



Wakefield Grammar School Foundation

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V1.00	January 2026	Previous individual school policies have been amalgamated into one new Foundation policy.

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WGSF More Able and Talented Policy

*“What the research shows consistently is that if you face children with intellectual challenges and then help them talk through the problems towards a solution, then you almost literally **stretch their minds**. They become cleverer, not only in the particular topic, but across the curriculum.”*

Prof. Philip Adey, 2008

1. Introduction, Aims and Rationale

Wakefield Grammar School Foundation (WGSF, “the Foundation”) is committed to providing an environment, which encourages all pupils to maximise their achievement, including pupils who have exceptional abilities. We aim to have an inclusive approach, to encourage all able pupils to fulfill their potential within mixed classroom settings. This involves a range of opportunities, both in the classroom and beyond. This further enhances ‘basic’ standards of attitude to learning, tracking, monitoring and interventions in order to improve academic outcomes for pupils of all abilities.

This policy is an integral part of the Foundation's broader development of maximum inclusion of educational opportunity for all pupils. It states our commitment to providing an environment in which all pupils are encouraged to reach their potential.

WGSF will promote stimulating and challenging experiences through a broad balanced curriculum that also offers quality learning activities that focus on the particular needs and talents of the pupils. We also appreciate that pupils will make progress at different times of their school career, therefore we allow opportunities for pupils to join our programs at various points.

We endorse the NACE (National Association for Able Children in Education) mission statement “provide for pupils with high abilities whilst enabling all pupils to flourish.”

Our aims are to:

- Ensure that we recognise and support the needs of all our pupils.
- Enable pupils to develop to their full potential.
- Offer pupils opportunities to generate their own learning.
- Ensure that we challenge and extend the pupils through appropriate learning opportunities.
- Encourage pupils to think and work independently.

1.1 Links to other policies:

- [Individual School Curriculum Policies](#)
- [Individual School Teaching and Learning Policies](#)
- [WGSF Careers, Information and Guidance Policy](#)
- [WGSF Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)
- [WGSF Homework policy](#)

2. Definitions

National Guidelines define More Able and Talented (MAT) pupils as those pupils ‘who achieve, or have the ability to achieve, at a level significantly higher than the average for their year group.’ Having potential in itself is not enough to guarantee success; WGSF has a vital role to play in encouraging pupils to challenge themselves and achieve excellence. Therefore we define “more able” as “having exceptional potential” and “talented” as “demonstrating exceptional performance”, not distinguishing between purely academic subjects and performing subjects.

3. Preparatory Section (EYFS - Year 6)

3.1 Identification

We identify our more able and talented pupils by considering both assessment data and the demonstration of NACE's more able characteristics by subject. Average yearly standardised scores of 120+ on the GAPs, PIRA and PUMA assessments identify children as more able and talented.

The identification process is ongoing and begins when the pupil joins our school and involves staff, pupils and parents. Data taken into account will include.

- Information from parents
- Information from previous teachers and previous school records
- Discussions with pupils
- Entrance examination results and standardised scores

Identification by staff using professional judgements, classwork and test and assessment results. More able learners in the different subject areas are identified using NACE criteria.

Pupils normally have access to VIM (Visiting Instrumental Music) teachers from Y3 onwards. If they have been identified as having a specific musical talent earlier than this, they may be able to access VIMS provision from Y2 or even Y1, as appropriate. This can occur after discussion between parents and the music lead within the Preparatory Section.

3.2 Provision Methods & Teaching and Learning Strategies

The following section details methods of provision, both inclusive and targeted and outlines teaching and learning strategies that teaching staff can use.

Subject provision for both inclusive and targeted strategies will be outlined in subject specific policies.

Teaching & Learning Strategies (Inclusive Provision) - These strategies are intended to be used in the classroom. They will help to stretch, challenge and extend all pupils.

Thinking Skills (Blooms Taxonomy) - A popular choice as a vehicle for promoting Thinking Skills is Bloom's Taxonomy. Benjamin Bloom (1913-1999), an educational psychologist, classified levels of intellectual behaviour in learning. He identifies six levels within the cognitive domain; knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. While knowledge demands only simple recall and recognition of facts, the levels of intellectual behaviour become increasingly more complex as we move down the list towards evaluation. We should strive to encourage critical thinking amongst our pupils.

Higher Order Questioning - Higher order Questioning is required to develop critical and creative thinking. Examples include: Why does anything exist at all? Higher order questions present the learner with no easy option or single neat answer. It offers a challenge with regard to thinking that is as difficult as the pupils' ability and enthusiasm will allow.

