

**ST MARGARET'S**  
SCHOOL

# More Able & Talented Policy

**Reviewed and updated January 2022**

## **Introduction**

St Margaret's School (the "**School**") is committed to ensuring that more able and talented ("**MAT**") pupils in both the Junior School and Senior School are recognised, supported, inspired and challenged to ensure they do not underachieve and that they maximise their potential.

All pupils have individual needs, making personalised learning a priority in our teaching and learning. This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Curriculum Policy.

## **Objectives**

- To ensure an appropriate education for all pupils.
- To provide opportunities for MAT pupils to work at a higher cognitive level.
- To provide opportunities for MAT pupils to develop specific skills and talents.
- To identify more able and talented pupils to the teaching staff.
- To support teachers in their work with these pupils.
- To ensure curriculum challenge.
- To provide extra-curricular enrichment opportunities.
- To facilitate access to external opportunities.
- To stretch and challenge the most able pupils, creating a pathway towards ambitious university destinations and careers.
- To ensure pupils' pastoral needs are supported.

## **Definitions**

There is no single definition or term used to describe pupils who are either more able or have the potential to be so.

Generally, a more able pupil is one who has the capacity for or demonstrates high levels of performance in an academic area. A talented pupil is one with a domain specific high level of ability in a non-academic area, for example:

- Physical talent
- Musical talent
- Visual / performing abilities
- Creativity
- Outstanding leadership and social awareness

## Identification

Before identifying any pupil as more able in a particular area, we aim to ensure that all pupils have had the opportunity to learn and succeed in this area. This makes the identification process fair. All teachers have a responsibility to recognise and value pupils' abilities.

It is worth remembering that more able pupils can be:

- Good all-rounders
- High achievers in one area
- Of high ability but with low motivation
- Of good verbal ability but poor writing skills
- Very able but still developing their English language skills
- Very able but with a short attention span
- Very able with poor social skills
- Keen to disguise their abilities

In the Senior School, a central register of MAT pupils will be published and reviewed annually and updated as necessary. This register will be compiled by nomination through academic departments, using the criteria listed in this policy. Pupils nominated by **three or more** departments will be identified on the central MAT register, which will also include pupils with high baseline data scores (Midyis, Yellis or Alis) who may be underachieving, and those in receipt of academic scholarships. This register will be distributed to all staff and will be kept under regular review.

- Individual academic departments will also maintain a **separate** register of pupils recognised as performing, or having the potential to perform, above the majority of their peers within that academic department. When planning lessons, teaching staff should refer to their departmental lists when considering how to cater for MAT pupils within lessons.
- Pupils can be identified and added at any time during the school year through the above criteria.
- Inclusion in the register will remain confidential and this register will not be shared publicly. However, MAT pupils and their parents shall be informed prior to their inclusion in the register.

## Provision

Teaching strategies for MAT pupils should be incorporated into schemes of work and lesson plans where appropriate. An effective classroom environment will deliver pace, breadth and depth in teaching and learning and challenge through differentiation by content, learning process and outcome. The identified MAT pupils will normally work within their peer cohort, but specific opportunities will be provided for them to allow extra challenge to take place.

In addition to their full entitlement to the curriculum, talented pupils identified on the register and informally within the classroom will be given access to curriculum extension and enrichment within and outside the curriculum. Extra-curricular provision for the more able is researched and offered through activities such as school clubs, national competitions or enrichment activities and recorded. In the Sixth Form, University Preparation Lessons provide weekly focused academic enrichment. Please refer to the Senior Schools' Careers Policy for further information.

Pupils on the MAT register in years 7-11 will be allocated a staff mentor to oversee their school experience and ensure that they are being offered appropriate stretch and challenge both within and outside the curriculum. Students in the Sixth Form are mentored by Heads of Department via University Preparation lessons.

## **Training**

Whole staff INSET as well as Heads of Departments' meetings will include provision for MAT pupils at appropriate intervals.

Heads of Departments are responsible for maintaining within their remit the level of knowledge, skills and understanding at an appropriate level of expertise and scholarship to teach MAT pupils. This might include identifying appropriate training and development for staff wishing to update or develop their subject knowledge; creating opportunities for staff to network with other schools; and encouraging staff to belong to appropriate professional bodies. The School has membership of the National Association for Able Children in Education which provides a range of resources and guidance.

## **Co-ordination**

The MAT co-ordinator will:

- Champion the special needs of MAT pupils.
- Provide training through induction for new staff and department heads.
- Support departments in further developing differentiated teaching, curriculum enrichment and extension.
- Compile and update the whole school register as well as collate departmental registers.
- Coordinate mentoring and support for those on the register as appropriate.

## **Monitoring, assessment and evaluation**

Pupil progress is tracked and assessed within departments. Heads of Departments are to liaise with Heads of Year to ensure MAT pupils reach their potential. Heads of Year must inform the MAT coordinator of any concerns.

## **More Able and Talented in the Junior School**

The objectives, definitions and training regarding the provision for MAT pupils in the Junior School are consistent with those set out at the beginning of the policy. All Junior School MAT pupils are included on the whole school register.

### *Identification*

The identification of MAT pupils is a process in which all Junior School staff are involved. Pupils may be added to the MAT register through teacher assessment and referral. Discussions with the class teacher using a range of criteria will determine whether a pupil is potentially more able and/or talented in a particular area.

The following criteria are used:

- Analysis of information from previous school or nursery
- Discussion of pupils with colleagues
- Discussion with the child
- Ongoing assessment and differentiated tasks
- Observation during lessons
- Assessment data
- Collation of evidence (pupils' work)

Specialist teachers may also refer pupils to the class teachers for inclusion on the register. The Assessment Coordinator plays a key role in monitoring the academic performance of all pupils in the Junior School at the termly pupil progress meetings and may make recommendations for inclusion on the MAT register based on assessment data. A balance of qualitative and quantitative assessment is used.

## **Provision**

A range of strategies are used in the Junior School to ensure all pupils have challenge and work to meet high expectations. Differentiation in its many forms is built into our provision in the classroom for individuals or groups. Opportunities for extension work and challenge are included in lesson planning. Regular concerts and drama productions provide opportunities for performance and there are numerous sports in which MAT pupils can represent the School. The School also looks for opportunities for MAT pupils

to be involved in external competitions, both local and national, and given leadership opportunities.

The Junior School seeks to support activities and achievements outside of school holding weekly celebration assemblies and sharing achievements in the School social media sites and newsletters subject to compliance with data protection and related policies.

The Head of the Junior School, in consultation with the Assessment Coordinator is responsible for keeping the MAT register up to date and providing support in developing the teaching and curriculum for MAT pupils. The register will be updated and reviewed at regular intervals.