

Sophia HIGH SCHOOL

More Able and Talented Policy

2026 - 2027

Ownership & Consultation	
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Version control	
Implementation date	March 2024
Reviewed and updated	August 2024
Reviewed and updated	August 2025
Reviewed and updated	August 2026
Next Reviewed	August 2027

MORE ABLE AND TALENTED POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

Sophia High School is committed to equal opportunities and aims to maximise the potential and achievement of each individual pupil. This policy seeks to establish a rigorous, systematic and effective response to the challenge of providing for the very able.

More Able and Talented pupils need identification and monitoring in order that the school may provide such pupils with appropriately challenging education and opportunities to develop their abilities and particular talents to ensure that their potential is translated into performance. The school accepts that all children are individuals and it is this personalised learning that is at the heart of our vision to develop a holistic education for all of our pupils. We value a child centred culture, valuing each child's interest and learning style.

The Deputy Head Learning and Human Flourishing is responsible for the More Able and Talented students, liaison with the Leadership Team and Curriculum Leads.

2. DEFINITION

More Able – refers to pupils who are exceptionally able in one or more of the curriculum subjects other than Art and Design, Music and Sport.

Talented – refers to pupils who have exceptional ability in Art, Music, Drama, D+T, Sport and Leadership.

3. AIMS

Sophia High School is fully committed to providing opportunities where pupils apply their skills and understanding, and to develop their knowledge within a secure and flexible learning environment. The school aims to assist all children to reach their potential. Our belief in differentiating to enable all children to work at a level appropriate to their ability is a clear indicator of this objective, including:

- To identify pupils who are more able and talented. This may be through GL Assessments, internal assessments, or teacher observations.
- To create a learning environment that is suitable for such pupils and facilitates the development of their potential.
- To raise the pupil's own levels of expectation and risk taking.
- To offer additional opportunities for varied and challenging enrichment activities across a wide range of subjects.
- To encourage our teachers and subject heads to recognise opportunities to provide further enrichment and extension for these pupils in their schemes of works.
- To involve parents in how they can help stretch and challenge their children further.
- Encourage pupils to reflect on the process of their own learning.

4. IDENTIFICATION

More Able and Talented children are a diverse group of children and their range of attainment will be varied. However, they are more likely than most children to:

- Work flexibly, processing unfamiliar information and applying knowledge, experience and insight to unfamiliar situations.
- Achieve and show potential in a wide range of contexts.
- Demonstrate high levels of attainment across a range of subjects or within a particular subject or aspect of work.
- We also use our GL assessments to identify gifted students. **Any student with an average SS125 or above in PTM and PTE is defined as “mentally gifted” in the UK population as a whole.**

Process:

A variety of methods is used to identify More Able and Talented pupils. The Executive Principal will look at the evidence which might encompass characteristic indicators namely: verbal and linguistic, aesthetic and musical, logical and mathematical, scientific, visual spatial, body and kinaesthetic abilities and interpersonal skills. Identification will also include elements of the following across subject areas:

- Teacher nomination as a result of superior class performance
- Analysing current GL assessment data (see above)
- Music, Drama and Sport accreditation
- Evidence of a pupil's leadership skills

5. PROVISION

We aim to provide an effective learning environment in order to enable all children to achieve their potential. The identified pupils are given enrichment whereby the skills and knowledge learned in the standard curriculum are applied in new and challenging contexts with a clear purpose. Our vertical structure enables us to allow identified students to join accelerated learning pathways.

We aim to present challenges to our pupils at all levels. This is done by:

- use of open-ended tasks and Project Based Learning, enabling all pupils to respond at their own level
- encouraging evaluation and analysis and avoiding over-emphasis on right/wrong answers
- open-ended questioning; asking pupils to justify their answers and respond in greater depth
- problem-solving activities of varying levels of difficulty
- focusing on process rather than outcome to encourage risk-taking
- providing tasks that encourage pupils to create, design, investigate and justify in their learning.
- independent work that encourages pupils to take responsibility and make their own choices in their learning.
- setting ambitious personalised targets
- participating in alternative curriculum provision, such as Esports Leadership
- attending visits from experts including workshops and talks.
- entering national initiatives and inter-school competitions and challenges.

6. ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES AND SUPPORT

It is important that staff ensure in their reflective planning outline appropriate challenges for high achieving children. Overall planning for subjects should show evidence of such challenges and:

- In observations conducted by Leadership, there will be an expectation that teaching shows differentiation and should provide for an appropriate challenge for all pupils.
- Digital Notebooks show examples throughout of teachers extending learning, and also of students 'closing the feedback loop' to show their consolidation of key points.
- Curriculum Leads should ensure that, where there is a need, appropriate resources are made available for teachers to provide extension materials for More Able and Talented children.
- Ensure that there is a balance between acceleration, extension and enrichment for all students, but that for More Able and Talented students this is specific and recorded within the Digital Notebooks and Athena.
- Support in the identification of More Able and Talented pupils and associated provision needs, liaising with the ALN team to support, and effectively communicate with parents and students to ensure all needs are being met.
- Adding to the More Able and Talented Register that is available to all staff, which is continuously reviewed and amended throughout each academic year.
- Facilitating opportunities for enrichment activities that are suitable for More Able and Talented pupils across the whole school.
- Communicating with and supporting parents in the education of nurturing More Able and Talented pupils.
- Keeping abreast of the latest research, sharing good practice with staff.

7. SUPERVISION OF BREAKOUT ROOMS AND COLLABORATIVE ONLINE LEARNING

Breakout rooms are an integral part of the school's delivery model, enabling paired and small-group collaborative work in line with the pedagogy of the Online Learning Policy. The school's approach to safeguarding within breakout rooms **follows the principles of Keeping Children Safe in Education: supervision that is reasonable, proportionate and appropriate to the setting, rather than continuous surveillance of every pupil interaction — the same standard that applies to group work, corridors and shared spaces in a physical school.**

The following controls apply whenever breakout rooms are in use:

- The class teacher retains host control of the whole session at all times, remains present in the lesson throughout, and moves between breakout rooms on an unannounced basis, as a teacher would circulate between groups in a physical classroom.
- Breakout groups are kept deliberately small, consistent with the school's small-group model.
- Every pupil retains an immediate exit at all times: any pupil may leave a breakout room and return to the main room, or leave the lesson entirely, at any moment. Pupils learn from home, with a parent or carer contactable as set out in the Online Learning Policy.
- All pupils are taught, and sign an age-appropriate Digital Safety Agreement committing to, the expectation that they report immediately to an adult anything that makes them uncomfortable, in a breakout room or anywhere else online. The school's behaviour and anti-bullying expectations apply in breakout rooms exactly as they do in the main classroom and in a physical school.

- Concerns raised about conduct in breakout rooms — by a pupil, parent or member of staff — are followed up promptly under the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Behaviour Policy, and grouping arrangements may be adjusted while any concern is looked into.
- Structured weekly parent contact provides a regular, reliable route through which concerns about peer interactions are surfaced and acted upon.

The school keeps this model under review as part of its annual policy cycle and its ongoing risk assessment of remote learning.