunities
- Peer Mentoring opportunities
- leadership opportunities

Pastoral Care

It is essential that the Stretch and Challenge programme embraces the support the pastoral system is able to offer. The College must be aware that the identification of a pupil as either gifted or talented may lead to peer- or self-imposed problems, and therefore must be open to strategies to support pupils within the Stretch and Challenge cohort.

The Role of The Director of Teaching and Learning

This is set out in section 5i of the Staff Handbook.

The Role of Heads of Department

Broadly speaking, the role of the HoD is:

- to develop departmental policy, within the framework of the Whole School Policy, for inclusion in departmental handbooks and Schemes of Work.
- to establish a system and criteria for identifying more able pupils and ensure that they are adhered to by all members of the department.
- to liaise with the DTL over the list of more able pupils in order to keep the DTL informed of any changes.
- to set aside regular departmental time to discuss new ideas, share materials, develop teaching strategies and extension activities for the very able cohort and therefore improve the quality of teaching and learning for all.
- to monitor the achievement/attainment of more able pupils to check that they are on target and to provide the necessary evidence.

The Role of the Classroom Teacher

- to ensure that lesson plans reflect the Whole School Policy and departmental Schemes of Work and contain class and homework activities that are differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils.
- to provide pupils with opportunities to extend their talents/skills by regularly promoting problem-solving, open-ended and investigative activities.
- to recognise that setting more work for pupils is not necessarily beneficial. More able pupils are more inclined to respond to higher level work that is more challenging, rather than more work of a similar level that is likely to be resented.
- to incorporate opportunities within their subject discipline to make use of ICT, including investigative work on the Internet.
- to foster opportunities for subject-specific academic mentoring.

Bibliography

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DCSF-00367-2008>

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110809101133/http://www.nsonline.org.uk/inclusion/giftedandtalented>