Homework - In addition to English and maths homework, a termly menu is provided for all pupils to deepen their understanding in Science/topic/PSHE etc. There are also Philosophy for children (P4C) texts and questions to discuss at home to promote the pupil's oracy and thinking skills.

Targeted Provision with focus on Identification and pupils on the 'flexible' register - These strategies deal with targeted provision. This is where we aim to provide solely for the more able pupils who have been 'identified' and placed on the flexible register (see section 4.1 for identification methods).

Provision for able pupils is often discussed in terms of **acceleration**, **enrichment** and **extension**.

- Acceleration – the pace of learning – when a pupil is moved through the curriculum at a faster speed than their peers.
- Enrichment – breadth of learning – additional educational activities that supplement the curriculum. Distinct initiatives may be organised by subject leaders and these will give identified more able pupils a chance to extend and enrich their learning in a particular subject or area of the curriculum.
- Extension – depth of learning – activities that develop a higher level of thinking
- Extra-curricular Clubs such as the Stretch and Challenge Club.
- Opportunities to take part in workshops with subject specialists / pupils in the senior section.
- National Competitions etc such as the BBC 500 Words competition or the Townsend-Warner History Prize.

This form of more able provision should be planned coherently across the school and within all curriculum areas.

3.3 Organisation & Responsibilities

The Prep Academic Enrichment Coordinator will:

- develop whole-school evaluation and improvement planning for the provision of outcomes for more able pupils;
- develop classroom practice for more able pupils;
- be an advocate for the needs and aspirations of able pupils and increase awareness amongst teaching colleagues;
- compile and keep up to date a register of able pupils;
- identify training needs amongst teaching staff;
- coordinate provision for able pupils on the register;
- with others to identify and resolve underachievement amongst able pupils;
- support and monitor curriculum planning that ensures differentiated provision.

Subject Leaders will:

- work with the Prep Academic Enrichment Coordinator;
- ensure that all pupils including more able pupils are being appropriately stretched, challenged and extended in their learning in their particular subject;
- monitor pupils within their subject that are identified as more able and be able to provide evidence (in appropriate ways);
- identify examples of provision within their own subject policy for both inclusive and targeted strategies;
- discuss more able provision and methods of identification appropriate to their subject and take feedback from class teachers during Subject Meetings;
- look for evidence of pupils being stretched, challenged and extended in their learning when doing Lesson Observations and Work Sampling.

Class and Specialist Teachers will:

- endeavour to ensure that all pupils including more able pupils are being appropriately stretched, challenged and extended in their learning at all times;

- notify the Prep Academic Enrichment Coordinator of any pupils they feel are showing particular ability in any area of the curriculum so that they can be added to the register.

Support Staff:

- will notify the Prep Academic Enrichment Coordinator of any pupils they feel are showing particular ability in any area of the curriculum so that they can be added to the register;
- may be called to work with more able pupils within the classroom whilst supporting in a lesson.

Parents:

- will not in the main be notified of their child being on the more able and talented register – this is a register for internal use and this is being done to avoid complications should a pupil be removed at a later stage etc. There may however be exceptions in some cases.

3.4 Personalised Learning (DCSF Learning Framework)

'Personalising learning means, in practical terms, focusing in a more structured way on each child's learning in order to enhance progress, achievement and participation. All children and young people have the right to receive support and challenge, tailored to their needs, interests and abilities.' Christine Gilbert (2006)

The five elements of personalised learning are:

- Assessment for learning (AFL).
- Effective teaching and learning.
- Curriculum entitlement and choice.
- Organising the school.
- Beyond the classroom.

3.5 Co-ordination and Monitoring

The Prep Academic Enrichment Co-ordinator co-ordinates the provision and practice within the Preparatory Section for more able and talented pupils and reports to the Director of Teaching and Learning. The Co-ordinator's role includes:

- running a register of more able and talented pupils, and keeping it up to date;
- meeting with the subject leads to receiving feedback on the challenge for all provisions that they have noted in the monitoring of their subject;
- regularly reviewing the teaching arrangements for these particular pupils;
- monitoring their progress through discussions with teachers, observations and discussions with the pupils on the register;
- supporting staff in the identification of these pupils;
- providing advice and support to staff on teaching and learning strategies;
- communicating relevant strategies and new methods of maintaining more able and talented provision within the school.

The transition between Preparatory Section and Senior Section pupils is managed in Year 6 when information and data sharing occurs between key staff from the Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 teams. This is enhanced with the Scholarship day in January where our pupils and external candidates sit the scholarship papers for transition to Key Stage 3.

Further evidence is provided by the entrance exam which Year 6 pupils are invited to sit if they would like to try for an academic scholarship.

4. Senior Section

4.1 Identification

More Able Pupils

We are committed to identifying and meeting the needs of these pupils as early as possible in order to enable them to achieve their best.

The formal identification of pupils in the Senior Section comes from the results of the initial MIDYIS testing. Pupils who score 120+ on the MIDYIS examination are identified as more able on all school data shown on SIMS and PowerBI.

Other exceptionally able pupils are identified through teacher-judgment based on an analysis of various sources of information including:

- Departmental subject-based [NACE criteria](#)
- Assessment results will be used both for identification but also monitoring purposes
- Data from previous schools

Identification may also come through other internal monitoring systems, parental nomination or student self-nomination.

It is worth remembering that exceptionally able pupils can be:

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

Academic Scholarship Y7-11

The initial identification of pupils in the Senior Section comes from pupils participating in a selection procedure. External Year 6 candidates sit the Foundation Entrance Exam in Year 6. Internal Year 6 candidates can choose to complete the same paper.

The top performing internal and external candidates are invited to an interview with the Head. The identification and selection of academic scholars is then at the Head's discretion. There is no set number of Scholarships that can be awarded and they can be awarded as either full scholarships, which have financial reward, or an honorary scholarship, which has the title but no financial reward.

Associate Scholarship Y9-11

At the beginning of Year 10, pupils can be identified as Associate Scholars. This designation is based on their academic performance throughout Year 9. Associate Scholars are identified as pupils who have achieved an average of an A2 in their end of Year 9 examinations.

Sixth Form Scholarship Y12-13

Sixth Form Scholars are identified as pupils who have received 8 or more grade 8s or above at GCSE level. Additionally, there are scholars for art, DT, music, sport and textiles.

The scholarship program is available to all pupils to participate in, though it is obligatory for academic scholars.

4.2 Provision for the exceptionally able in the classroom

Opportunities for extension and enrichment should be built into all teaching in order to provide work which challenges the most able. Teachers should encourage exceptionally able pupils to attempt more challenging activities, which will involve higher order thinking skills, or approach open-ended tasks in an original and innovative way. Teachers should also encourage those who are very able in their subjects to take their ability seriously and to try out some form of enrichment activity (see below), where the pupil's subject interest is also significant.

We are aware that able pupils need to be challenged (tactfully) beyond the content of the tasks suitable for most pupils. Equally, we are mindful that unnecessary repetition of work is de-motivating for many pupils, but especially for the very able.

The enhancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) software enables staff to identify gaps in pupil knowledge, provide targeted feedback, and offer personalised support. With AI-powered tools like chatbots, educators can extend assistance beyond the classroom, helping pupils stay engaged and motivated. Through the effective use of AI software such as Sparx and Atom Learning, teachers can provide challenges for all pupils commensurate with their abilities.

Reading lists for further study/interest will be provided by Heads of Departments (HoDs) and magazine subscriptions may create further opportunities for the pupils.

4.3 Teaching & Learning Strategies

These are some of the strategies we use in our classrooms to cater for our most able. We recognise and embrace that many of these strategies will enhance the learning environment for all our pupils.

Higher order Questioning - is required to develop critical and creative thinking. Examples include: Why does anything exist at all? What would you change in the story?

Higher order questions present the learner with no easy option or single 'neat' answer. It offers a challenge with regard to thinking that is as difficult as the pupils' ability and enthusiasm will allow. The implementation of 'Walkthrus' by Tom Sherrington and Oliver Caviglioli are embedded in our lessons with question types such as think-pair-share, cold calling and say it again better.

Socratic questioning - to extend thinking and question for depth of response. Examples include Is that the only way? How did we arrive at that conclusion?

Desirable difficulties to stretch our more able learners include A03 Analysis and evaluation activities. Fermi problem solving questions are also used e.g. how many jelly babies would fill Wembley Stadium?

'3 B4 Me' - Promotes independent learning. This is required to develop critical and creative thinking. If a pupil is finding a particular aspect of the lesson challenging, they are encouraged to try something new, use resources and ask for some support from a peer. These three stages must happen before they seek the support from an adult in the classroom. It encourages learning as a process, develops resilience and promotes independence.

Task led - Pupils could start tasks or independent work sooner than other pupils. The type of task set may differ to other pupils to ensure the challenge is pitched at the appropriate level. For example, these tasks could be open ended challenges, puzzles, reasoning and problem solving tasks or tasks that require pupils to use another perspective. Extension tasks are readily available in all lessons.

4.4 Enrichment beyond the classroom

Opportunities for extension and enrichment beyond the classroom exist in great numbers at WGSF. Although often self-selecting, able pupils should be encouraged to take advantage of the plethora of extra-curricular activities. Enrichment opportunities may involve:

- Public opportunities for music, drama and sporting success
- School clubs e.g. subject clubs, chess, debating, art, bridge, drama
- QED/EDGE (Enrichment and Development activities afternoon)
- National schemes/competitions/festivals
- Exchanges and trips
- Oxford/Cambridge University visit for pupils identified in KS4

Specific longer-term extension/ enrichment activities may also include some of the following:

- Visiting academic speakers, sports or arts personalities
- Attendance at a university lecture
- Extended writing (on scientific, literary geographical or historical topics)
- Research opportunities
- Wider reading
- Subject-specific publications (New scientist etc.)
- Shared able-group work
- Advanced textbooks
- Subject specific enrichment courses
- Competitions / publications
- EPQ and HPQ

4.4.1 Scholars programmes

Academic Scholarship Y7-11

Scholars will engage in a range of enrichment activities designed to complement and extend their curriculum learning. Subject events for Academic Scholars happen once per half term, led by departmental teachers, providing academic stretch and enrichment outside of the normal taught curriculum. Scholars take part in a mentoring scheme with Sixth Form Scholars. Mentoring meetings take place once every half term. As part of this programme, pupils are also expected to achieve the Scholarship Pathway Awards (see underneath).

Examples of enrichment activities for Academic Scholars are:

- Reading Academically Focused Literature
- Entering National Competitions
- Completing MOOCS (Massive Open Online Courses)
- Participating in University Masterclasses
- Engaging with Visiting Speakers and Lectures
- Trips and Visits
- Completing the Higher Project Qualification (HPQ) (Year 10)
- 6th Form Mentoring Scheme
- Scholars Lectures

Sixth Form Scholarship Y12-13

Pupils take part in a range of super-curricular opportunities. Pupils are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to pursue places at Oxbridge or other highly competitive universities and courses. The programme aims to nurture intellectual curiosity, academic ambition, and independent learning, ensuring scholars are fully supported in achieving their future aspirations.

Examples of activities for Sixth form Scholars are:

- Reading Academically Focused Literature
- Entering National Competitions
- Completing MOOCS (Massive Open Online Courses)
- Participating in University Masterclasses
- Engaging with Visiting Speakers and Lectures
- Trips and Visits
- Scholars Lectures
- University aptitude test preparation sessions during
- University practice interviews
- Bespoke University application guidance
- Leading of Clubs/Societies
- Work Experience
- EPQ, Finance or CSLA qualification
- 6th Form Mentoring Scheme

Art, DT, Music, Sport and Textiles Scholarships Sixth form

Pupils take part in a range of super-curricular and leadership opportunities and have access to high level coaching and tuition. Pupils are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to pursue their sport to a high level with individual mentoring and guidance. They will be supported in entering or pursuing external opportunities and competitions.

Enrichment for All - Scholarship Pathway Award

The Scholarship Pathway Award is open to all pupils in Y7-11 as part of our “enrichment for all” programme. Pupils will engage in a range of activities designed to cultivate a scholarly mindset and enhance academic skills. The award is designed to develop pupils' interest, knowledge, and skills in specific subjects, providing a solid foundation for their future educational and career decisions. Through this pathway, pupils will engage in various academic enrichment activities, working towards Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum awards.

4.5 Oxford & Cambridge and other competitive courses

For many of our most able pupils an application for either Oxford or Cambridge is a goal they have been harbouring for a number of years. As a result there is a clear route for these pupils to follow in Year 12 and 13, with general assistance as well as subject specific guidance. We are fortunate to have both teachers as well as current and former pupils who advise and guide the pupils through the opportunities open to them at Oxford and Cambridge.

The programme at sixth form enables them to make the best choice of course and college initially, as well as assistance in their personal statement and interview practice. We also recognise that a number of courses are competitive whatever the learning institution e.g. Medicine, and run a programme to support these applications.

4.6 Coordination and monitoring

Identification and monitoring is carried out by the More Able Champions in each department. This can form part of a Performance Development target for interested members of staff. It also allows for meetings in this area to be carried out more efficiently. The More Able Champion reports to the Director of Teaching and Learning through the Academic Enrichment Co-ordinator.

Identification as 'academically more able and talented' is visible to staff on the School's Information Management System (SIMS) and PowerBI.

The list will be a flexible document with pupils being added/taken off throughout their time at school. The expansion of enrichment and extension activities is encouraged, both departmentally and school-wide.